Edited by
Brian Tomlinson

English Language Learning Materials

A Critical Review

English Language Learning Materials

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Preface

Brian Tomlinson

This book provides a critical review of English language teaching (ELT) materials currently in use throughout the world. It does so through objective analyses, through subjective but systematic evaluations and through presenting the informed views of its authors. Its intentions are to inform, to stimulate and to provide suggestions for future development.

A personal introduction by the editor is followed by a section in which experienced developers and users of ELT materials review the materials currently used for different types of target learners (i.e. young learners (YL), learners of General English (GE), learners of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and learners of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). It also reviews materials for extensive reading, materials for self-access learning and multi-media materials. In this section, the reviewers describe and exemplify materials typical of those currently used in their sub-genre, they make generalizations about the distinctive characteristics of currently used materials, they subject a sample of materials to systematic, criterion-referenced evaluation and they present their personal views of developments they would like to see take place in the future.

In the second section, materials development experts review ELT materials currently in use in the geographical area they are most familiar with. Some of them focus on the country they know best and then make reference to other countries in the region, whilst others review materials used across a wide but connected area. In this way ELT materials are reviewed for the UK, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Australia and New Zealand, East Asia, South-East Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Central and South America and North America. In each chapter the authors describe and exemplify the distinctive characteristics of the materials currently in use, they say how these materials are typically used, they evaluate a sample of typical materials and they specify the improvements they would like to see in the development and use of ELT materials in their area.

This book does not attempt to provide an objective overview of the development and use of every type of EFL material in every area of the world. Instead

it provides an informed impression of what is happening in the ELT material world and in doing so hopes to stimulate teachers, researchers, materials developers and publishers to think of ways in which they can contribute to improvements in the development and use of ELT materials. This is the declared aim of MATSDA (the Materials Development Association) and many of the contributors to this book have played an important role in the development of MATSDA since it was founded by Brian Tomlinson in 1993 (e.g. Brian Tomlinson (President), Hitomi Masuhara (Secretary) and such frequent contributors to MATSDA events and publications as Rod Bolitho, Irma-Kaarina Ghosn, Alan Maley, Freda Mishen, Jayakaran Mukundan and Luke Prodromou). For more information about MATSDA, refer to www.matsda.org.

We hope you enjoy this book and that you might follow up your reading of it by contributing an article to the MATSDA journal *Folio* and/or a presentation at one of our MATDSA conferences or workshops.

Part 1

INTRODUCTION

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Chapter 1

Language Acquisition and Language Learning Materials

Brian Tomlinson

Intention

In this rather unusual Introduction to a book which reviews ELT materials around the world I'd like to present my personal views about:

- what facilitates language learning
- what language learning materials are currently doing which helps learners to acquire and develop English
- what language learning materials are currently not doing to help learners of English
- what language learning materials are currently doing to prevent language acquisition and development.

Notice that I'm deliberately using the term 'language learning materials' instead of the usual 'language teaching materials' in order to stress that one of my views is that many ELT materials are designed for teaching English rather than for learning it. Note also that I'm making a distinction between language acquisition and language development. For me language acquisition is 'the initial stage of gaining basic communicative competence in a language', whilst language development is 'the subsequent stage of gaining the ability to use the language successfully in a wide variety of media and genre for a wide variety of purposes' (Tomlinson 2007a: 2). One of my arguments is that many ELT materials (especially global coursebooks) currently make a significant contribution to the failure of many learners of English as a second, foreign or other language to even acquire basic competence in English and to the failure of most of them to develop the ability to use it successfully. They do so by focusing on the teaching of linguistic items rather than on the provision of opportunities for acquisition and development. And they do this because that's what teachers are expected and required to do by administrators, by parents, by publishers, and by learners too. This is a rather provocative opening to a book which much of the time tries to be as objective as possible and I'm sure it will be resented by most publishers and textbook writers. I don't think many teachers will disagree with me though – especially those who responded to my worldwide enquiry

about why a particular global coursebook was so popular by saying they used it because it meant they didn't have to spend time preparing their lessons but that they felt sorry for their students because it was so boring. For other perspectives on the global coursebook see Gray (2002).

My Knowledge of Language Acquisition

There is still much debate about how learners can best acquire a second or foreign language but 'this should not stop us from applying what we do know about second and foreign language learning to the development of materials designed to facilitate that process' (Tomlinson 1998a: 6).

I know that a pre-requisite for language acquisition is a rich experience of language in use. We also know that for such experience to facilitate language acquisition:

- the language experience needs to be contextualized and comprehensible (Krashen 1985, 1993, 1999)
- the learner needs to be motivated, relaxed, positive and engaged (Arnold 1999; Tomlinson 1998b, 1998d, 2003d)
- the language and discourse features available for potential acquisition need to be salient, meaningful and frequently encountered (Maley 1994, 1998; Tomlinson 1998b)
- the learner needs to achieve deep and multi-dimensional processing of the language. (Tomlinson 2000c, 2001b)

This means that materials for learners at all levels must provide exposure to authentic use of English through spoken and written texts with the potential to engage the learners cognitively and affectively. If they don't provide such texts and they don't stimulate the learners to think and feel whilst experiencing them there is very little chance of the materials facilitating any durable language acquisition at all. There is massive evidence that one of the easiest and most effective ways of providing such exposure is through extensive listening and extensive reading (Elley 2000; Krashen 1993) in which the learners listen to or read what they want to without any requirement to complete any tasks during or after their experience of the texts.

It is my belief that helping learners to notice features of the authentic language they are exposed to can facilitate and accelerate language acquisition. It can do so by drawing the learners' attention to language and discourse features which might otherwise have gone unnoticed (Schmidt and Frota 1986) and it increases the likelihood of noticing similar features in subsequent input and of therefore increasing readiness for acquisition (Pienemann 1985). This is particularly true if the learners are stimulated and guided to make discoveries for themselves (Bolitho *et al.* 2003; Tomlinson 1994) and to thus increase their awareness of how the target language is used to achieve fluency, accuracy, appropriacy and effect.

This means that not only should materials provide a rich exposure to language in authentic use but that they should also include activities which help learners to notice for themselves salient features of the texts. Ideally the materials should follow the principles of the experiential approach in which apprehension is followed by comprehension (Kolb 1984), and therefore the analytical noticing activities should follow engaging experiential activities in which the emphasis is on personal response to the meaning of the text.

It is also my belief that helping learners to participate in meaningful communication in which they are using language to achieve intended outcomes is essential for the development of communicative competence. This is of vital importance in helping the brain to monitor and modify hypotheses about language use and to involve the learner in the sort of negotiation of meaning which increases opportunities for language acquisition and development (Swain 2005). Practice activities which have been designed to give the learner frequent opportunities to get something right make very little contribution to language acquisition because they don't add anything new and they make no contribution at all to language development because they focus on accurate outputs rather than successful outcomes. What the materials need to do is to provide lots of opportunities for the learners to actually use language to achieve intentions and lots of opportunities for them to gain feedback on the effectiveness of their attempts at communication.

My Thoughts about Language Acquisition

In my experience of 42 years of English language teaching, I have arrived at the following conjectures:

- The majority of language learners gain very little from being given information about a language and how it is used.
- The majority of language learners gain very little from analytical activities which require them to apply what they have been told about a language to their attempts to use it.
- The majority of language learners gain very little from practice activities which help them to get most things right by controlling and simplifying the context in which they are asked to produce language.
- Many of the minority of language learners who succeed in acquiring a language analytically become language teachers, materials writers and examiners, they set up a false paradigm of the good language learner as a hard-working, analytical learner and they cause many experiential learners to fail.
- Language acquisition is facilitated and accelerated if the learner is positive about their learning environment, achieves self-esteem and is emotionally engaged in the learning activities (Tomlinson 1998d).
- Achievable challenges help learners to think and feel and to achieve valuable self-esteem.

- Learners gain from sometimes being allowed to hide and from not always being put under a spotlight.
- Those learners who participate mentally in group activities often gain more than those who participate vocally.
- Encouraging learners to make use of mental imaging whilst responding to and prior to producing language facilitates comprehension and communication and promotes language acquisition and development (Tomlinson 1996, 1998c; Tomlinson and Avila 2007a, 2007b).
- Encouraging learners to use L2 inner speech can have positive effects on communicative competence and can facilitate and accelerate acquisition and development (Tomlinson 2000b, 2001a, 2003a; Tomlinson and Avila 2007a, 2007b).
- L2 learners can use high level skills (e.g. connecting, predicting, interpreting, evaluating) from the very beginning of their language learning experience. Doing so facilitates language acquisition and is essential for language development (Tomlinson 2007b).
- L2 beginners' courses should follow the learner syllabus and should focus on meaning rather than form (Sato 1990; Tomlinson 1998b).
- Reading should be delayed in the L2 until the learners have a sufficiently large vocabulary to be able to read experientially rather than studially and then extensive reading should be introduced before intensive reading (Masuhara 2007; Tomlinson 2001c).
- Learners should be encouraged and helped to represent language multidimensionally (Masuhara 2007; Tomlinson 2000a, 2000c, 2001b).

What ELT Materials Do to Facilitate Language Acquisition and Development

Below I have listed some of the things which I think some ELT materials are currently doing which are likely to promote language acquisition and development:

- Some of them are providing a rich experience of different genres and text types.
- Some of them are providing an aesthetically positive experience through the use of attractive illustration, design and illustration.
- Some of them are making use of multimedia resources to provide a rich and varied experience of language learning.
- Some of them are helping the learners to make some discoveries for themselves.
- Some of them are helping the learners to become independent learners of the language.
- Some of them are providing supplementary materials which provide the learners with experience of extensive listening and/or extensive reading.
- Some of them are helping the learners to personalize and localize their language learning experience.

What ELT Materials Do to Inhibit Language Acquisition and Development

My assumption is that ELT materials should be driven by principles of language acquisition and that ideally all units of material should be principled, relevant and coherent. The reality seems to be rather different, with commercial materials being driven by considerations of what the buyers (i.e. administrators and teachers) are likely to want rather than of what the learners are likely to benefit from, and with most materials developers driven by intuitions about what is likely to 'work' rather than by their beliefs about what facilitates language acquisition (Tomlinson 2003e; in press).

In a still confidential research project which I conducted for a major publisher I found from a survey of twelve countries throughout the world that about 85 per cent of ELT textbooks were selected by administrators, 15 per cent by teachers and 0 per cent by learners. The results of this situation are obvious to see, with colourful photographs placed in the top right-hand corner of the right-hand page to attract potential buyers flicking through a new book, with as many words as possible crammed on to a page to achieve optimal coverage at an acceptable price, with each unit being the same length and following a uniform format to make timetabling, teacher allocation and teacher preparation easier and with most tasks replicating conventional test types so as to facilitate examination preparation. None of these characteristics are likely to add pedagogic value to a textbook but all are likely to promote sales. This is not, of course, an attack on commercial publishers. Many of them try to add as much educational value to their products as possible but for all of them the main objective is to make money. If only teachers were able to put the learners first when selecting coursebooks and not have to do as many teachers around the world reported doing in another confidential survey I carried out for a major publisher in which they said they selected a best-selling coursebook because it was designed to minimize their lesson preparation (even though many of them said they felt guilty because their students found it so boring). What this situation means for writers of commercial ELT materials is that they can at best try to achieve a compromise between their principles and the requirements of the publisher. See Bell and Gower (1998), Mukundan (2006a, 2006b), Richards (2001) and Wala (2003a) for discussions of ways of resolving this dilemma.

Johnson (2003: 28–29) gave a group of experienced and expert materials developers a task to design, involving the development of a unit of materials giving learners 'a 'communicative' activity to practise 'describing people'. He elicited from them observations about their design process so as to be able to compare their efforts with those of a group of novice materials developers. He found that the experts used such strategies as simulating input and output, practising 'consequence identification' (131), designing in an opportunistic way, spending time exploring and 'using repertoire a lot' (136). What he doesn't report is any overt consideration of principles of language acquisition. This concern for what they can get learners to do rather than how they can get them to learn is a characteristic of other reports of expert developers at work. See Byrd (1995), Fenner and

Newby (2000), Graves (1996), Hidalgo *et al.* (1995), Jolly and Bolitho (1998), Lyons (2003), McGrath (2002), Maley (2003), Mares (2003), Mishan (2005), Prowse (1998), Renandya (2003), Richards (2001), Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) and Wala (2003b) for discussions of the process of developing ELT materials and, in particular, Bell and Gower (1998), Flores (1995) and Tomlinson (1998b, 2003b, 2003c, 2003d, 2003e, 2003f, in press) for discussion of principle-driven materials writing. See *Search 10* (Fenner and Nordal-Peedesen 1999) for an example of a commercially published local coursebook which is designed primarily for the learner and which is driven by principles of language acquisition.

I have listed below, in a rather lengthy list, some of the things which many ELT materials are currently doing which are likely to inhibit language acquisition and development. Obviously there are exceptions to these generalizations and there are some materials which are actually and commendably doing the opposite.

- They are underestimating learners both in terms of language level and cognitive ability.
- In particular they are treating linguistically low level learners as intellectually low level learners.
- They are impoverishing the learning experience in a misguided attempt to make learning easier by simplifying their presentation of language.
- They are creating an illusion of language learning by using a Presentation/Practice/Production approach which simplifies language use and results in shallow processing.
- They are also creating an illusion of language learning by ensuring that most activities are easily accomplished as a result of involving little more than memorization, repetition of a script or simple substitution or transformation.
- They are confusing language learning and skills development by trying to teach language features during listening and reading activities.
- They are preventing learners from achieving affective engagement by presenting them with bland, safe, harmonious texts (Wajnryb 1996) and requiring them to participate in activities which don't stimulate them to think and feel.
- They are providing learners with far too much de-contextualized experience of language exemplification and not nearly enough experience of language in fully contextualized use.
- They are focusing on activities which require efferent listening or reading for detailed and literal comprehension and are providing very little opportunity for the sort of aesthetic listening and reading which stimulates the total engagement so useful for promoting both enjoyment of the language and acquisition of it (Rosenblatt 1978).
- They are failing to help the learners to make full use of the language experience available to them outside the classroom.
- They are focusing on uni-dimensional processing of language through activities requiring only the decoding and/or encoding of language rather than on multi-dimensional representation of language through

activities involving the use of the full resources of the brain (Arnold 1999; Masuhara 2007; Tomlinson 2000c, 2001b).

Conclusion

The hope, of course, lies with local, non-commercial materials which are not driven by the profit imperative and which are driven rather by considerations of the needs and wants of their target learners and by principles of language acquisition. I have recently enjoyed being involved as a consultant in a number of projects contributing to the development of such materials. One example of such a project has been *On Target* (1995), a coursebook published by Gamsberg Macmillan for the Ministry of Education in Namibia. The first draft of this book was written by a team of 30 teachers in five days in response to the student articulation of their needs and wants and with the help of a principled, text-driven, flexible framework (Tomlinson 2003e). Another example is a textbook currently being developed by a team of 17 teachers at Sultan Qaboos University in Muscat. In a radical departure from the norm, the starting point has been the articulation of the writers' beliefs about what facilitates language acquisition (i.e. universal criteria) and what is needed and wanted by their target learners (i.e. local criteria). These beliefs have been supplemented by consideration of the findings of language acquisition research and by the results of triangulated needs and wants analyses, and they have been developed into criteria which will be used both to drive the writing of the book and to evaluate it during and after development. Before starting to write the book the writers are developing a library of spoken and written texts with the potential for affective and cognitive engagement, they are developing a principled, text-driven, flexible framework and they are writing sample communicative tests and examinations to ensure eventual positive washback on classroom use of the book. Soon they will start to write the book in small teams and each unit will be monitored by another group, revised and then trialled. Eventually a small team of editors will match the learning points in the units to a 'secret' syllabus they have developed, develop final versions of the units and then fit the final versions of the units together into a structure which will ensure principled cohesion as well as maximizing student and teacher choice.

Perhaps this type of principled approach to materials development can be used as a blueprint for commercial production of L2 materials – with due consideration being given, of course, to the face validity and conformity to market expectation which is necessary to ensure profitability.

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Part 2

DIFFERENT TYPES OF MATERIALS

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Chapter 2

Materials for General English

Hitomi Masuhara and Brian Tomlinson

Introduction

The shelves in the English Language Teaching (ELT) section of bookshops in major cities anywhere in the world seem to be dominated by global coursebooks published by major British publishers. English Language (EL) teachers and learners all over the world are likely to recognize at least some of the names of best-selling coursebooks. The front pages of publishers' ELT web catalogues prominently flag their new coursebooks, which seem to be added every year to their existing ones. Exhibitions at ELT conferences are a showcase of coursebooks and participants witness intense competition.

Coursebooks often come with a Student Book, a Teacher's Book and a Workbook. Many offer additional materials such as cassette tapes, a CD Rom, tests, extra resources and photocopiable materials. Some may offer videos, web resources, a mini-dictionary, a mini-reference book and/or an extensive reader booklet. Coursebooks seems to mean big business.

Questions come to our minds. What kinds of ELT learners are these coursebooks catering for? What are the needs and wants of the teachers and learners who use these coursebooks? Are these coursebooks meeting the target users' needs and wants? Are these coursebooks effective in terms of second language acquisition (SLA)? What are the strengths and weaknesses of currently published coursebooks? What kinds of improvements would teachers and learners like to see?

Having these questions in our mind, we conducted a small-scale survey amongst teachers and learners who use General English (GE) coursebooks in the UK and overseas. We then randomly selected seven coursebooks published from 2001 to 2006, analysed their coverage and claims and then independently conducted pre-use evaluation using 14 criteria based on SLA principles. Our objective for this evaluation was specifically focused to see if these samples of coursebooks mirror what is recommended by SLA studies (Ellis in press; Tomlinson 1998b; Cook 2001).

In this chapter we will firstly try to describe how these current GE coursebooks may be used in UK and overseas and we will also ask if these coursebooks are meeting the needs and wants of the target learners and teachers. Secondly, by reporting the results of our evaluation of seven recent coursebooks, we will look into how these sample coursebooks match SLA principles. We will then

conclude by presenting our personal views as users on possible future directions for coursebooks.

What Kinds of ELT Contexts are General English Coursebooks Catering for? What are the Needs and Wants of the Teachers and Learners who use these Coursebooks?

Major global coursebooks seem to be mainly targeting two different kinds of teaching contexts: 'General English' in English-speaking countries and 'English as a Foreign Language' in non-English-speaking countries. Such dual roles of the same coursebooks may be evidenced by the fact that four of the recently published seven coursebooks (2001–2006) randomly selected for the review for this chapter acknowledge language teaching institutions in England and overseas as providers of feedback or as piloting institutions (see Donovan 1998 and Singapore Wala 2003 for publishers' accounts of the piloting of coursebooks).

Let us firstly focus on typical GE contexts. English-speaking countries such as the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand attract a lot of learners from all over the world who wish to learn English for various purposes including academic (i.e. EAP) and professional reasons (e.g. ESP, Business English) (see Chapter 9 for more details). Amongst these language learning visitors, there are a significant number of young adults/adults who enrol in 'General English (GE)' classes at language schools, further education colleges (FE colleges) or language centres in higher education institutions (HE).

According to our survey distributed among GE teachers and students, one of the main needs of such GE learners is to improve the four language skills, especially speaking and listening to everyday English. These learners are well aware that English is widely used as a lingua franca or as an international language (EIL). Another major reason for enrolling in GE courses is an instrumental motivation in that being fluent in English will give them better job prospects in the near future.

Interestingly, GE learners also express their wish to enlarge their vocabulary and consolidate their grammar. Many of them seem to feel that their English is 'not good enough' and that they make 'a lot of mistakes' when they speak or write in English.

It is puzzling that these learners normally have spent at least 3–6 years learning English back home at school with a vocabulary- and grammar-driven syllabus. Do these learners feel the need for more similar pedagogic grammar? If so, current coursebooks should be satisfying such needs and wants. Or do they mean different kinds of grammar? Grammar that is more closely connected to real life communication, for example, spoken grammar (Carter, Hughes and McCarthy 1998; Carter and McCarthy 2006)? Judging from their responses in the questionnaires or even those in interviews, learners themselves do not seem to be able to articulate what exactly they mean by 'grammar' apart from their wish to 'speak/write perfect English without errors like native speakers', the

myth still widely believed by teachers as well as learners. As Masuhara (1998) argues, alternative ways of tapping into the users' voices may be required.

The contents of recent coursebooks seem to respond to the general needs and wants of GE learners in that they all cover skills, vocabulary and grammar. Publishers launch new or revised coursebooks fairly frequently and supply language teaching institutions with fresh but similar GE materials for new learners and repeaters who come and go year after year.

The coursebooks used in GE courses in English-speaking countries are also used in countries where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL), especially in private schools, language schools and universities (see Part 3 of this book for area-specific reports).

In some EFL countries (e.g. China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia), their Ministries of Education control the primary and secondary level English language teaching. In such countries, the majority of EFL learners normally spend about six years in secondary schools, learning English through locally approved materials, taught by local teachers who may prefer to use the local vernacular language in English classes. These local teachers say that it is difficult to teach English using English because they are under pressure to cover the syllabus and also to successfully prepare their students for examinations. Teachers, parents and students are very much concerned with exam preparation, being fully aware that the results of the exams will determine the academic and occupational future.

The majority of EFL learners may manage not to fail in local tests but they seem to feel that their English is not 'native-speaker like' (Timmis 2002). For them, native speakers mean 'middle-class British, North Americans, Australians or New Zealanders who happen to speak a fairly standardised white version of English' (reported by overseas EFL teachers). Such a 'native speaker' image seems to have been created by dominant popular cultural artefacts such as films, Western music and magazines. Coursebooks may have contributed in perpetuating such images (Cook 2002; Tomlinson *et al.* 2001).

The growing awareness of the importance of English as a tool for international communication, however, is gradually changing the perception of learners, teachers and administrators. After finishing their secondary education, many of the EFL learners proceed to colleges and universities in which global coursebooks are used to teach English for communication. Some EFL learners may visit English-speaking countries to do GE courses. The Ministries of Education in many countries are updating their curriculum, syllabus and materials to keep up with changes in English language teaching at primary and secondary level.

Are the GE/EFL coursebooks meeting users' needs and wants?

The results of our survey contained mixed responses.

GE and EFL contexts do share some similarities in that:

- teachers have tended to be native speakers from English-speaking countries

- teaching has mainly taken place in language schools, colleges and universities in which courses focus on developing the four language skills for communication.

Both GE and EFL teachers in our survey did comment on how coursebooks satisfy certain needs and wants. Coursebooks provide readily available resources for teachers. Coursebooks give ideas for experienced teachers to plan their lessons and scripts for teachers who are new or lack confidence in using English in classrooms. They also provide a focus for their teaching.

Students appreciate the variety of activities and the colourful appearance of coursebooks. Students, both in GE and EFL contexts, said that they can physically see what they have done in classes.

There are differences, however, between GE and EFL contexts. In GE, students are physically in the English-speaking environment. The learners face immediate needs for everyday communication to cope with life outside the classrooms. The length of GE courses tends to be short (e.g. two–four weeks); therefore the learners will expect visible short-term benefits with which they can go back to their countries. The number in a class is on the small side and classes tend to consist of multi-cultural learners with different previous training experiences.

EFL learners, on the other hand, do not have immediate everyday communication needs outside the classroom, such as buying tickets at the cinema or ordering food in a restaurant. The length of the course tends to be at the level of term, semester or academic/calendar year and the class is more likely to consist of a homogenous mono-lingual/mono-cultural group. EFL learners often face examinations.

The similarities and differences of GE and EFL contexts are summarized in Table 2.1. The comparison of GE and EFL in Table 2.1 reveals that in fact there are more differences than similarities.

Table 2.1: Similarities and Differences of GE and EFL Contexts

	General English	English as a Foreign Language
Teachers	Often white native speakers	The same as GE N.B. EIL allows more variation
Teaching venue	Language schools, FE, HE	The same as GE N.B. Some private sector schools
Content	Four skills Language teaching	The same as GE

Needs and wants	• English for everyday interaction • English for jobs • Language improvement (esp. vocab and grammar)	• English for no immediate and specific purposes • Vague wish for acquiring a lingua franca
Class size	Small classes (about 10–15)	Large classes (about 15–100)
Environment outside classroom	English speaking	Surrounded by local vernaculars Level and amount of English input outside classrooms varies
Urgency	Immediate needs for everyday communication	No immediate communicative needs outside classroom
Length of course	Generally short (e.g. 2–4 weeks)	Term (e.g.10 weeks), semester (e.g. 14 weeks), academic year (35 weeks)
Exam pressure	Not imminent	Exams expected at the end

GE students in our survey (119 responses in all) seem to indicate that they would appreciate materials which help them to manage everyday interactions in the specific English-speaking environment that they are in. They also commented that they would like what they do in the classroom to have more connection with what happens to them outside the classroom. The type of cultural awareness they require needs to be much more environment-specific and concrete than, for instance, the very general and abstract 'A World Guide to Good Manners' (*New Headway Intermediate*, Unit 4).

In our survey, GE teachers (60 responses in all) supported that the major problems with GE materials are that:

- there are too many dry and dull texts
- many of the texts are not authentic or real
- texts and activities are not preparing students for real life situations
- texts and activities do not engage the interest of foreign students
- texts and activities seem to be culturally biased towards white middle-class British
- grammar exercises are often not related to the texts
- there are so many activities to get through
- formats are repetitive.

GE students and teachers seem to echo when they report that often activities in

lower-level materials are too easy and that they would welcome more interesting and engaging texts and activities. In evaluating the selection of topics, texts and activities of seven sample coursebooks (see a later section of this chapter), we did confirm such a tendency: startling differences were observed in terms of selection of intelligent topics, texts and activities between upper-intermediate/advanced materials and those for beginner/elementary. It seems that the level of language proficiency determines how similar adult learners (often 18 to 40 years old) are treated.

EFL learners and teachers, on the other hand, seem to find texts which focus on everyday interaction in the UK or USA to be interesting but not relevant enough (see Part 3 of this book for reports from various areas of the world). Dat (2006a) explores issues in developing localized materials and lists six common drawbacks in which global coursebooks, for example, misrepresent the world in which EFL learners live (see also Dat 2006b on stereotyping) or fail to cater for local learners' needs for EFL. The overseas teachers and students in our survey commented that they would like to see more topics related to their lives. They would welcome more interesting texts that would stimulate their thinking. They also pointed out that they would appreciate coursebooks catering for different learning styles and offering more flexibility for teachers and students so that they can be 'owners of learning, not slaves of textbooks', as a Chinese teacher expressed in our questionnaire.

Going through responses in our survey, we felt that no matter how good the materials may be, they could never manage to satisfy the different needs and wants that come from the different learning contexts, learning styles, cultural norms and experiences of each individual learner. It would be simply unrealistic to expect global materials to satisfy all the needs and wants of learners. Instead, as Tomlinson (2006) points out, every party involved in materials production and consumption should take their share of responsibility. Learning would be far more effective if:

> curriculum developers and materials writers started to cater more to divergent needs and wants, if teachers more readily and confidently adapted materials for their specific learners and if learners are encouraged and helped to make more decisions for themselves. (Tomlinson 2006: 1)

In addition, we would like to argue strongly that learners are more likely to succeed if curriculum developers, materials writers and teachers all try to ensure effective intake that leads to language acquisition as the most important goal rather than focusing solely on providing the 'required' input and assuming that teaching will lead to learning. This means that we need to evaluate if the current coursebooks are effectively facilitating intake, language acquisition and development.

Are these coursebooks effective in terms of second language acquisition? What are the strengths and weaknesses of currently published coursebooks?

Our Evaluation of Materials

An evaluation of a sample of ELT materials used in the UK

In order to find out about the degree of match between currently used GE/EFL materials and what we know about acquisition and development (Ellis in press; Tomlinson 1998b, Tomlinson in press, see also Chapter 1 of this volume) we took at random seven Student Books of young adult/adult courses (see 'Key to materials evaluated' below). We had three conditions for our selection:

Condition 1: we have not used the books ourselves
Condition 2: samples should represent a range of different UK publishers
Condition 3: samples should spread across all the levels.

Apart from the above three conditions, we should stress that these courses were selected at random and that no claim is being made about their typicality.

Key to materials evaluated
Material 1 (Beginner) = Crace, A. & Quintana, J. (2006), *Reach* Book 1. Oxford University Press.
Material 2 (Elementary) = Le Maistre, S. & Lewis, C. (2002), *Language to Go* (Elementary). Longman Pearson Educational
Material 3 (Low Intermediate) = McCarthy, M., McCarten, J. & Sandiford, H. (2006), *Touchstone* Book 3. Cambridge University Press.
Material 4 (Intermediate) = Harmer, J. (2004), *Just Right*. Marshall Cavendish.
Material 5 (Upper Intermediate) = Kay, S., Hird, J. & Maggs, P. (2006), *Move*. Macmillan.
Material 6 (Upper Intermediate) = Harris, M., Mower, D. & Sikoryska, A. (2006), *New Opportunities*. Pearson Longman.
Material 7 (Advanced) = Pulverness, A. (2001), *Changing Skies*. Swan.

We individually evaluated these coursebooks against the 14 criteria below (see Table 2.2), using a 10-point rating scale (minimum 1 to maximum 10). We then converted the score of 140 (10 points x 14 criteria) into 100, averaged our scores and agreed on our comments.

It is important to stress that our evaluation is only focused on the match between our 14 criteria based on SLA principles and what we see on the pages of Student Books. Our evaluation is not meant to recommend or criticize any of these coursebooks. All we are doing is presenting our pre-use evaluation of the effect we intuitively feel that these materials are likely to have on the target learners. Our selection of criteria and our use of them are inevitably subjective and can do no more than reflect our own personal views of what facilitates language acquisition and development based on our aggregate of 70 years of experience using ELT materials and researching language learning.

Table 2.2: Match between Seven Sample Coursebooks and SLA principles (score/10)

Criteria \ Materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Comments
1 To what extent do the materials provide exposure to English in authentic use?	4	3	8	8	7	8	8	Very little exposure in the lower levels. Efforts made to replicate authentic features of spoken discourse at varying level. A variety of genres covered. Materials 4, 6, 7 offer comparatively longer texts but still less than a page. Material 6 offers extensive reading in Literature Spot section at the end. Material 7 declares 'adaptation' of authentic texts
2 To what extent is the exposure to English in use likely to be meaningful to the target learners?	5	4	7	7	7	8	8	All the materials try to include personalization to a certain degree. Material 5 features a lot of universal topics in a personalised manner. Material 6 stimulates personal starts to units and often leads onto activities with real life outcome (e.g. Mod 4, 16, 3 Writing a film review). Material 7 deals with European issues meaningful to the target learners
3 To what extent are the texts likely to interest the learners?	5	5	7	8	7	8	8	Varied genre and contemporary texts in most of the materials. Possibly biased towards Western media? Materials 3 and 7 clearly specify their target learners and teaching contexts. Do teenagers really welcome the kinds of stereotypical 'Teen-age topics' in Material 1?

Criteria \ Materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Comments
4 To what extent are the activities likely to provide achievable challenges to the learners?	4	3	6	7	7	7	8	With the exception of Material 7 the books follow a PPP (Presentation, Practice and Production) approach and their main intention seems to be to teach language items and features explicitly. Stock examination type exercises (e.g. true/false, multiple choice) feature strongly and they sometimes seem to spoil the potential of engaging texts, as in Material 6 (p. 40, pp. 132–3)
5 To what extent are the activities likely to engage the learners affectively?	4	4	7	6	7	7	8	Attractive visuals, selection of engaging topics, texts and involving activities contribute to affective engagement in all the materials. Pity that language questions, comprehension checks and exercises interfere in most cases (e.g. Material 5 Unit 4, 'Lead in', Reading and Vocab 6 seem to appeal to affect but Reading and Vocab 1, 3, 4 and 5 take away the engagement). Material 7 takes a consistent text-based cognitive approach. How do the learners with other learning preferences feel?

Criteria \ Materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Comments
6 To what extent are the activities likely to engage the target learners cognitively?	4	5	7	7	7	8	9	All the materials seem to involve discussions at one point, e.g. Material 2 'L38 Big issues', Material 4 'Unit 4 Debate, role play'. Materials 6 and 7 include provocative topics and 'think' questions. Tips from a language corpus in Material 3 may be welcomed by those who are interested
7 To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for learners to make discoveries about how English is used?	4	5	7	7	7	9	7	Materials 1–4 seem to be basically based on the PPP approach. Material 3 has some discovery activities (e.g. finding and thinking about 'used to' and 'would' on p. 36). Material 4 uses texts to find examples of lexical chunks and then encourages making use of a Mini Reference Book: a good recycling idea. Material 5 has useful language awareness activities but their focus is on form and not on use. Material 6 offers very useful discovery activities which really get the learners to think about how English is used

Criteria \ Materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Comments
8 To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for meaningful use of English?	4	6	7	7	7	8	8	Discussions, debate, personalized speaking and writing activities in all the materials. Material 5 has some varied and useful activities for production (e.g. Unit 4 'Writing a letter of complaint', Module 2 Extra practice). Materials 6 and 7 are designed to ensure real-life outcomes as a result of speaking/writing
9 To what extent do the materials provide opportunities for the learners to gain feedback on the effectiveness of their use of English?	4	4	6	6	6	7	7	At lower levels, the only feedback seems to be answer keys or teachers' feedback. Some interesting writing like writing gripes and blog page in Material 3 which uses pair work for comparison but does not go any further. In Material 4, prediction, comparison with examples (e.g. listening17 U4) could provide varied feedback. In Material 6 and 7 activities are sequenced so learners receive feedback in various forms
10 To what extent are the materials likely to sustain positive impact?	5	6	7	7	7	8	7	All the materials seem to try to vary their format to a certain degree. Materials 4, 5, 6 and 7 are mainly based on interesting texts which are exploited in different kinds of activities

Criteria \ Materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Comments
11 To what extent do the materials help the learners to make use of the English-speaking environment outside the classroom?	3	3	6	6	6	7	7	It is not evident that any of the sample materials try to make use of the English-speaking environment outside the classroom though texts assume the outside world. Material 3 uses the Internet and talks about American usage of language but all the activities seem to be for classroom sessions
12 To what extent do the materials help the learners to operate effectively in the English-speaking environment outside the classroom?	3	5	6	6	6	7	7	None of the materials appear to make explicit connections to how the classroom learning can be applied outside the classroom. In Material 1, not much consideration seems to be given to appropriacy or effectiveness of language use (e.g. some of the expressions taught could be considered inappropriately blunt). Material 4 tries repeated exposure with consciousness raising (e.g. Unit 4 17, 18, 28). Material 6 tries to prepare learners for real life interaction (e.g. 'Communication Workshop' section of Material 6)

Criteria \ Materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Comments
13 To what extent do the materials treat English as an international language?	3	5	5	5	6	8	7	Some of the characters are from different cultures and in some units there are photos and features on different countries in all the materials. These non-native faces and places, however, are often associated with tourist attractions (e.g. Material 1). Material 6 has a section on English as an International Language (p. 52), showing how English has spread around the world and considers positive and negative implications. Material 7 often deals with European issues using English as a lingua franca
14 To what extent do the materials provide opportunities for cultural awareness?	3	6	6	6	6	9	9	Five out of seven sample materials deal with culture in some ways. Some explore more deeply implicit subcultures (e.g. Material 5 different family activities; Material 6 Module 10, 39 'Conflict Resolution'; Material 7 Unit 5). 'Culture Corner' in Material 6 is useful. Would have been interesting if Material 3 showed some interesting language use for culturally tricky situations such as requests and refusal
Total (out of 100)	37	44	65	62	64	76	74	

Looking at the scores, there seems to be a general gradation of scores from lower to higher level. This may reflect the amount of restriction imposed on materials writers due to learners' limited language ability. Moreover, we would like to stress again that our criteria were very much related to our own views about what fosters language and development and did not include such conventional criteria as those relating to the clarity of grammar instruction, the attractiveness of the appearance or the quality of examination preparation.

Summary of our views of the main strengths and weaknesses of the sample

There is no way that we can claim that our selection of material to evaluate is representative of materials currently in use for GE and for EFL nor that our evaluation of these materials is at all objective. Based on our criterion-referenced evaluation of sample materials, however, we have noted the following tendencies.

The materials developers have provided a variety of contemporary topics, texts and genres as well as texts with universal interest. E-mails, blogs, film reviews, SMS as well as soap storylines, magazine, news and book extracts provide an up-to-date flavour of authentic language in real life use. It was also encouraging to find some affectively and cognitively engaging texts in Materials 4, 5, 6 and 7. Coursebooks have been criticized for avoiding taboo topics (Helgesen 2007; Viney 2007), for using mainly trivial topics (Tomlinson *et al.* 2001) and for painting idealized pictures of English-speaking countries but we found some attempts to deal with serious issues such as war, conflict and contemporary history (Materials 4, 6 and 7).

From the perspective of SLA principles, however, we do question the validity of the brevity of the texts in most of the materials, even at an Upper Intermediate Level (e.g. Material 5). Material 6 does have a Literature Spot but even then the texts are never longer than one page. Long texts often contain redundancy, recycling and gradual build-up that could allow a rich exposure to language in real life use. A short and snappy succession of lots of different short texts and activities in a unit could give learners and teachers an impression of 'too many activities to go through' (this is a quotation from our survey).

It was noticeable that the lower-level books appear to treat the learners as being low level in experience, intellect and maturity (e.g. Materials 1 and 2). We felt that the topics tend to be trivial and the activities are unlikely to stimulate the learners to think or feel. The two higher-level books (Materials 6 and 7) have much more serious topics and much more involving activities. Yet the learners using Material 7 are not necessarily any more experienced or intelligent than the learners using Material 1. Our survey among the teachers and students revealed that many of them find the materials to be too easy, irrelevant and boring. These comments may indicate the necessity for more exploration of ways of providing affectively and cognitively engaging and challenging materials to young adult/adult learners with low language levels.

The selection of affectively and cognitively engaging texts is vital in ensuring language acquisition and development but how we exploit the texts may be even more crucial. In our criterion-referenced evaluation of seven sample

materials, the texts in most cases seem to be presented as opportunities to experience teaching points being 'used' rather than as opportunities for exposure to language in authentic use with the possibility of affective and cognitive engagement. This invariable tendency in all the materials except for Material 7 may mean that materials writers are focusing on providing pre-determined input rather than on facilitating intake, language acquisition and development. Such a concern for input seems to invariably result in materials featuring far more language practice exercises than language use activities (see Tomlinson and Masuhara in Chapter 9 in this book; Tomlinson *et al.* 2001).

There also seems to be an obligation for the writers to provide opportunities to include stock examination type exercises (e.g. true/false, multiple choice, matching, gap filling, sentence completion). This could reflect the fact that users in the EFL contexts strongly request exam preparation. These exercises, however, often seem to inhibit the cognitive and affective engagement of learners as can be seen with the true/false questions immediately after a poem in Material 6 (p. 40) and the multiple-choice questions after an engaging story in Material 6 (pp. 132–3). Since there are no SLA studies which support the positive effect of exam preparation exercises (Krashen in press; Ellis in press), it would be self-defeating if materials producers are sacrificing aspects of the materials that are widely believed to facilitate SLA in order to satisfy 'market demands'.

Earlier in this chapter, it was noted that the same coursebooks are used for GE and for EFL contexts. All the seven sample materials received low grades for helping learners to make use of the English-speaking environment outside the classroom. In GE contexts especially, the learners could be involved in projects outside the classroom but none of these materials made use of television, radio, the press, the cinema, the web or face-to-face interaction with English speakers. Even in EFL contexts there is usually some English in the environment which the coursebooks could help learners to make use of.

Earlier in this chapter we reported that our survey had indicated that both GE and EFL learners seem to request more 'grammar', the meaning of which is rather unclear. The materials producers' response has traditionally been to provide a lexical and grammar syllabus using a PPP (Presentation, Practice and Production) approach in which language items and features are explicitly taught. Such an approach was based on the traditional studies of written language. All the sample materials except for Material 7 basically rely on this PPP approach in dealing with grammar, even though there is no evidence that such an approach in any way facilitates language acquisition and development.

The authors noted some interesting new developments, however, in that five out of seven samples did include language awareness sections. This trend seems to reflect the recent shift in our view of language description. Corpus-based studies of language have been demonstrating that levels of language traditionally considered to be separate (e.g. grammar and vocabulary) are in fact closely interwoven in the construction of meanings and of texts, both spoken and written (Carter and McCarthy 1997). Such a view of language calls for more holistic exploration of language in use in social and cultural contexts and

the Language Awareness Approach (Bolitho *et al.* 2003) is a pedagogic answer to such a call.

Language Awareness offers opportunities for affective engagement, personal investment and the raising of self-esteem (Donmall 1985: 7). It also helps learners to notice for themselves how language is typically used so that they will note the gaps and 'achieve learning readiness' (Tomlinson 1994: 122–3). It also nurtures 'learners' cognitive skills such as connecting, generalizing and hypothesizing, and helping learners to become independent with positive attitudes towards the language and learning the language beyond the classroom' (Tomlinson in Bolitho *et al.* 2003: 252).However, some of the language awareness sections in the five samples seem closed in a sense that pre-determined answers are made available (Material 3 and 4). Nonetheless, we welcome this recent development in helping learners to make discoveries for themselves and especially the exploration of corpus-data-based material in Material 3 and the way that Materials 6 and 7 seem to manage genuinely open exploration of language in a skilful way.

We have no intention of providing detailed critiques of each of the courses but we have specified below those characteristics of the courses which stood out to us as likely to facilitate or inhibit language acquisition and development.

Material 1

- Has an interesting storyline and the dialogues try to simulate authentic features.
- Includes topics such as fashion, celebrity and parents but seems to have a British and North American focus with limited coverage of the other parts of the world.
- From our own experience of teaching teenagers we wondered if this course could achieve real affective and cognitive engagement. Most of the exercises seemed mechanical and trivial, though some of them are personalized (e.g. 'Which form of transport would you like to try? Why?' p. 36).

Material 2

- Short and snappy units with wide coverage of contemporary topics with attractive photos.
- Slightly simplistic but inclusion of social/cultural appropriacy in L27, work in L36 and big issues in L38.
- Most of the exercises are very easy but some attempts are made to personalize them (e.g. 'Give advice to some foreign friends coming to visit your family' on p. 65).
- Many mechanical gap-filling and grammar exercises which are unlikely to engage the learners.

Material 3

- Contemporary and varied texts (e.g. email, internet, blog, magazine) in the North American context.

- Some interesting real life production activities like writing gripes, blog page, plus personalised discussion topics (e.g. 'How do you wish your life were different?' on p. 76).
- Discussion questions are interesting but reporting the result of discussions to the class may not be the best real life outcome.
- Lexical advice from the corpus is interesting but could interfere with affective engagement or language awareness.
- Lots of gap-filling and conventional exercises which are unlikely to engage the learners.
- Heavy on giving lexical explanation, and memorization of frequently used chunks.

Material 4

- Long, varied and engaging texts (e.g. the war in Yugoslavia on p. 155). The texts are possibly more suited for Western intellectual adults though.
- Quite a lot of activities which are real-life like and personalised (e.g. 'Which of the pictures is most like where you live? What differences are there between your home and the one in the picture?' p. 49).
- Basically PPP but use of texts for discovery and also use of Mini Reference book for grammar ensure repeated exposure with progression.
- Language awareness activities seem to be often at a rather superficial level e.g. 'How many examples of comparative and superlative adjectives can you find in the text?' p. 39.

Material 5

- Lots of universally engaging human stories and personalised activities. Good to see the sources printed next to texts.
- There are many useful language awareness activities which get the learners to discover things about language use for themselves (e.g. Direct v indirect questions on p. 36). Even so most of the activities focus only on form (e.g. there are no questions about when and why you would use conditionals on p. 16).
- Personalized life-related questions are engaging, e.g. Unit 4 Lead in 1, Reading and vocab 6. It is a pity though that the engagement is often disrupted by language questions and comprehension checks as in Unit Reading and Vocabulary 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
- For an Upper Intermediate Level book the texts seem surprisingly short and simple.

Material 6

- The writers seem to be well aware of the recommendations made in current literature by methodologists and theorists and have applied principles of language awareness, cultural awareness and English as an international language to their development of materials.
- Lots of long, contemporary and engaging texts with an authentic feel.

- A Literature Spot section encourages extensive reading.
- Personalised start of units, followed by activities that lead to real life outcomes, e.g. Mod 4, 16.
- The Communication Workshop section is unique and very useful for language awareness of language in use.
- Sensitive treatment of English as an international language on p. 52.
- An interesting and useful Culture Corner and a useful inclusion of social/historical issues (e.g. Module 10).

Material 7

- Also demonstrates knowledge, awareness and experience of relevant theories and practice.
- Well-selected realistic texts for the specific target learners.
- Deals with serious issues and is designed to make learners think and feel.
- Activities are carefully and skilfully sequenced to facilitate language acquisition and educational development, often using peers in giving feedback and providing opportunities for communication using English as a lingua franca.
- All the units, however, seem to favour cognitive, analytical and thorough readers?

What We Would Like to See

Hitomi Masuhara's suggestions for improvements

As a materials writer and a researcher myself, I find materials development to be exciting but challenging. My evaluation and comments in this chapter were a record of my enquiry into what exactly GE and EIL materials might be able to provide.

As a user of EIL, I would like to see GE/EFL materials which:

- introduce interesting people and their views and opinions from different ethnic groups (e.g. novels, articles, news reports) as well as from British or American points of view
- offer opportunities for language/cultural/critical awareness that helps learners to reflect on their own use of language as well as those of others (Material 6 Culture Corner and Language Awareness sections seemed to me to be an attempt in this direction)
- explore different varieties of language (e.g. social, ethnic, gender, age)
- offer opportunities to consider effective ways of communication with people with various backgrounds and sense of values
- help teachers and learners to realize that there are no neutral, correct and perfect language users.

As a teacher/lifelong learner, I would welcome materials which:

- are produced after intelligent and critical appreciation of theories of language learning and teaching
- provide ready resources that are up-to-date, varied and affectively and cognitively engaging (e.g. flexi resource material on the web with suggested procedures?)
- offer creative ways of satisfying the cognitive level of young adult/adult learners with limited language ability
- facilitate learner development (e.g. in information navigation, in learning strategies)
- are carefully designed to ensure maximum intake and yet are flexible and user-friendly
- entertain, intrigue and inspire teachers as well as learners
- respect and further develop learners' intelligence and creativity.

Brian Tomlinson's suggestions for improvements
I would particularly welcome GE/EFL materials which:

- not only focus on helping learners to become accurate and fluent but also help them to become appropriate and effective communicators as a result of placing production activities within a clearly defined context and of specifying target outcomes
- provide ways of helping the teacher to give outcome related feedback and of helping learners to gain information on the effectiveness of their task performance through, for example, applying evaluation criteria before, during and after production
- make use of L1s, of visuals, of mental imaging, of inner speech and of learner prior experience to enable linguistically low level learners to participate in activities which match their intellectual and emotional maturity
- reduce the number of language items to be taught and learned and focus more on increasing learner exposure to language in use and learner discovery and exploration of language input meaningful to them
- provide more opportunities for extensive reading, listening and viewing
- provide greater exposure to non-native speakers of English using it effectively as a lingua franca
- include activities requiring learners to seek and explore English input in the environment outside the classroom
- include activities which require the learners to use English to achieve communicative outcomes outside the classroom.

Our Conclusions

GE materials and EFL materials cater for different contexts. By trying to satisfy two different groups of learners, coursebooks seem to be unable to set clear objectives and to choose suitable approaches. As a result, neither GE nor EFL users seem to feel that their materials completely satisfy their needs and wants.

Materials producers on the other hand may feel that they cannot possibly meet the specific needs and wants of different users and, at the same time, make materials production to be economically viable.

We believe, however, that it would be possible for commercially published coursebooks to satisfy learning principles and incorporate user flexibility whilst still providing the attractive, credible and trialled materials that they are so successful at doing. It should be also possible for curriculum developers, administrators and teachers to try to focus more on how to maximise intake rather than concentrating on language item coverage. The first step toward such a direction could be to look at the current state of GE/EFL materials in the light of user feedback and to evaluate our current provision against major principles of second language acquisition and development. We would be delighted if readers of this chapter have been inspired to do so.

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Chapter 3

Materials for Teaching English to Young Learners

Wendy Arnold and Shelagh Rixon

Introduction: the Scope of this Chapter

EYL, for the purposes of this chapter, means English for Young Learners, that is, for children within the age range that attends elementary or primary school. Precise ages differ from country to country, but this period of schooling can involve children from as young as four or five up to eleven or twelve. The term 'YL' will therefore refer to children in this range.

English as a foreign or a second language?

EYL may be taught in contexts where English is seen as a foreign language – that is where it has no widespread or official role in a country - or in contexts where it is given the status of a second language. However, the distinctions these days are not so clear cut. For example, in countries such as Bangladesh or Sri Lanka where English is generally considered a second language, there may be great differences in the roles and 'visibility' of English. In rural areas the contact with the language outside the classroom may be so minimal that the conditions in which it is being learned are more like those of a foreign language (Rixon 1999b: vi–viii). On the other hand, in Scandinavian countries, where English is technically a foreign language, the access to the language through the media and the standards achieved in the school system give English perhaps a greater currency than it has in some 'second language' countries. For many children in foreign language situations Cummins's (1984) BICS – Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills – may be thought appropriate, whereas for those children (for example, primary schoolchildren in Anglophone Cameroon) whose present or future education should be through the medium of English, materials which promote CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) are clearly needed. We surveyed materials that were in use in both types of context.

Public and private

Where public systems of schooling are active in language teaching, private institutions usually endeavour to offer more. Mainstream private primary schools tend to devote more hours to language learning and give it a higher priority in

the curriculum. Additionally, in many contexts there is a vigorous private language institute sector ready to succeed commercially by offering children and their parents the chance to supplement the language learning that takes place in mainstream school. In fact, in countries where a large percentage of the children learning English in primary school are also attending out-of-school lessons, a major problem has been created with regard to evaluating the effectiveness of English teaching in mainstream schools. It is virtually impossible to disentangle the learning that has taken place in the two domains.

Historical background

In order to understand how EYL materials of today have developed and diversified it may be useful to have some historical background. One of the most salient facts is that in the last 25 years there has been an extraordinary increase in the provision of EYL materials worldwide. In the early 1980s relatively few countries supported the teaching of English as a Foreign Language in publicly funded primary schools, but in the twenty-first century the situation is that most countries are either already teaching YLE in state schools or are in the early stages of planning to do so, with private institutions following suit. Triggers for the growth in interest were in some cases politico-economic, as in the late 1980s and early 1990s with those countries which left the orbit of the Soviet Union and in which the introduction of ELY was part of a wider educational reform, in part symbolizing an opening out towards a new internationalism. In many other countries in this period, English became the favoured language for primary school learning because it was perceived as the passport to global communication and therefore to increased personal and national prosperity. A main driving force in this regard was parental demand often fuelled by the belief that 'Younger is Better' when it comes to language learning. Another source of motivation at an official level was a view that for young children learning another language has an educational value in itself, seen both in cognitive and in personal development terms – breaking down barriers and widening children's horizons. A less up-beat reason for introducing English at primary school level in some countries has been the view that the results of starting to learn it only at secondary school level have not been satisfactory. Introducing English in the primary school is in such cases seen as offering a double advantage: the number of years available for learning the language can be extended, and, as mentioned above, younger children are seen as particularly effective language learners, 'Younger is Better'. It may be debated how far all these beliefs and perceptions are well founded (Rixon 1992 and 1999b; Moon and Nikolov 2000) but nonetheless they are the basis for the decisions made by authorities in many countries.

One feature that is common to many contexts is the speed at which EYL has been introduced into mainstream education by the authorities. This has often outpaced the teacher education and creation of suitable materials that ideally should prepare the ground for such an innovation. Debates have raged and different choices have been made about who in these circumstances are the most suitable teachers for YL – language specialists who may not have worked

with young children before or mainstream primary teachers who may not have worked with a foreign language before? 'Suitable materials' here, therefore often means materials that are not only child-friendly but also teacher-friendly, with the capacity to support and scaffold the early efforts of teachers who, in one way or another, are inexperienced in the field of EYL. Teachers in many contexts, especially in public primary schools, have acknowledged their need for support both in the English they are to use in class and in the methodology that is appropriate for teaching English to children. 'The textbook as agent of change' (Hutchinson and Torres 1994) has therefore been a major role for YL materials in the last 25 years. New ideas have largely been carried to the YL teaching profession by successful and influential course materials. Publishers who wish to succeed in a market in which many teachers are not yet very experienced in the field need to put major effort into supplying Teachers' Guides that are clearly written, comprehensive and full of teaching advice, even if this often makes them several times the length of the pupils' materials.

Writers of Young Learners materials come from diverse backgrounds. While it is true that successful professional ELT writers for other age groups have been able to create viable courses for children, some of the most interesting and attractive work is that by writers with training and experience in general primary education. Ideas which are now accepted as EYL orthodoxy can be directly traced to common practice in general primary education, often UK based primary education. An example is the way in which many teachers first became aware of topic-based teaching through *Stepping Stones* (originally published by Collins in 1990). The use of stories can also be traced to general primary practice, and bringing cross-curricular topics into English lessons is another clear example. Tensions can arise where writers with a predominantly L1 primary background are not sufficiently aware of the need to keep the language content of materials 'under control', but it is one of the roles of editors to keep the balance in course materials between linguistic loading and interest and depth of subject matter.

International, local and 'glocal' materials

It is often the case that, when EYL is newly introduced into a state system and context-specific materials are in short supply, agreements are made between the educational authorities and international publishers for bought-in international materials to be used (e.g. *Chatterbox* in Greece, *Tip Top* in the Baltic States in the 1990s). In other cases, materials intended for an international market have been adapted by local writers to suit the particular teaching context – so-called 'glocal' materials. An example is the adaptation of *Gogo Loves English* currently used in parts of China. The tendency is for use of international or 'glocal' materials to be phased out in the state schools as EYL becomes more established, allowing local writers and local publishing houses to take the lead. Another relevant development seen particularly during the 1990s and the early part of the twenty-first century has been in large-scale textbook projects supported by international agencies such as the UK Department for International Development, the British Council or the Soros Foundation, in which local primary school teachers showing promise in materials writing were offered

training, often abroad, on writing for publication. Examples are the team who created *Let's Learn English* for Sri Lanka or the Russian teachers who created *Millie.* Projects like these, in which primary teachers are the writers, often provide a welcome contrast from previous practices in countries in which materials once tended to be created by expatriate writers or local academics with little or no relevant school experience.

What is Current Thinking in YL Teaching?

Issues in YL teaching are perhaps even more complex than those in the teaching of languages to older learners. In most societies children have even less of a voice than older learners about what happens in their language learning. These learners are, however, at a crucial point in their lives, in the early stages of their cognitive and affective development, and many of their English language teachers also have responsibility for their general all-round education.

Three developmental theories have had a substantial influence on discussion of what is desirable in YL teaching. They were part of the academic debate about EYL even in the 1980s and 1990s but recently seem to have found their way more fully into the rationales behind newly created materials. This is a sign, perhaps, that YL teaching is better established and has 'come of age' in many contexts so that teachers are professionally prepared and willing to consider values which go beyond the minimally informed language teaching that may have marked their early years in EYL. The theories are:

i) Piaget's sequential developmental stages, especially as re-visited and analysed by Donaldson (1978: 131–40), whereby development in cognition only occurs by understanding, adapting and continually modifying knowledge. Donaldson's contribution, like those below, emphasizes the importance of other people as mediators in this process.
ii) Vygotsky's (1978: 90) 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD) identifying a gap between what the YL have learnt from their own experience and what they could achieve with the help of others, seeming to emphasize the importance of social interaction with language being the 'tool of thought' (Brewster 1991: 3).
iii) Bruner's 'scaffolding' analogy (Maybin, Mercer and Stierer 1992: 187). This defines the role of the more knowledgeable others in ZPD, with a stress on 'learning how to learn', transferable learning skills and learner autonomy (Williams and Burden 1997: 24).

All of these theories have much to say about the role of supportive 'others' in children's learning and clearly have very important implications for teacher education. A major issue for materials designers, however, is how far the development and exercise of this sort of mediation skill by teachers can reliably be built into, or supported by, materials, especially if appropriate teacher education is not available.

That said, how far do recent materials for children take into account the need for meaning-based and interaction-based approaches? EYL materials have in the past seen their share of activities reflecting quite different 'structural' approaches (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 17) reflecting Behaviouristic theories (Stern 1983: 144) and involving copious repetition and drilling. Many children's materials still have activities whose audio-lingual roots can be seen poking through, even under the brightest and most educationally worthy seeming surfaces. The debate about the value of such activities is as vivid for YL as it is for older learners, but with the added force of argument from authorities such as Donaldson (1978) that young children are supremely good at deriving meaning and guessing people's intentions from the context, but less geared to pay attention to the form of the language. In defence of the practice of repetition, however, Garvie (1990: 56–7) suggests that for a YL to 'be helped to mean', certain parts of learning need to be made 'mechanical' so that the learner can focus on the meaning rather than the form. However, the contexts in which Garvie suggests that children should repeat are not drill-like, but contexts in which children would naturally repeat, such as when 'joining in' with the repeated refrain of a story (e.g. 'Who's that on MY bridge?' in 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff').

Types of Syllabus

Several syllabus concerns which have been debated for older learners have not generally come into the Young Learners' area. For example, the 'functional' (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 17) approach describing language as 'a vehicle for the expression of functional meaning' and paying great attention to appropriacy and register has only to a small extent appeared in YL materials and there has been minimal interest in making functions of English the Major Organizing Principle of syllabuses for children's courses. This is probably because it is recognized that children do not need to negotiate such a wide range of social and register issues as older learners may.

There has been more interest in an 'interactional' approach (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 17) where language is seen as 'a vehicle for the realization of interpersonal relations and for the performance of social transactions between individuals', valuing communication for exchanging views and for social purposes. However, particularly 'child friendly' organizing principles such as Topics have become more prominent for YL courses than they have for courses for older learners. It is true, however, that many ostensibly Topic-based syllabuses have skilfully interwoven structural progression within them. Structural grading is, in fact, found in many YL course materials, both local and international, and practice varies greatly over the extent to which this is disguised among other organizing principles. Other powerful ways of building in coherent 'threads' that make a course more meaningful to children have been story-line and character. Recently, there has been some interest in Tasks as a major syllabus strand (Willis 1996), along with various degrees of Learning to Learn.

Incorporating Broader Educational Values through CLIL

In the twenty-first century there has been a major movement, towards EYL courses in which the language emerging from content areas such as science or art activities drives the teaching in an approach known as CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). This has had particular resonance in European countries such as Hungary, Switzerland and Italy. See Kovács (2005) for a very interesting set of articles describing different CLIL projects in these contexts. However, the CLIL approach is not exclusively European and builds on research and thinking that has been going on for at least 30 years. See, for example, Tongue (1991) for an account of his attempts to bring primary practice and language teaching closer together in Hong Kong and Singapore during the 1970s and 1980s. As suggested above, the CLIL approach operates not only at syllabus level but very much at the level of teacher skills in mediating language, curriculum content and the development of inquiry and research skills in children. It may therefore be described as an approach to language teaching that is fully embedded in wider educational values. Outside the contexts already mentioned, Malaysia has introduced the teaching of Science and Maths through the medium of English from Primary One classes and materials are being developed to meet these needs.

Reconciling Meaning and Language Load

An issue with all meaning-oriented ways of creating the framework for a language course is the greater technical difficulty they present in matters of sequencing and 'dosing' language items across course units, particularly where recycling of vocabulary or structures is concerned. It can be difficult to ensure that language that fits particularly well with one topic area is not lost sight of as other topics come into play.

The above trends and debates are relevant for the sort of materials that are the product of 'cutting edge' writers, often working in teams for well-resourced international publishers, but it is probably true to say that the materials created for many local markets still tend to favour the more traditional organizing principles of structural linguistic progression and vocabulary content.

Skills Development

The appropriate skills focus for EYL teaching is seen in many contexts as speaking and listening, at least at the beginning stages of learning the language. There is, however, no universal agreement on this point, even within countries. How early literacy in English should best be approached, especially for children whose L1 language is written in a non-Roman script, is an issue which many materials intended for a general international market do not address at all, but which local and 'glocal' materials cannot avoid. In Korea, for example, the single Ministry of Education sponsored textbook in use in primary schools aims to

build speaking and listening for the first two years with very limited or no exposure to the written word. In other contexts, such as parts of China, the written word is included uncontroversially in YL materials from the very beginning and in locally customized 'glocal' versions of international materials (e.g. *Gogo Loves English*) extra early literacy development material has been incorporated.

The Development of Discourse and Textual Awareness

Cameron (2003: 109) points to the need to teach YL discourse skills as well as language items. Many EYL materials, however, operate predominantly at the sentence or single utterance level rather than at the discourse level. The use of short unanalysed 'chunks' of language, otherwise known as formulaic utterances (Weinert 1995) is a well-known strategy of language learners of all ages when trying to build fluency. In many EYL materials, however, language is actually presented in short chunks. It is rare to find a course in which children are helped to move from the understanding or production of single chunks to the ability to produce substantial and coherent texts of their own, either in writing or in 'long turns' in speech. With regard to comprehension skills children tend not to be taught to cope with substantial reading texts but the situation is somewhat better with regard to giving them experience of listening to extended texts. This is especially so in those materials which make use of stories – live or as audio materials – as a vehicle for some lessons. However, in many courses even today, listening is used mainly as a way of presenting new language, and the children's listening experiences are therefore limited to hearing short utterances as models for spoken imitation.

Different Learning Styles for Different Children and Contexts

In older materials, YL were often treated as an undifferentiated group, who it was enough to motivate and delight by whatever means the author thought most effective (e.g. characters, visuals, colour, relevance, humour). However, recent developments in YL thinking have acknowledged learning differences which Gardner's (1994: 41–3) theory of 'multiple intelligence' (MI) identifies as seven different abilities, talents and mental skills used for problem solving, including intrapersonal, interpersonal, musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, spatial, linguistic and logical-mathematical. Tomlinson (1998: 17) extends the styles of learning by adding studial, experiental, analytical, global, dependent and independent, further implying that a learner's preferred style might be variable depending on 'what is being learned, where it is being learned, who it is being learned with and what it is being learned for'.

Culture-specific or Universally Child-friendly Methodologies?

Cultures as the 'context within which we exist, think, feel and relate to others' (Brown 1994: 163) have diverse values, and this includes the existence of different

pedagogic cultures. As is well documented in Alexander's (2000) comparative study of primary education in different countries, what is an accepted teaching approach in one context may be unknown or quite possibly frowned upon in another. The use of collaborative group work is one example. In language teaching, the applicability of exporting Western practices and assumptions to other cultures has long been debated (Holliday 1994; Howatt 1997: 267–8; Littlewood 2000: 31), A teacher's belief system is based on their 'goals' and 'values' (Richards and Lockhart 1996: 30–2) in relation to 'content and process of teaching and their understanding in which they work and their roles within it', implying that a teacher's role in the implementation of the syllabus influences its success. Whether language teachers are native or non-native speakers may also affect the skills, attitudes to learners and willingness to take risks that they bring to the classroom, with not all of the advantage necessarily being with the native speakers (Medgyes 1996).

Materials Evaluation

In order to inform this part of the chapter we used a questionnaire (Arnold and Rixon 2006) that was made available online to EYL professionals worldwide. We also created an evaluation grid to guide our own 'on the page' judgements of materials.

Materials in use – the professionals' views

We received responses from 76 teachers representing 28 countries (see Appendix 2 for details). We report facts and figures where they offer interesting indications, but, given that our sample of informants is a largely 'goodwill' and opportunistic one, a heavily statistical approach to analysing our data does not seem appropriate. It is the insights and verbatim comments of materials users that raise the most interesting issues.

As has been pointed out above, EYL provision is so varied across sectors and cultures that it does not make sense to seek a 'typical' use of materials. Our informants worked in the full range of educational contexts, some in both the public and private sectors. They fulfilled a number of roles, as trainers, curriculum advisers, materials writers, teachers and directors of studies. Our informants mentioned a total of 78 different courses or series. The most frequently cited were *Happy Earth* (6), and then *Backpack*, the *BUGS series*, *English Adventure*, *Go For It*, with three mentions each. Interesting anomalies on the list were courses written for older learners such as *Exchanges* and *Headway Intermediate*. Some older courses of the 1990s, such as *Chatterbox*, *Stepping Stones* and *Project English*, were still in use.

Overall, materials in use were liked by their users. Of the 103 judgements on different sets of materials, 40 (39%) were highly positive (Very Happy) and 29 (29%) positive (Happy), perhaps reflecting the fact that most of the informants had been involved in their choice. Only 5 (0.5%) were Very Unhappy.

Informants' comments on the whole reflected the current values and concerns in YL teaching as discussed above.

Most valued features

Our questionnaire provided a number of descriptive phrases that respondents could choose from in order to characterize a particular course. There was also space for their own comments on what they liked and disliked about a particular course. Taking the descriptive phrases first, the results were as follows:

Characteristic	*Total comments*
Based on fun and enjoyment	62
Emphasising listening and speaking	62
Promoting interaction in class	57
Topic-based	57
Task-based	41
Promoting systematic study of language	38
Content-based	26
Heavily vocabulary based	21
Heavily grammar based	9
Other	3

The descriptions were all associated with positive judgements of materials, except for 'heavily grammar based' which tended to be associated with negative judgements. This was in contrast with 'promoting systematic study of language' which was seen as a desirable feature. A good informative Teacher's Guide was thought to be important by the majority of respondents.

In their own comments our respondents showed their concern that materials should be at the appropriate cognitive and maturity level for the age of children. Affective values such as children's enjoyment and engagement with characters were also frequently mentioned.

> *Bright Star* applies the theory of Multiple Intelligences very well, which was the main criterion for its adoption here. (*Bright Star*, Syria, private language centre)
> They have interesting reading passages – have exercises which encourage learner participation – facilitate listening comprehension – have interesting pictures. (*Passport to English*, Cameroon, state primary school)
> Resources and activities are diversified enough to motivate the majority of children, in their differences. (*Story Magic*, Portugal, state primary school)
> Communication in English. The children really talk. (*I Spy*, France, private language centre)
> The teachers really like using this book because it is interactive, topic based, which works very well for children this age and allows for project work. (*Happy Earth.*, France, private language centre)

Issues connected with culture and representations of culture were mentioned by some:

> ... [among best features]cultural and racial diversity. (*Backpack*, Portugal, state primary school)

> ... reflect local colour and culture. (*Champions in English*, Cameroon, state primary school)
> The multi ethnic/multi cultural nature of the world today is not well represented (i.e. it's very 'Anglo Saxon). (*Bright Star*, Syria, private language centre)

Appropriate assessment material was generally appreciated when found:

> I really liked the assessment stuff in the Teacher's Book – and the 'can do' statements ... (*Join In*, Spain, private language centre)

Issues and problems arising

Materials that did not seem to 'stretch' children were criticized by a number of respondents, and boring and repetitive approaches to grammar were amongst the complaints. A number of courses were criticized for sudden jumps of level and difficulty and for unconnected introductions of new language (particularly at the higher levels).

> Each lesson has its own vocabulary, not revisited in any other units. Also, there is no progression in building up the students' four skills. From level 1 to level 4, they are all in the same pattern design, one sentence pattern, five key words and that's it. (*Smart*, Taiwan, state primary school)

Some informants had tried to use materials of which they themselves thought highly for their imaginative qualities or for the wider educational values that they embodied, but had encountered problems with parents or authorities whose more traditional expectations were not being met.

'I like the program, but we failed to implement it in my context because of parents' views of education. It's holistic and whole language based and Korean parents want translating, vocabulary study, levelling up each month, lots of fill in the blanks etc.' (*Reading Street*, South Korea, private language centre).

Conversely, others were using more traditional materials that they themselves did not like but which found favour in a particular society.

> This book has been well accepted in France as it reflects the tradition, grammar based approach used in French schools, but the teachers don't like it! ... Ready-made tests but they are not YL friendly. (*Way Ahead*, France, private language centre)

Main Features of Materials in Our Own Evaluation

An evaluation framework for our own use was created to attempt to capture the features of materials such as the underlying syllabus types (discussed above) and their rationale and philosophy, but also to investigate what was built in for both the YL and the teachers. To this end Tomlinson's (1998: 7–22) 16 'basic principles' provided a useful checklist. Taking Littlejohn's (1998: 191–3) advice,

the materials were evaluated 'as they are' and not with regard to 'what may happen in classrooms' since 'what happens in classrooms and what outcomes occur when materials are brought into use will depend upon numerous further factors, not least of which is the reinterpretation of materials and tasks by both teachers and learners ...'. The same applies to the aspects of the materials that we examined for what Littlejohn terms 'the pedagogic device', that is to say how they assist the teaching and learning of a foreign language. Following the same model, we also divided the framework into 'publication' and 'design', the former being concerned with the 'physical aspects ... and how they appear' and the latter the 'thinking underlying the materials'.

All the materials that we evaluated were published after 2000. Most were mentioned by respondents to the survey (described above) but some not mentioned were chosen for special attention by us for their promises of cutting edge pedagogy. A total of nearly 100 different courses for YL were identified and of these 16 were examined in detail as they had been mentioned by questionnaire respondents and/or were considered representative of a particular publisher.

Although many of the materials evaluated were described as for 'global' use, upon further examination it became apparent that some had specific target markets e.g. *Cool English* and *Join Us* are versions of the same materials with the former targeting Europe and the latter targeting the rest of the world. The differences in target ages for different levels are an indicator of different primary/ elementary starting ages around the globe. The degree of specificity about the relationship between age and level varies e.g. *Primary Colours gives* 5/7 – 10/11, while *Backpack* just states that it is intended for primary/elementary. The wide range of components available, either included in the basic course package or available at additional expense, may also be an indication of publishers attempting to make their materials more attractive to more prosperous areas of the world. CD ROM materials for pupils' own use are becoming increasingly common. Some recent courses (e.g. *BUGS* and *Primary Colours*) offer Web-based activities and support for teachers and pupils. Only two courses specifically mentioned resources supporting teachers' continued professional development (*Visions* and *Primary Colours*).

A summary of the findings in this area is given under the headings below:

Rationales and realizations

There was a wide range of philosophies discussed in the authors' own rationales for the materials, all in line with current YL thinking about teaching and learning. However, when the materials were investigated in more detail, their actual characteristics seemed to fall into two main groups: a) those which promoted structural/grammatical gearing up for specific tests, and b) those which were more activity based and placed less stress on linguistic content. Generally, all the materials were pitched at a cognitive level to fit the age of YL that they targeted. The cultural content was mostly generic but visually leaning towards Western cultures rather than Eastern. Most had a combination of photographic, illustrations and cartoon-type graphics, although some looked old-fashioned in their style and in the appearance of characters. Although some materials attempted

to make the characters representative of multi-cultural environments, e.g. *Stardust* and *Pop Up Now*, this was not true of all.

The language content was often not particularly 'realistic', often more what an adult might expect a YL to say, rather than the sort of language that children might genuinely use to each other. It could be that this language is influenced by the content of local or international tests which themselves are not notably geared to 'young' language. Most of the materials set up a straightforward symmetrical relationship of input and output language, in that learners were expected to make productive use of all the language items they encountered. There were few courses in which language encountered for comprehension was more extensive than that expected for output. Although lip-service was paid to task-based learning, there were very few materials which set goals in terms of achieving effective outcomes rather than just accurate and/or fluent language output.

As mentioned above, there is room for debate about at exactly what point reading and writing skills should be introduced to YL, but the systematic development of literacy in English tends to be neglected in the majority of the materials. If YL are using the materials in a context which does not use the Roman alphabet, e.g. China, Taiwan or Korea, then little or no assistance is given on how to make the children's first steps in literacy as clear and unproblematic as possible. The internationally distributed *BUGS* series, however, includes specific and careful attention to developing awareness of sound-symbol correspondences in English. In a number of East Asian countries, notable amongst them Taiwan, a version of Phonics-based teaching is widespread in locally produced primary materials, although it often seems to be a much simplified, even simplistic, version in which letter-sound correspondences are focused on usually in a,b,c order and most notice is taken of initial letters. Overall, very few materials aim to move children, even over a period of several years, towards the ability to cope with substantial quantities of written text and encourage them to 'become readers', although *Primary Colours* is a notable exception.

Most of the materials had some kind of assessment provision and often supplied assessment components at the ends of units or the back of a book. These were usually child-friendly in appearance but favoured items that it was easy to assess, reflecting sometimes trivial details of what had been covered in a teaching unit, e.g. the assessment material in *Pop Up Now*. Some materials, such as the *BUGS* series, offered very useful advice to teachers about formative and less traditional means of assessment such as observation, but also included the traditional pencil and paper tests that many teachers tend to favour (see Rea-Dickins and Rixon 1999). Some courses such as *Pingu Loves English* offered information on how the materials could prepare children for external assessment like the Cambridge ESOL Young Learners' tests.

The Teacher's Books were generally clear and the aims were set out well with notes of what activities were supposed to achieve. Very few had any explanations of likely language errors linked to the lesson.

As a large proportion of learners of English are now in EFL contexts it seems valid to look closely at how materials make the language accessible to the learn-

ers who may lack exposure to it in their daily lives. Taking into account the varying contexts and starting times for learning English, one particular set of materials, *Visions*, shows exceptional sensitivity to the fact that users might not be homogeneous and their mother tongue might not be written in the Roman alphabet. In their 'basic language and literacy' activity book there are tasks which target consciousness-raising in left-right directionality, top-bottom directionality, shape recognition, consonants and vowels (starting with m, s, t, a, b, g) copying sentences and blending to name a few. These materials are written for primary/upper/elementary children. The course materials themselves may not be ideally suited to all contexts but there is much for other materials designers to learn from.

The *Visions* course also comes with a teacher training component via CD Rom and continued professional development online. Other courses e.g. *Primary Colours* have detailed examples of how teachers can set up activities mentioned in the materials or create additional ones. These are also available online, but unless the teachers have seen a demonstration they are hard to follow. These materials, in spite of the additional support offered, are a more natural fit for teachers who already have experience and training.

Our Evaluation of Materials

Putting the results of our two investigations together the main issues that arise are:

Methods, approaches and the 'post-method' era

A number of influential strands in YL teaching have emerged since the twentieth century. The central need is that EYL materials should be child-friendly. During the 1990s much faith was put in the power of Topic-based material to make contents meaningful for children and to facilitate links with other parts of the curriculum but since then other approaches have developed. Topic-based, Task-based, Content-based/CLIL, character- and story- based materials all have as their fundamental principle a concern for meaning. Some of these approaches (such as story-based teaching) imply particular ways for teachers to act in class, but others have their roots more in decisions about syllabus and content. For example, a Topic-based course does not seem to imply any particular teaching approach and may actually be open to traditional rote-learning based vocabulary-centred approaches.

Materials which support innovatory practice or accommodate to modest expectations?

The need for materials to support new or unconfident teachers both linguistically and in methodology terms has been referred to above, but there is a negative side to this when publishers interpret it as the need to fit materials to the least well-prepared of the possible constituency. This has led to a tendency for materials in many contexts to be reduced to what is easily 'doable' rather than

to promote what would be slightly challenging to teachers yet would make a useful difference in teaching. Big international publishers as well as local publishers can on occasion self-impose limits and constrain authors to produce materials that the least confident teachers will not find off-putting. The commercial reasons for this are clear, but there surely is a 'tolerance zone' where a degree of teacher challenge is balanced by the support that Teacher's Guides can offer, so that useful advances may be made. Many Teacher's Guides rely too much on the written word alone. In these days of advanced technology, teachers could be given concrete examples by way of teaching demonstrations in formats that suit their contexts such as video, CD-Rom and downloadable ipodcasts available online.

Issues in Skills Teaching

The issues in Skills teaching have been discussed above. The systematic development of reading skills, so that YL progress beyond mere decoding to become readers capable of dealing with substantial texts and possibly even developing a taste for reading in English is a generally neglected area.

Paper-based or multimedia materials?

Cameron (2003: 244) advises that the advent of computers and the internet are 'changing the possibilities for language learning' and warns that if YL are not to feel as if they are walking 'back through time when they enter a classroom' then computers, videos and 'tools not yet invented' should be used so that school 'meshes into their lives'. Multimedia materials clearly offer considerable resources to learners who wish to work independently. However, there are pitfalls connected with working within what the computer most easily 'does well', which still tends to be setting up matching tasks and allowing short-term feedback on success on small items (see Rixon 1999a). This can easily lead us back to activity types which are repetitive and smack of Behaviourism, particularly when, as often happens, program designers are not also experts in language teaching methodology. The prevalence of interactive whiteboards in schools in prosperous countries should not be forgotten, although EYL targeted software that we have seen for this resource has so far been disappointingly Behaviourist in design.

Domination by international publishers?

Big international publishers are still creating materials which they hope will be suitable for a wide variety of contexts, but they are also continuing to work on context-specific projects in places such as Hong Kong (e.g. *Magic*) where the writing of the materials itself is closely monitored by Education Departments or Ministries of Education. The reality for the publishers in such situations is that they need to adhere to the official guidelines in order for their works to be included on the recommended lists for schools, even when these guidelines do not reflect current thinking on YL teaching. Teachers in some countries, such as Hungary, are moving away from using international materials in their

schools and local writers and publishers have worked out their own, often very innovative, paths. Textbook projects supported by funding from international agencies, such as those in Sri Lanka or Russia mentioned above, have largely run their course and the writers trained on those projects are now ready to make their contribution by creating other materials.

Team work or lone talents?

One trend seen in well-resourced international publishers is the creation of relatively large teams of writers with complementary expertise. The *BUGS* series with its large team of named contributors is a product of one such collaboration. This again marks the EYL field as one which has 'come of age' in that publishers are willing to commit considerable resources to the production of high-quality materials.

Parallel Developments

Not all the significant developments in YL teaching can be captured between the covers of a coursebook. For example, storytelling and the related use of Real Books (authentic picture storybooks not originally written for teaching purposes) are examples of ways in which YL teachers have been developing professional capacities which do not depend on textbook use – but yet may enrich it. *Tell it Again! The New Storytelling Handbook for Primary Teachers* (Ellis and Brewster 2002) is an example of a book for teachers promoting the use of Real Books as alternative or supplementary materials to a more traditional course book. *Telling Tales* (James and Superfine 2003) is another example of using traditional tales in the same way. In only one case did our questionnaire informants mention a systematic introduction of resources to allow teachers to make use of Real Books as part of their mainstream YL teaching (France – with *Tell it Again!*). A course book series which takes the power of storytelling seriously and which provides practical support to teachers taking their first steps in this area is *BUGS*. The teachers are supplied with 'story cards' – large pictorial flash cards which act both as visual aids for the children as they hear the stories and as a scaffolding and a prompt for the teachers in their narrative efforts.

Our Suggestions for Improvements

A number of materials that we have reviewed for this chapter have features that we feel could be studied and emulated with advantage by EYL writers. These will be summarized in list form after some wider issues that extend beyond teaching materials have been discussed immediately below:

The need to build bridges between what happens in primary school and secondary school English

Cameron (2003: 110) urges the importance that secondary teachers 'receive

information about the Young Learners who come to them from the primary sector' in order to 'build on early language learning'. It is still true today that in many countries the children's primary school achievements in English are largely ignored when they change schools, and this is reflected in those secondary school ELT materials which take learners 'back to zero'. In a very few countries such as Germany, secondary school syllabuses and materials are being revised in order to incorporate such a bridge (e.g. *Let's Go*).

Big principles need to be explained and exemplified clearly to teachers
Because of the variety of aims and contexts that can be connected with YL, it is not possible to lay down a single set of universal principles. However, writers need to work from principles and also to make those principles transparent to users. The most usual vehicle for this is the Teacher's Guide although good 'signalling' in the pupils' materials is also very helpful. We have mentioned above the good use of websites and video-based demonstration material that some publishers have already made.

There needs to be more teacher education linked to use and choice of EYL materials
'Face to face' teacher education is a natural extension of the use of the type of teacher education resources mentioned just above. When provided by a publisher, such training is often linked to the use of a course already adopted, but there is also a place for independent teacher education that equips teachers, in contexts where a choice of materials is possible, to make a principled evaluation of and selection from candidates.

There needs to be consideration of appropriate language models and goals
An important issue is what type of language, including pronunciation, is appropriate for twenty-first-century children preparing to enter a world in which English is an international language. As Jenkins (2000) points out, more people speak English as a second or foreign language than as a first language, and intelligible communication between non-native speakers is, for many people, the priority, rather than adherence to a particular native speaker model. Materials for adults are starting to take account of this, and perhaps it is timely to think of how it might be reflected in materials for younger learners.

Within materials themselves the following issues seem to us to be important:

- Consideration needs to be given to the appropriate order of introduction of skills for children of different ages and reading skills in particular need to be developed to a more ambitious level than most materials currently promote Conventional wisdom, working on the analogy of L1 skills development, recommends that oral/aural skills need to be established well before reading and writing are introduced. However, there may be differences in appropriate approaches according to the ages and language backgrounds of the children and this is an area that is in need of further research.

- Multi-media resources should be used to extend and enrich YL methodology rather than to turn back the clock to Behaviourist practices.
- The supply of assessment material with courses needs to go beyond trivial easy-to-test aspects of the teaching content and to develop teachers' assessment methods towards a more child-friendly approach.
- There is a need for materials which support big moral and intellectual themes and promote educational values appropriate to the age and context of the children concerned.

Conclusion

In Figure 3.1 we reproduce a Theme chart from the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) that we find exemplary. It would be interesting to see a pedagogic framework akin to that shown in Figure 3.1 used with national curricula but localized to take into consideration the needs of teachers and learners in specific contexts. The search, for all learners of a language, is for ways of promoting meaningful communication but for children this is not just a desirable facilitating and motivating factor but at the heart of what children need in order to learn at all.

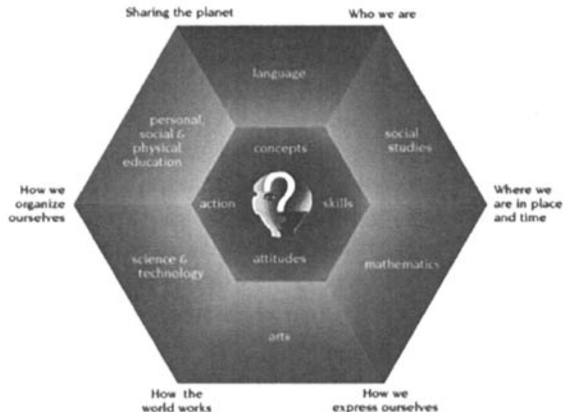

Figure 3.1: International Baccalaureate Organization's Theme chart

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Appendix 1

Materials that are mentioned in the text are listed below. They are listed alphabetically, by title rather than authors, since the title is the most salient feature and often multiple authors are involved in a course materials series.

Title	Date	Main context of use	Publishing company
Backpack	2005	International	Pearson Education
Bright Star	2005	North Africa and Middle East	Oxford University Press
BUGS series	2005	International	Macmillan English
Champions in English	2005	Cameroon	Macmillan Publishers, Cameroon
Chatterbox	1992	International	Oxford University Press
Cool English (updated version of *Join In*)	2006	International (intended for Europe)	Cambridge University Press
English Adventure	2005	International	Pearson Education

Go for It!	2nd edition, 2005	International	Thomson Publishing
Gogo Loves English	1997	International	Pearson Education, Asia
Gogo Loves English (Chinese adaptation)	1997	People's Republic of China	Pearson Education, China
Happy Earth	2002	International	Oxford University Press
Happy English		Taiwan	Hess
Headway Intermediate	1995	International (not for EYL)	Oxford University Press
I Spy	1997	International	Oxford University Press
Join In (updated to become *Cool English*)	2000	International (outside Europe)	Cambridge University Press
Join Us for English (second edition of *Join In*)	2006	International	Cambridge University Press
Let's Go!	2005	Germany	Enst Klett Verlag
Let's Learn English!	2000	Sri Lanka	Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Sri Lanka
Magic	2005	Hong Kong	Oxford University Press
Millie	2006	Russia	Titul and Brookemead Associates
Passport to English	2001	Cameroon	Macmillan Publishers, Cameroon
Pingu Loves English	2001	International	Pearson Education
Pop Up Now	2005	International	MM Publications
Primary Colours	2002	International	Cambridge University Press
Project English	1990s	International	Oxford University Press
Reading Street	New edition, 2007	Mainstream USA reading scheme	Scott Foresman

Smart	2002	Taiwan	Melody
Stardust	2005	International	Oxford University Press
Stepping Stones	1990s	International	Collins (later Pearson Education)
Story Magic	2003	2003	Macmillan ELT
Tell it Again!	2002	International	Pearson Education
Telling Tales	2003	International	Delta Publishing
Tip Top	1990s	International	Macmillan/ Prentice Hall
Visions	2006	International	Thomson Publishing
Way Ahead	New edition, 2004	International	Macmillan ELT

Appendix 2

The countries in which the questionnaire respondents worked are:

Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Laos, Mexico, Mozambique, Pakistan, People's Republic of China, Portugal, Singapore, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, UK

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Chapter 4

Materials for English for Science and Technology (EST)

Philip Skeldon

EST, was that it then?

In an article in *Forum*, the journal of the Language Centre at Sultan Qaboos University, Ramsden (2002) wrote that in the 1970s EFL teachers first ventured out of the Arts Faculty and the 'gentle landscape of language and literature' into 'the land beyond the mountains inhabited by illiterate and savage tribes called scientists, businessmen and engineers'. In the late 1970s and early 1980s there was a plethora of EST titles such as Oxford University Press's *Focus* series, or Longman's *Nucleus* series and coursebooks with titles beginning '*English for* ...'. However, three decades later, this flood of material seems to have been just a flash flood, leaving behind just the odd bit of debris. None of the catalogues of the major publishers seem to include any '*English for* ...' titles and ESP sections only contain titles for Business English. The catalogue of the Oxford English Book Centre for 2005 includes only eight titles, four of which were originally published in 1983 or before. There are three new titles but they are published by small specialist publishers. I read somewhere that EST was 'moribund'. Now, it seems to be like the parrot in the Monty Python sketch, dead, expired, late ..., etc. Many tertiary education institutions now use general English coursebooks in their foundation year programmes. But are we to assume that the perceived need for help with the language of science and technology has somehow disappeared in the new millennium? Are we to believe that it is possible to lay a foundation without any reference to the structure it supports, or the occupants of the structure and the different purposes they may use it for?

Some of the disenchantment with the materials published in the 1970s and 1980s was undoubtedly due to the poor quality of many of the titles. These were important pioneering efforts in a new field and the following paragraphs should not be seen as a sort of 'knocking shop'. Hindsight should not allow us to be superior at all, but it might be instructive if we examine some of the flaws in the previously published materials so that we can understand where EST went wrong.

First of all, the writers seemed to have some problems with choosing topics for the students to do their learning activities with. In many instances, the writers failed to negotiate the tricky line between the boringly familiar and the

bafflingly new. So, we often had topics chosen from elementary, introductory sections which led to such activities like describing the water cycle, which the students had been bored with since secondary or even primary school. Or, they dealt with the first topics of the subject course like this extract from a reading activity in *Infotech* (Santiago 2000) for students of computing.

> Typically, a mouse is a palm-sized device, slightly smaller than a pack of cards. On top of the mouse, there are one or more buttons for communicating with the computer. A 'tail' or wire extends from the mouse to a connection on the back of the computer.
>
> The mouse is designed to slide around on your desktop. As it moves, it moves an image on the screen called a pointer, or mouse cursor ...
>
> Similarly, the mouse is used to grab one corner of the image (say a square) and stretch it into another shape (say a rectangle). Both of these actions are more difficult to perform with a keyboard ...

It seems obvious that in this day and age almost everyone is familiar with the mouse and its functions, and will not be impressed if he/she is asked to read about it ... with an English teacher. Also, ironically, the students will almost certainly know the vocabulary of computing but may not know words like 'palm', 'button', 'wire', 'extend', 'slide', 'stretch', 'shape', 'rectangle', 'perform'. In my experience, students often know or seem able to acquire the technical vocabulary of their subject. In Oman, the conversation of motor mechanics is in Arabic with the occasional 'carburettor', 'distributor', 'lead' thrown in. At my college, the Sri Lankan cleaners have an ability to generate conversation about cricket by using phrases like 'England very problem, no strike bowler'. 'Low score match. Bad wicket.' Again, the technical vocabulary of the sport is not the problem.

In contrast to the overfamiliar topic of the mouse, there are often bafflingly unfamiliar topics. *Interface* (Hutchinson and Waters 1984) seems to assume the students will share an interest in industrial archaeology and the world of the steam engine, when they read a text about Newcomen's steam engine. The IELTS practice book that my college uses as a sort of EAP book introduces the students to problems like the erosion of river banks, or the controlled reintroduction of wolves into the USA. It is something of a struggle for the teacher and the Omani students, who have no experience of rivers or wolves and their habitat ... and even less interest!

Sometimes the texts were so general and banal that they were empty verbalizing without any clear purpose. For example, this text from Bolitho and Sandler (1986),

> A great deal is known about our solar system. We know that there are nine planets and that life probably only exists on Earth. So, there are no Martians. We know a lot about the sizes and atmospheres of other planets ... We have even measured their polar and equatorial diameters. (Bolitho and Sandler 1986)

Furthermore, writers seemed to assume that because the students had limited English, their knowledge of science was also limited, or even their intelligence!

The challenge seems to be to find a different angle on the information. I have used texts about the inventions and discoveries of the past like Priestley's and Lavoisier's discovery of oxygen, or Eratosthenes' calculation of the diameter of the earth, or the impact of a meteor in Saudi Arabia which is recorded in the legends of this part of the world. Another angle is the development of new technology, especially cars, hybrid cars, computer controlled cars, etc, or offbeat subjects like an experiment to find out why the Bedouin do not suffer from the heat although they wear black robes. *Infotech* (Santiago 2000) has an interesting text about computers for people with different disabilities like blind students, or Thalidomide victims with no arms using a keyboard with their toes. This offers the opportunity for the student to read something challenging and interesting but different from his/her computer course, bring their technical background to bear and recycle a lot of useful technical and 'sub-technical' vocabulary.

Often, the level of the language in the materials was way beyond the students. For example, this text from (Glendinning 1974) was considered to be at 'intermediate level' and 'largely self-explanatory' to the students and the teachers:

> The chassis of a heavy commercial vehicle consists of a strong steel frame which is separate from the body. The two side members are riveted to several cross members. This type of frame must have enough strength to resist
>
> a) bending
> b) twisting
> c) shearing
>
> The side and cross members are usually formed of channel section steel girders to increase their strength and decrease their weight. (*Focus on Mechanical Engineering*)

No general English coursebook at intermediate level will have introduced the students to 'chassis', 'rivet', 'member', 'frame', 'resist', 'bending', 'twisting', 'shearing', 'channel', 'section (in this sense)' or 'girder', which make up 20 per cent of the items in this paragraph.

In most of this first generation of EST textbooks, there was little attention to reading. The first editions of *Nucleus* had no reading passages at all, although later editions did have some tacked on. There were no pre-reading exercises, no follow-up activities and no introduction to the frequently recurring text types in texts about science and technology, such as Experiment – Method – Result – Interpretation, or Theory – Hypothesis – Evidence, as listed by Davies (1995). The texts were often written to exemplify some aspect of English and were highly contrived and artificial, for example, this text from *Nucleus*, which is from a unit on the notion of 'Location'.

> The house is a single storey building with a square-shaped plan. It contains seven rooms. The entrance which is located on the south side leads to a hall.

> On the left of the hall is the living room and beyond that, in the north west corner, there is the dining room. The kitchen is next to the dining area. A terrace is situated next to the dining area ... A toilet is located in the centre of the house.

Why say 'square-shaped' instead of square? More important, the text breaks the rules of cohesion because it does not follow either the bird's eye view outline of the plan, or the pedestrian view which leads us from one room to the next. If it did, each sentence would begin with the room where the reader is at that point, and we would not have successive sentences beginning 'The kitchen ...', 'A terrace ...' and 'A toilet ...'.

These problems probably occur because the authors were using a notional syllabus.

Producing a text with lots of examples of 'location' phrases seems to have taken priority over simply describing the plan of a building. Of course, no one speaks or writes to practise certain forms, a comment about language teaching made by Jespersen in 1902. Similarly, undue prominence was given to statements of measurement such as 'The bridge has a length of ...' which always struck me as an unusual form, but was probably deemed necessary as a simple introduction to sentences like 'Water has a thermal capacity of ...' Of course, the notion of measurement is central to science. Some scientists would even claim that if you can't measure it, you can't define it. However, it is interesting that when I made a brief survey of some science and engineering textbooks, I found very few direct statements of dimensions as taught in *Nucleus*. In fact, most of the statements of measurements occurred in the 'Problems and Exercises' section of the engineering textbooks. These used expressions like 'Take a piece of steel, 1m x 2cm x 2cm'. In the main text, there is a focus on theory and examples, and the problems and exercises deal with the practical experiments or calculations that underpin them. The latter require specific measurements but the former do not.

In *Nucleus*, there are more classic English teacher sentences that no one would ever dream of saying. For example, students are invited to select one of the alternatives

> A material which is suitable for making clothes must be solid/fluid, brittle/tough, soft/hard, rigid/flexible, smooth/rough, opaque/transparent and soluble/insoluble.

Then, they move on to

> One material with these properties is wool. Others are ...
> Steel is not generally used for clothes because it is hard and rigid.
> Glass is unsuitable because it is transparent.

It seems ironic to reflect that such sentences were forged in the white heat of the communicative revolution, when the communicative, purposive, functional

use of English was replacing the old approach of English as an object, something to study analytically and formally in the Faculty of Arts.

If I might digress, my favourite 'English teacher' sentence comes from *English 901*, a Collier Macmillan publication in the late 1960s. There is a substitution table with the basic frame of

Please excuse me, I didn't mean to ...

Then there was a drill to practise when students completed the sentence with

disturb you
interrupt your meeting

and so on until they came to the end with

Please excuse me, I didn't mean to start a revolution!

Who would ever say this? Marx, Lenin, Chairman Mao, Castro ...? Well, even they would be ruled out because they definitely did mean to start a revolution!

When the ELT pioneers described in Mike Ramsden's *Forum* article (2001) trekked out into the new territories, they were burdened by a lot of baggage. They brought with them a whole apparatus of exercises and simply attached them to texts about science and technology. Matching tables, substitution tables, multiple-choice questions, True/False questions. Of course, this is not unreasonable but there are some that foundered because the teacher or the students did not know the science well enough. I well remember reading a physics text in the University of Khartoum and there was a disagreement between the students over two of the alternatives in a multiple-choice question. I was not really sure of the answer, and the students' explanations in English were not sufficiently clear for me to adjudicate and one student suggested we take a vote. I pointed out that this was not a correct scientific procedure and went off to find a physics lecturer. More seriously, the exercises are trivial and completely lacking in challenge, and do not require any understanding to complete. For example, this comes from *Focus on Mechanical Engineering*. Students are invited to combine two sentences using a relative clause ...

Rust may attack certain metals ...
These metals contain some proportion of iron.

Sir Isaac Newton put forward a law ...
The law states that every action has an equal and opposite reaction.

Of course, this is trivial and presents no challenge to the students at all. Simply delete the first phrase and replace it with 'which'. And they learn nothing about the various ways we can add information to the noun phrase in English. Furthermore, the student jumps from topic to topic in unrelated sentences,

another feature of this kind of exercise, and all the exercises are entirely sentence based. This ignores completely that grammatical and lexical choices have to be made in the complete discourse, not isolated sentences. There is a very similar exercise in *Infotech* (Santiago 2000) published in the new millennium, so it is not just the bad old days of ESP.

There is a similar lack of imagination in other books where students are asked to complete sentences about diagrams like 'The bridge is 20m long' or describe the dimensions of a wooden blocks of different sizes. Would it not be possible to ask them to find out about some structures like the Suez Canal, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Pyramids, the temple at Borobudur, the Petronas Towers or Foster's fabulous new bridge in France, etc.? They could then share this information with each other in poster presentations.

This leads us to another lack in the first generation of EST materials. Everything was centred on the book and the teacher. There was little opportunity to contribute other than by answering the questions the teacher or the book set. There was no opportunity for the students to explain what they thought, or share what they had found out by research in the library, or now, on the internet. An example of this can be found in *Infotech* published in 2000 by Cambridge. Yes, the students are asked to work in pairs as a nod to communicative methodology, but I find it difficult to imagine any group I have worked with developing this dialogue comparing two word processing programmes. If they could, I am not sure they would need a course in English ... or even basic IT? Yet, the blurb specifically states that the book does not 'require specialist knowledge of computers on either the part of the student or the teacher'. There seems to be a catch of some kind here. You have to learn all about computers so that you can learn English so that you can learn all about computers ...

> Work in pairs. Read the table below which summarizes the most relevant features of two word processing programmes ... Explain to your partner why your programme is better.
>
> *Example*
> A: With Printext I can ...
> B: Yes, but you can't ...

Characteristics	Student A *Printext*	Student B *Publisher*
1. Instantaneous WYSIWIG and editing	X	X
2. Variety of font types, styles and size	X	X
3. Editing facilities: Copy, Cut, Paste, Undo, Select All	X	X
...		
12. Includes internet connection tools and allows you to create HTML pages for the Web.		X

(*Infotech* 2000)

The students are merely verbalizing and manipulating the teacher's thoughts, words and structures. There is no genuine communication taking place here.

This is more of a challenge in EST but it is still possible to organize jigsaw readings, poster presentations explaining how things work, quizzes, doing simple experiments and reporting the results and design projects. At Aston University in 1983, I devised a design project with the aid of John Swales (Skeldon and Swales 2003). Students were asked to read an illustrated text about music machines to familiarize themselves with the basic principles of pitch and rhythm and obtain some ideas on how inventors had reproduced them in various music machines. They were then asked to design a music machine themselves from everyday things like glass bottles, bamboo canes, etc. Finally, each group made an illustrated presentation of their design and fielded questions about them from the other groups. Throughout the project, teachers helped with questions about language, acting as touchline coaches to trouble-shoot language difficulties during the actual match as it were. The students rated the activity as useful and enjoyable, and actually asked for more. (The activity is described more fully in Skeldon and Swales 2003.)

Finally, there was almost a complete lack of grammar in these books other than exercises on relative clauses and some on the passive. The *Nucleus* series had more of a phrase book approach, where students were supplied with useful words and phrases, but no systematic grammar. There seems to be a need for some explicit advice say on the use of the timeless tense, or present simple, when describing how things work, or the use of the passive when describing processes. These should explain the reason for the choice. In the case of a process description, the passive is used to maintain the theme/rheme structure so that the focus is on how the raw materials are transformed into the finished product. Alternatively, there could be a systemic treatment of sentences in texts and what they do to make information available to the reader. This overt attention to grammar may run counter to current trends in methodology, but certainly in Oman there is a perceived need for grammatical explanation. Perhaps we should try to meet it, with the focus on studying real language in use, with examples drawn from real texts or spoken interactions.

It should be said, however, that a lot of the vocabulary in the *Nucleus* series was exactly what the students needed, and the English teacher was well placed to teach. In other words, 'sub-technical' vocabulary which is difficult to define, but is exemplified by words like 'diameter', 'edge', 'surface', 'measure', 'boil', etc. rather than dense technical clusters like 'triple point equilibrium', which are the province of the subject teachers. In other words, it is the kind of vocabulary we have because we did some elementary science at school and live in a technological world full of gadgets. This problem is nicely illustrated by Cobb and Horst (2001). They describe how a chemistry lecturer tries to explain a 'carbon fluoride bond, he tries a succession of analogies: Teflon pans, a tug of war, an assembly line – all to no avail. Apparently, "pan", "war" and "line" were simply unknown ... There was apparently no common lexical ground to retreat to'.

What Can Be Done Instead?

So, how can we develop more useful, relevant and challenging materials for the next generation of EST books? Well, there may not be a second generation. The publishers have no titles in their catalogues or in preparation. Perhaps the volume of sales is not sufficient to justify launching more EST series, especially in the current business model based on providing maximum profit for the shareholders. Perhaps things might change if the publishers return to a business model of providing a service in return for modest profits, but don't hold your breath.

Many institutions now produce their own EST materials in house, although the quality of content and appearance vary. However, if teachers use the internet to share materials and feedback, the quality of the content would improve, and modern desktop publishing packages should enable institutions to provide professional, attractive course manuals. There is an abundance of sources for lively and interesting articles on science and technology. There are two international magazines, the *New Scientist* and the *Scientific American*, which regularly include articles that could be adapted for use in class. For example, there was an article on raising the Titanic by freezing the water around it, so the ship would be raised by a giant iceberg similar to the one that sank it. Another article described proposals for a space elevator. Both articles were based on the simple science of liquids and magnetism, and could be used to reinforce basic words like 'freeze', 'melt' or 'pole', 'force', 'attract' and 'repel'. These would be a useful starting point but the publishers of these magazines would have to adopt a more friendly policy on permissions. However, there is a way round this if the teacher uses the article as a starting point and then consults other websites from a Google search. Then he/she should be in a position to write a composite article from the different sources, thus avoiding copyright issues. In this way, we should be able to develop reading materials which have a genuine communicative purpose and fresh, stimulating content. The language level can be adapted to the level of the students. Here is an extract from a text about space elevators that I developed in Sohar College, Oman:

> Going Up? ... into space!
>
> The idea of a space elevator first appeared in the nineteenth century, but it first became well known when the famous writer Arthur C. Clarke published his book, *The Fountains of Paradise* in 1979. Now several companies are actively developing plans for a space elevator. They believe it would help to develop space tourism and space exploration.
>
> There are two things which are essential to a space elevator. First of all, there must be a cable for the cars to move up and down. At the end there would be a large weight, possibly an asteroid. The cable would need to be very strong to resist the forces of gravity pulling at one end, and gravity pulling at the other. It would need to be up to 40,000 km long. A steel cable would be impossible to build, so scientists are looking for a new material. One possible solution would be to use tubes made of pure carbon. These

tubes would be 100 times stronger than steel. However, the process of making the carbon tubes is new, and at present they cost five hundred dollars a gram to produce.

The cable would be attached to a tower, which would be fixed or built on a floating platform in the sea. The tower would be up to twenty kilometers tall, which would mean that the cable could be shorter and thinner. As a result, the cable would need less material and be cheaper to produce. The engineers working on the project say that it would be possible to build the tower with present methods and materials. However, we should remember that the tallest building at present is the CN Tower in Toronto, Canada at 553 metres.

The space elevator would need to have some kind of car to carry people and goods up and down the cable. One suggestion is to use the power of magnets. The forces of the magnets in the car would push the car away from the magnets in the cable. Then, the magnetic forces would push and pull the car up the cable. There would be no friction as the car would not touch the cable. This would allow very high speeds of up to 2,000 kilometres per hour, and there would be no moving parts to repair and replace. However, many engineers believe that the magnets in the track would be too large and heavy for the cable. Another idea would be to use the energy of the light from a laser. In the laboratory, laser power has raised weights, but only to a height of forty metres.

If the elevator were built, what would the journey be like? According to the companies working on this project, the price of a ticket could be as cheap as an airline ticket. As the journey began, you would be pushed back into your seat. As you went higher, you would lose weight. At around 100km, you would lose about 3% of your weight. As you went higher, the sky would become darker and eventually completely black and the stars would seem much brighter and clearer. You would be able to look back at the bright blue planet you had left earlier.

But, the elevator would not only be great for tourism, it would also be useful in developing space exploration. The Earth is rotating at a thousand miles an hour. The force of this rotation could be used to send rockets into space. There would be no need for rockets to lift the ships against the force of gravity. This would reduce the costs and increase the safety of space exploration.

A nice idea. But will it ever happen? Well, there are several companies working on this project. Arthur C. Clarke once said, 'The first space elevator will be built 50 years after everyone stopped laughing'. He has recently reduced the time to 25 years! Some of the engineers think they could be ready by 2025.

The unit opened with pre-reading activities. The teacher reviewed key vocabulary about magnetism with some small magnets – the students know the science of magnetism from school. Then, looking at the illustration, the students made a list of questions that they had about the elevator. They came up with

things like 'How many people will it carry?' How much will it cost? 'What is the wire made of?' Then they read the text to answer these questions, which gave a purpose to the reading, in addition to the intrinsic interest of this brilliant idea. After the first reading, they completed a tabular summary based on the Innovation text structure outlined by Davies (1995), i.e. innovation – technical details – expected outcomes, positive/negative. Then there were some conventional reading comprehension questions some of which required the students to make simple inferences, like 'What is the bright blue planet at the end?' The next step was for the students to work in small groups to make a list of possible problems they anticipated. The questions were about things like 'What about aeroplanes?', 'What will happen if the cable breaks?', 'What will happen if the engine stops?' There was a follow-up reading which addressed some of these questions. I tried to find answers to the others on the internet. In another unit, the text was based on an article in the local newspaper about a solar chimney devised by Dr Hinai, an engineering lecturer at Sultan Qaboos University. (A solar chimney works by the sun heating air which rises up a chimney to turn a turbine at the top.) The students drafted questions about it, and Dr Hinai was kind enough to answer promptly. This promoted real communication in English, although I appreciate that this is a rare opportunity.

There were follow-up reading activities on the development of magnetic levitation trains in Japan and China, so that students could recycle the ideas and vocabulary they had met in the opening text.

At the end of the unit, the students were asked to work in groups to discuss a list of innovations with some issues to address, such as what we can do now, what difficulties there are and what advantages and disadvantages the innovation would bring. Here is a list of some of the innovations:

- We will be able to talk to our computers and they will talk back.
- Doctors will be able to replace our organs with artificial organs, including the brain.
- We will all be driving cars that use hydrogen not petrol.
- Computers will completely replace books and magazines.
- The earth will be hit by an asteroid destroying all living things.
- We will build cities on other planets.
- We will have weekend holidays on the moon.

Don't worry about getting your predictions wrong. You will be in good company, as you can see below.

> Talk of nuclear power is moonshine. (Ernest Rutherford)
>
> Space flight is bunk. (H. Spencer Jones, Royal Astronomer, 1957 ... two weeks before the first Sputnik went into space!)
>
> I think there is a world market for maybe five computers. (Chairman, IBM)
>
> I can see the time when every city will have one. (American mayor after seeing a demonstration of Bell's telephone)

In this way, the students are given the chance to express their own thoughts and ideas and with luck discuss them with the other groups. The list of quotations at the end added a touch of humour, which the students were not expecting in an EST class. After doing this unit with my trainee science teachers, I found a short paragraph in the *Guardian* on how to make your own toy maglev train. I have not yet had the opportunity to try this out with a group of students, but 'read and do' offers an extra dimension.

One of the biggest lacunas in the provision of English language teaching and learning materials is the almost complete lack of extensive readers at the various vocabulary levels. A perusal of the Penguin Readers catalogue for 2005 shows that there is a broad range of genres but only 12 titles are non-fiction and of these, only two are about science, an adaptation of James Watson's *The Double Helix* and Maulk's *Inventions that Changed the World*. This seems to reflect the two cultures problem that C. P. Snow described in the 1960s, the literary culture and the scientific culture. Snow (1993) described how the members of each group could only 'manage a frozen smile across the gulf' that divided them. The literary intellectuals looked at their scientific counterparts 'in total incomprehension as if they were talking Tibetan'. Snow had a famous dispute with the literary critic F. R. Leavis which led to court action. Perhaps, just as the ripples of the big bang can still be detected, the results of this cultural divide still affect us. If we take biography as an example, it is difficult to understand why there is a biography of Prince William, whose only achievement is to be his father's son, but there are no biographies of the scientists, engineers and businessmen who have shaped our modern world. Surely, students of all subjects should read about Darwin, Henry Ford, the Wright Brothers, Neil Armstrong, Galileo, Newton, William Harvey, Edward Jenner, etc.? And perhaps the publishers could commission adaptations of the writing of some of the top science writers like Richard Dawkins, Stephen Jay Gould, Steven Rose, Steve Jones or Dava Sobel? The narrow outlook of the Arts-trained graduates in publishing who commission the books, and the English teachers who order them denies students access to a wide range of stimulating topics of great significance in shaping their future. Melvyn Bragg (1999) wrote of the recent emergence of the genre 'Popular Science': 'I no longer felt left out. The chief way in which the twentieth century described itself was at least approachable. I was somehow present. I was not a player, but I was at the game.' Surely, we should try to provide all students, not only EST students, with a ticket to this game?

Here is an extract from the sort of EST reader which is as yet unpublished but has been read and enjoyed by some of my students, and even one of the college cleaners! It is an adaptation of Dava Sobel's (2005) bestseller *Longitude*. The book describes the problems sailors experienced because they were unable to determine longitude. These difficulties caused many accidents and deaths. For example, 2,000 sailors died when their fleet ran into the rocks off the Scilly Isles in 1707. Of course, the authorities were anxious to solve the problem of longitude, and Sobel tells a real story of invention, intrigue, duplicity and the eventual success of John Harrison, a simple Yorkshire clockmaker, who developed the first marine chronometer. The story includes details of the science

and technology behind the problem, but is also a story of a simple man's triumph over the corrupt authorities who tried various strategies to deny his claim to the £20,000 prize offered by the British Government. It required the intervention of King George III to ensure fair treatment for Harrison. There is also a certain amount of humour as this extract shows.

> In 1713, two mathematics teachers, a Mr Ditton and a Mr Whiston suggested another method. Mr Whiston was Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University, who followed Isaac Newton, the discoverer of gravity. They suggested that boats should be placed on the sea at the lines of longitude. There would be a distance of 800km between each pair of boats. At a fixed time, they would fire their guns. The captain would hear the gun and compare the time with his local time. The difference would give him his longitude.
>
> They explained their idea to some sailors, who realized that the sound of guns would not travel far. So, they suggested that the ships could use fireworks. In fact, this would improve the method. The captains could use the difference between the speed of sound and the speed of light to find their position. They wrote a book in 1714, 'A New Method of Discovering Longitude'. However, the book did not explain how to find longitude first, before the boats could be put in the correct position. Or how to fix the boats in position when the sea is between 4,000m and 5,000m deep, and 7,000m deep at the deepest place. Where would they find all the thousands of men for all the ships? Where would they get their food from?
>
> Ditton and Whiston's idea was simply not practical. However, they did lead a group of businessmen and sailors to Parliament. They demanded that the government do something about the longitude problem.

Echoes of *Catch 22* here? I hope it illustrates that reading about science and technology is not necessarily dull or boring. In 1982, Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters wrote a short article for the *EFL Gazette*, entitled 'EST. Does it have to be boring?'(Hutchinson and Waters 1982). This says a lot about English teacher attitudes to technical English. There seems to be an underlying assumption that science and technology is boring, whereas it is probably English teachers who have made it so, or at least materials for EST.

Individual reading programmes should include a wide selection of science topics either in the form of extensive readers or of boxes of reading cards containing short articles. In my college in Sohar, we began a pilot project in e-learning. The website had a 'reading room' where the students could access short texts with reading and vocabulary exercises. With some of the texts, we were able to exploit the use of sound and vision, using an extract from *David Copperfield*, and reading and videotapes about Maradona. There seems to be a lot of potential here as the websites and CDs like Dorling Kindersley's *How Things Work*, have moving diagrams, and there is film coverage of the *Challenger* and *Columbia* disasters, early flights including the birdmen, etc. There is one website which shows Baird's first television pictures. Listen and read has always seemed to be a valuable language learning exercise, and I am sure that there is

massive potential in using computers to offer alternatives to text and pictures in paper form ... not that there is anything wrong with those media! Again, I would like to stress that these materials should appeal to all students, not just EST students, if we can cross Snow's divide.

G. K. Chesterton once claimed that a problem is only an opportunity viewed from the wrong end, and I think his remark offers us a fresh approach. In tertiary institutions all over the world, English teachers are training students to read the scientific textbooks they are issued by their departments. These books are often published in the West, and recommended by visiting consultants from the West. However, in many cases in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, these books are often not suitable. For one thing, they make no concessions to the language level of the students. Also, the examples which are supposed to illuminate the science often create another obstacle for the students. One egregious example I met was the book which explained the maths of 'average' with examples and exercises based on cricket. Another was the physics book which requires students to calculate the coefficient of friction on an ice skate ... in Khartoum? Surely, the English and Science teachers could collaborate to provide the students with course manuals they could actually read. The English teachers could use their expertise to make a real contribution to the learning of the students if they took on this role (Skeldon 2002a, 2002b).

With another bit of lateral thinking, I would like to suggest that the publishers of coursebooks for General English should try to make them more general by including some reference to science and technology. For example, many of them have potted biographies but they are usually of literary figures such as Dickens. Could they not include Leonardo, or Darwin? Many school systems in the Middle East have a science stream and an arts stream. I don't agree with such a division, but, at least, the science stream should have the opportunity to practise their English using science topics. The secondary school coursebooks in Oman do have readings for science students, which is a small start, even though some of the so-called science topics are not actually about science.

Finally, I would like to suggest that teachers could plan communication activities based on science and technology. I have already referred to a project we ran at Aston University, which was based on the TV show, *The Great Egg Race*. Brunel University made a television series where sixth formers applied basic principles of science to devise lifting machines, small boats, etc. These ideas could probably be successfully adapted for English projects. The *New Scientist* once ran a competition on devising simple devices to enable a person to walk on water, using wood and plastic bottles for flotation. Again, it seems that this sort of activity would provide a stimulating learning experience. It could be developed on the lines of the Music Machine project referred to earlier. There would have to be some reading about the scientific principles behind flotation, and the movement of ships through water; a list of materials available, such as planks of wood, empty plastic bottles, foam rubber, etc.; a minimum specification including a minimum distance to be achieved; help with preparing an illustrated presentation about the design; and lots of assistance provided by science and English teachers. Then the rest is up to the students. This is something of

a risk as the teacher hands over control of the next stage to the students, but it is rewarding when it comes off, as it did at Aston. This kind of project would provide a rich, memorable context for what has been learned to stick in the students' minds, rather than the flat context and the desiccated language of many textbook exercises, a point touched on by Earl Stevick (1986) in his book, *Images and Options in the Language Classroom.* Simple classroom experiments might be exploited by the English teacher also. In many countries, science classes do not provide much in the way of experimentation, so there should be some suitable simple experiments, which students could talk about. For example, although they 'knew' all about the fact that some substances change from a solid to a gas directly, my students at the University of Khartoum were still amazed to find that a block of 'dry ice' disappeared, leaving a jar full of a gas which extinguished a flame – carbon dioxide.

As I indicated at the beginning of this chapter, EST is in a parlous state and is being abandoned by many tertiary institutions who, like Sultan Qaboos University, found that 'the English teachers seemed to learn a lot of science, but the students didn't seem to learn much English'. There does not seem much prospect of publishers investing in a second generation of EST titles. Perhaps if we learn from our mistakes, and change the focus of our attack, we may be able to do more for our students because the one thing we can be sure of is that the science and technology departments still have students who need the help that English teachers can offer.

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Chapter 5

EAP Materials in New Zealand and Australia

Hans Mol and Tan Bee Tin

Introduction

This chapter focuses on some EAP (English for Academic Purposes) textbooks used in Australia and New Zealand, in particular in pre-sessional EAP courses, and aims to analyse the extent to which they are successful for EAP purposes. Hill (2005: 1) claims that 'due to the wide range of contexts in which course books are used, it is clearly impossible for the writer to ensure that it is perfectly suited for a particular class that a teacher may be using it with'. This may sound like a defeatist attitude towards coursebook development but, in fact, it refers to the wide range of possible content for EAP courses. This is true especially for pre-sessional EAP courses: students studying in such courses need to apply their knowledge in varying disciplines. It is also true that many 'different syllabus types have been proposed for ESP (English for Specific Purposes) instruction: structural, situational, functional-notional, task-based, text-based, content-based' (Flowerdew 2005: 136). We do not attempt to prove which approach is best, but will illustrate that materials draw on many different categories, that some materials presented have a strong EFL/English for Professional Purposes focus, which has intrinsic value in itself, and that there may be a call for a different approach to EAP materials development.

EAP Foundation Courses in Australia and New Zealand

EAP aims to 'speed learners through to a known destination' (Basturkmen 2006: 9). According to Jordan (1997: 1), it is concerned with 'those communication skills in English which are required for study purposes in formal education systems'. This general definition has been elaborated in the literature. For example, Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002: 2) define EAP as follows:

> English for Academic Purposes refers to language research and instruction that focuses on the specific needs and practices of particular groups in academic contexts. It means grounding instruction in an understanding of the cognitive, social, and linguistic demands of specific academic disciplines.

> This takes practitioners beyond preparing learners for study in English to developing new kinds of literacy: equipping students with the communicative skills to participate in particular academic and cultural contexts.

Many international students come to New Zealand and Australia every year to pursue further study at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. For example, in Australia, in 2005, over 101,000 overseas students participated in English courses. Asian students accounted for 80 per cent of these enrolments, mainly from Japan and South Korea (Blundell and Wilson 2006). Many of them enrol in EAP foundation courses, also known as 'pathway' courses, offered at a university or at private language schools before they attend the university courses. These allow them to develop strategies suitable for independent learning in a university. The grades they receive in such courses are regarded by many universities as equivalent to IELTS bands and are used to decide the eligibility of students in terms of English proficiency.

These courses are often not specific to any university discipline, as it is not always clear which path students will take after finishing their foundation course. Researching websites of universities that offer EAP courses, it becomes clear that there is fairly large consensus on what they should teach. A comparison of aims put forward by English Language Centers of some Australian universities (Trinity College, ANU, UNE, University of Adelaide), and SWIC (University of Western Sydney) shows that the skills displayed in Table 5.1 are deemed EAP.

Table 5.1: Skills required for EAP

Listening/Reading	Understanding academic texts
	Taking notes
	Identifying relevant information
	Interpreting information
	Recognizing point of view and bias
Speaking	Negotiating
	Paraphrasing and using evidence
	Participating in formal and informal discussion
	Arguing a point
	Expressing ideas
Writing	Structuring academic essays and presentations
	Using academic style (writing and speaking)
	Arguing a point
	Expressing ideas

Other	Thinking clearly and critically
	Extending learners' awareness of cross-cultural differences and of how to use language appropriately to negotiate these differences
	Developing strategies appropriate for independent and collaborative learning in a university

Additionally, some EAP courses stress the importance of specific tools for university study: writing bibliographies and referencing, computing skills for study purposes, library research skills and using study resources.

Materials in use: some generalizations

Many published EAP materials available in Australia and New Zealand are published for global markets. Even *EAP Now!*, which was originally designed for the Australian market, is now published globally. We were not able to locate any locally published materials for New Zealand, although there are a few published in Australia. What is also clear from our research is that many EAP teachers develop their own materials. This may range from developing supplementary materials, used alongside an existing course book, to compiling their own resources using photocopies from existing publications, or writing their own materials. 'Developing supplementary materials is a common teacher activity. When using published course books, teachers often debate the relevance of the materials to their particular teaching context' (Healy 2005: 1).

On the basis of contacts with teachers, English language schools and publishers, we have selected the following resources for analysis. We are not implying that other available resources do not deserve evaluation – our shortlist has partly been inspired by constraints of available space. All three resources are available and used worldwide, so what we say will also have relevance for teachers outside Australia and New Zealand.

1 *Skills in English* (Garnet Publishing)
3 *Writing Skills/ Reading Skills/ Listening Skills/ Speaking Skills* (CUP)
3 *EAP Now!* (Pearson Longman)

These resources have in common that:

- they are used in foundation level courses;
- they are designed for adult learners of English who are planning to study at a university or college where English is the language of instruction;
- the overall English level of students required needs to be between intermediate and early advanced (approximately 5.0 IELTS, 500 TOFEL or 173 CBT-TOEFL). It must be pointed out here that the *Skills in English* resource, however, is a multi-level course package that starts at a level requiring IELTS 2.0–3.0 and builds towards materials requiring IELTS 5.0–6.0 as a pre-requisite over four levels;

- the editions used for analysis were published roughly within a period of three years prior to writing this piece.

Materials in Use: Evaluation

Skills in English (SIE)

SIE is divided into skills-specific books for listening, speaking, reading, and writing, much like CUP's *Skills* series. The insistence on the target skill is because the writer believes that

> some students need one or two skills more than the others, and that students should be allowed to make differential progress in the four skills rather than constantly being held to the level at which they can hear, say, read and write a common set of language items. (Phillips 2004: 5)

Each skills book can be used on its own although the author points out that the 'commonality of themes across the four skills means that the more skills books you use, the deeper and wider the students' linguistic ability to communicate in that thematic area becomes' (Phillips 2004: 5).

Each unit is divided into four lessons. The first section presents and practises vocabulary, preparing for the second section where the skill at hand is practised, revising skills from previous lessons. The third lesson highlights new skills, which are practised in Lesson 4.

Each unit has internal thematic coherence and topic continuity: the topic is developed gradually throughout the unit. This is likely to sustain the students' interest and facilitate their concentration on important vocabulary and language. The books give learners an opportunity to bring in their interest and background knowledge about the discipline they may be studying.

Our criteria used for evaluation are the following. To what extent:

1. do the materials provide exposure to English in authentic use?
2. is the exposure to English in use likely to be meaningful to the target learners?
3. are the texts likely to interest the learners?
4. are the activities likely to provide achievable challenges to the learners?
5. are the activities likely to engage the learners affectively?
6. are the activities likely to engage the learners cognitively?
7. do the activities provide opportunities to make discoveries about how English is used?
8. do the activities provide opportunities for meaningful use of English?
9. do the activities provide opportunities to gain feedback on effective use of English?
10. are the materials likely to sustain positive impact?

Criteria	Grades out of 5	Comments
1 Authentic use?	4	Through reading and listening materials SIE enables students to be exposed to authentic English, even though the texts may have been adapted. For listening, the course focuses on lectures, speeches, student talk and radio programmes which are all relevant to students' needs. For reading there is a fairly large variety of text types and genres, such as newspaper and magazine articles, web text, advertisements, brochures, encyclopedia and research reports. Texts do not limit themselves to academic genres or research (reports, dissertations, essays)
2 Meaningful exposure?	4	For listening the resource focuses on listening to instructions, predicting content, recognizing important words, note-taking, distinguishing fact from opinion and understanding argument. Reading texts relate to a wide variety of aspects of students' personal and educational life, as well as to topics that lie a bit further afield. Because of careful grading and constant review and repetition, both in terms of language and in terms of skills, much of the content will be meaningful to students, and for new skills they can apply prior experience
3 Interesting texts?	4	A variety of topics is used to construct theme-based units: Education, Daily Life, Work and Business, Science and Nature, The Physical World, Culture and Civilization, They Made Our World, Art and Literature, Sports and Leisure, and Nutrition and Health. This variety should make it possible for most students to find something to their liking. It may, on the other hand, not offer enough challenge to some students. Lack of overall topic continuity between units will make it challenging for the teacher to trigger and sustain student interest. Writing tasks are clearly related to academic work, like ordering information, giving opinions, writing research reports, linking, summarizing. Level 3 focuses almost entirely on text cohesion, which is considered an important tool in EAP

4 Achievable challenges?	4	Students using *SIE* take small steps. Because of this approach, it appears that tasks are almost always achievable. Students are guided through every step along the way: this may not always be challenging, in the sense that materials challenge students slightly beyond their linguistic abilities, but it does make tasks achievable. Revision of vocabulary and skills information is a recurring feature aiding students to cope with the challenges of exercises. A minority of exercises are open-ended; most exercises lead to pre-set results. As sections build up, the challenge for students is to use and/or recognize as much of the language as possible actively. At times it feels as if the books need to include more challenging tasks, especially at the higher levels. What we find a strength in these books is that there are lots of mini-tasks which help students get started, both for speaking and writing
5 Affective engagement?	2.5	The activities are largely language-focused, aiming at the process of acquiring the language necessary to perform (EAP) tasks. As for reading tasks there does not seem to be all that much opportunity for personal input. There is some, however, such as Example 1 in the Appendix. There is some opportunity to pay attention to learning styles, but otherwise the materials are very language-focused and aim at building language skill bottom-up rather than top-down. More opportunities to bring in students' background knowledge and opinion could be given. Instead of a series of short (linguistically related) tasks, a longer, more integrated task would encourage learners to engage with the tasks and texts
6 Cognitive engagement?	4	Students are frequently encouraged to guess, discover, interpret, work things out and reflect. This challenges them to think about their linguistic abilities, thus achieving engagement. There is also constant referencing to what was learned before, allowing students to review knowledge they already have (see Example 2 in Appendix, colour-coded words signpost review of new lexical items (this volume is not in colour, so it is not easy to see here))

7 Discovering English in use?	5	There is constant opportunity to do this, as the course is very language-focused: students learn to recognize, analyse and use both lexical and functional chunks of language intensively in, for instance, listening. They are asked to discover things for themselves. For example, students are sometimes presented with 'problem texts' (examples of bad presentations and discussions), and are encouraged to discuss how to improve such texts
8 Meaningful activities?	4	Purposeful opportunities to use English in the academic speaking and writing context are plentiful, but the focus is generally on use of language within each context
9 Feedback opportunities?	5	Discussion of learning results is a constant for all skills. The course is teacher-controlled to a high degree and in that sense the opportunities for feedback are there constantly, also because students are constantly confronted with skills and language they have seen before and are asked to apply
10 Positive impact?	4	Because of the immediate relevance to micro-skills required for academic and general coursework, the materials are likely to sustain positive impact. In the realm of adding personal opinion to activities, the materials could offer more opportunity

Summary of the evaluation of SIE
There are some good points in *SIE*:

1. The SIE series offers opportunities for students starting at low IELTS levels to attain sufficient academic English over time.
2. In terms of content it covers topics and themes from a wide range of possible study disciplines, making it suitable for a wide range of students.
3. SIE focuses on developing students' linguistic abilities together with skills relevant for academic study. Discipline-specific books for the higher level are being prepared at the time of writing.
4. There is constant and intensive vocabulary revision and a strong focus on vocabulary as an important skill for language development.
5. Skills check items are not skills *presentation* – knowledge of skills strategies is assumed to a certain extent but constantly revised.

These are our suggestions for improvement:

1. Speaking skills are not so much geared towards presentation/debate/

discussion, but towards carefully building up the language needed to perform speaking tasks and are not, up to level 3, specifically academic.
2. There is a large focus on teacher control and less opportunity, compared with other courses, for student-directed learning.
3. Skills in English stresses the importance of the four discrete skills and, within the books, largely maintains this one-skill focus.

Study Reading, Study Listening, Study Writing, Study Speaking (CUP)
While the *SIE* series has been written by the same author, the CUP *Study* books are written by different authors and thus differ in approach.

Study Reading (*SR*) is divided into three parts, taking students from basic reading strategies such as scanning, predicting, reading with a purpose to more advanced strategies such as making inferences, note-taking, reading graphics, critical reading, reading for research, etc. Each unit is divided into four sections: Before You Read, Reading and Interaction, Text Exploration, and Application.
Study Speaking (*SS*) is divided into four parts, including a series of study-related scenarios in which students need to use English to resolve problems (e.g. negotiating for accommodation, essay deadlines), discussion, presentation and seminar skills, strategies for improving speaking after the course, and self- and peer-evaluation of speaking.
Study Writing (*SW*) has ten units. The earlier units feature the writing process, ways of evaluating one's own writing, the difference between academic and personal styles of writing, and the grammar of academic discourse. The later units build on this foundation and get students to analyse the grammar and vocabulary associated with academic writing, and the various information structures (e.g. definition, generalization, describing process and product, argument). These units also raise students' awareness of several principles which underline academic writing (clarity, honesty, reality, plagiarism), the importance of various information structures, and their role in longer academic texts such as research reports.
Study Listening (*SL*) has ten units and contains talks given by lecturers on different academic topics. The units cover six macro strategies for listening identified by research on academic listening: predicting, monitoring, responding, clarifying, inferencing, and evaluating. Each unit is divided into three sections: pre-listening, while-listening (first and second listening), and post-listening. Each unit also has trouble-shooting activities which deal with the problems of understanding natural speech and different lecturing styles.

All these books deal with a variety of topics from different academic disciplines (e.g. biology, psychology, information technology, sociology) and cover a variety of academic text types. The books draw principles from recent research on academic vocabulary, genres, and EAP research. There are accompanying listening tapes/CDs for *SL* and *SS*. All books include Teaching Notes and Answer Keys.

Criteria	Grade	Comments
1 Authentic use?	4	Authentic reading or listening texts are used to generate ideas for writing, discussion, and note-taking. In some cases, however, more variety in terms of authentic academic tasks would be required – e.g. the need to exploit longer reading texts in *SR* to prepare students for the reading demand required in their university study; the need to include more examples of dialogues and seminars for students to listen to in *SS*
2 Meaningful exposure?	4	The books give plenty of opportunity for students to bring in their interests and experience about academic genres, and background knowledge about various disciplines they might be studying. Academic strategies and linguistic skills developed in all four books are based on EAP research and will help students with their university study
3 Interesting texts?	4	All books include topics from various academic disciplines. The books also include many texts and topics which have educational value, raising students' critical awareness of global issues and multicultural awareness. However, lack of topic continuity found in some cases may make it challenging for the teacher to sustain student interest. Several topics are presented one after another in a series of short texts in one single unit (see Example 3 in Appendix)
4 Achievable challenges?	4.5	All books provide achievable challenges to the learners to a great extent. All books encourage students to examine 'problem texts' and to work collaboratively. For example, each unit in *SL* has troubleshooting sessions, which help examine the problems of understanding natural speech and different lecturing styles. Productive skills, especially writing, are difficult to get started. It is good to see that there are lots of mini-tasks, especially in *SW*, which help students to get started. *SR*, however, needs to include more challenging tasks. Although there are group reading tasks in which different students are assigned to read different extracts, the tasks lack task dependency where different groups work collaboratively to achieve one major outcome

5 Affective engagement?	3.5	The scores vary from 3 (*SR* and *SS*) to 4 (*SW* and *SL*). In *SW* and *SL*, opportunities for analysing the language of various academic genres and information structures, and activities such as oral summary, pair work, comparing notes are likely to engage the learners affectively to some extent. However, in *SR*, tasks are sometimes mechanical (e.g. matching, ranking) and the pre-reading activities do not seem to engage students' interest in the topic and skills addressed. Instead of using a series of short unrelated tasks, a longer, more integrated task would encourage learners to engage with the tasks and texts. All four books should also include visual images and video clips to evoke students' responses and should provide more opportunities to respond critically to academic principles and structures
6 Cognitive engagement?	4	The scores vary from 3 (*SR*, *SS*) to 5 (*SL*, *SW*). In *SR*, academic reading strategies and skills are presented as if universal. In *SS*, some discussion tasks are often too open and divergent and may not put enough pressure on students to think critically and creatively. On the other hand, the writing and reading tasks in *SW* are cognitively challenging. Students need to read between the lines: need to notice not only the language used but also the reasons why it is used in that way. (See Example 4 in Appendix.) There are activities which require students to transfer texts from one mode to another (e.g. from direct language to hedges, from bad to good examples, from graphic presentations to written texts). Similarly, in *SL*, critical thinking in post-listening activities and troubleshooting sessions will encourage students to reflect on the lecture content as well as the lecture language which may cause problems in their understanding
7 Discovering English in use?	4	Although there are some cases in *SS* and *SR* where students are explicitly presented with useful language and explanations of academic language points rather than being encouraged to notice the language points themselves first, all books provide opportunities for making discoveries. Troubleshooting activities and a comparative approach (presenting different text styles and analysing their differences) provide

		opportunities for learners to make discoveries about Academic English (see Example 5 in Appendix)
8 Meaningful activities?	4.5	In all books, the opportunities for meaningful use of English for academic purposes are plentiful. For examples, *SS* covers speaking skills for a wide range of academic and social contexts. In *SL*, the note-taking activities, using handouts and power-point notes prepare students for meaningful listening tasks they will encounter in lectures. *SR* needs more activities, encouraging students to link reading with other reading-related academic tasks (e.g. reading for presentation, for discussion, for lectures, for writing)
9 Feedback opportunities?	4	Again the scores vary from 3 (*SR*) to 5. There are opportunities for learners to gain peers' feedback on the language and the content, to seek teachers' feedback, to reflect on the process of writing. Useful checklists for evaluation are also provided
10 Positive impact?	5	All books cover important academic strategies, academic vocabulary knowledge, grammar and discourse structures, independent learning strategies and will have positive impact on students in their future academic study

Summary of the evaluation of the CUP Study *books*
There are some good points:

- Like *SIE*, all *Study* books include a variety of topics chosen from different academic disciplines, cover a wide range of important academic strategies, genres and academic English, and incorporate findings from EAP research.
- The series engages students in collaborative learning (an important learning tool in higher education) and gives guidance on self- and peer-evaluation and on independent learning strategies.
- All books reflect the role of awareness-raising and problematizing in language learning. *SW*, in particular, reflects this feature most successfully in the way it introduces the key academic language points (see Example 4 in Appendix). Like other books on EAP, concepts such as 'comparison and contrast', 'generalization', classification', 'nominalization', 'hedges' are covered. But unlike others, *SW* makes students become aware of the reasons *why* these are important in EAP and the way these are used in whole texts in combination with each other.

- Even though the focus of each book is on one specific language skill (e.g. Speaking), other skills are not neglected.
- Unlike *SIE*, the CUP series is for EAP *Study* purposes rather than what we would call for somewhat broader English for Academic *Professional* purposes. The books are suitable for both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

These are our proposed areas for improvement:

- There is a need for more variety in terms of text types students are given exposure to. For example, lack of sufficient authentic discussion texts and negotiations for students to listen to and analyse in *SS*, lack of sufficient space for referenced essays in *SW*, lack of presentation and practice of academic vocabulary in context in *SR*.
- In some cases, there is often a lack of topic continuity, thematic coherence, and communicative link. Tasks are related in terms of language focus but not in terms of content and an overall communicative goal. Students jump from one topic to another, from one task to another in one single unit and this may fail to sustain their interest.

EAP Now! (*EAPN*)

EAPN is an integrated course book and covers all four skills. All these skills are thematically linked within each unit. Each unit also includes *Grammar*, *Critical Thinking*, *English for the Internet Age* and *Learner Independence and Study Skills*. Each unit provides models and learning tips for students to follow in their academic study. *EAPN* has an accompanying Teacher's Book and CDs for listening materials.

Criteria	**Grade**	**Comments**
1 Authentic use?	3	Gives authentic exposure in terms of academic skills covered, but not in terms of variety of text types/topics covered. The major text type covered is limited to academic essays
2 Meaningful exposure?	4	Many activities are presented within the context of academic work and the context of the tasks occurring within their course. Instead of offering explicit learning tips in every unit, students should be given more opportunities to reflect on their own learning strategies and formulate their own learning tips
3 Interesting texts?	3	The first unit started quite well with a humorous story of a new student which illustrates the importance of register. But the texts used in other units are not very interesting and students would like more variety in terms of topics and text types used

4 Achievable challenges?	3	Many activities for speaking and writing are open-ended and may provide too much challenge for linguistically challenged students. On the other hand, many activities for listening and reading are gap-filling and comprehension questions and would need more variety. There are too many mini-tasks in each unit and they lack an overall communicative link (see Example 6 in the Appendix)
5 Affective engagement?	3.5	Content and tasks are made relevant to students' academic studies and they will be able to apply what they have learnt almost immediately. Texts are exploited more for language purposes and not enough for triggering emotional responses
6 Cognitive engagement?	3.5	For all skills there is some cross-referencing to what was learnt before in terms of language. But in terms of communicative goal, there is no such link. Although there are critical thinking sections in every unit, many other activities in the unit are somewhat mechanical
7 Discovering English in use?	3	There is constant opportunity to do this, but the course is very skills focused in an open-ended way especially for productive skills (speaking, writing). So a lot is left up to what happens in the classroom. Students are presented with models and language points to follow and not encouraged to discover them on their own. The book seems to reflect a rather rigid view of academic essays and strategies as fixed
8 Meaningful activities?	3.5	As all activities are constantly geared towards coursework and academic work, opportunities to use English in the academic context are plentiful. There is a large segment on creative writing, though, which seems less relevant
9 Feedback opportunities?	3	Although the book contains some useful checklists for evaluation in the appendix, feedback is largely teacher-controlled and not so much built into the materials
10 Positive impact?	4	Because of the immediate relevance to academic and general coursework, the materials are likely to sustain positive impact

Summary of the evaluation of EAPN

There are some good points:

1. Pays attention to academic skills (using internet, study skills, critical think-

ing) and language skills for academic contexts (e.g. asking for an extension, oral presentation, participation in tutorials, academic vocabulary, etc.).
2. Open-ended and a lot of opportunity for personal input.
3. Strong emphasis on essay-writing as a central academic skill.
4. The models of essays provided can be exploited to raise students' awareness of the genre of academic essay.

There are also some points for improvement:

1. Although guidance is given in terms of language for speaking and writing tasks, there is not much guidance and preparation in terms of content. The material needs to be supplemented with other resources.
2. No visual stimulus.
3. There is no communicative link between tasks in each unit. The outcome of one task is not related to another.
4. The book takes a prescriptive view of academic genres and principles and does not encourage students to reflect on them critically.

How Materials are Typically Used: Teacher/Learner Impressions

As mentioned earlier, many teachers compile or write their own materials. Published materials, however, make a positive impact on the design and shape localized materials take. It is widely noted that many teachers use commercial materials as 'bridges' to stimulate their thinking and as the basis for developing locally appropriate materials in their context (e.g. Harwood 2005). This is widely reflected in the practice of EAP courses in Australia and New Zealand. Many teachers we talk to design their own EAP materials, using a variety of published EAP materials as resources and data banks. It is encouraging to see that some of the strengths of EAP textbooks are reflected in their courses. For example, many EAP teachers in New Zealand and in Australia organize their courses according to various themes from different academic disciplines (a practice found in commercial EAP materials). Many supplementary texts, in particular reading texts, are taken from authentic sources in their own contexts. As for listening materials, teachers tend to use commercial materials.

Conclusions: Our Thoughts Concerning Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths of EAP materials

Texts

- Texts and themes should be used from a variety of academic disciplines (e.g. sociology, psychology, education, biology, history, environmental studies, etc.); educationally valuable topics (e.g. topics related to learning

strategies, independent learning, multi-cultural awareness) and global issues (e.g. pollution, media) should be covered; as well as a variety of text types used in academic contexts (e.g. tutorials, discussions, negotiations, research reports, essays).

Research

- Materials should be designed drawing principles from current research on EAP and ESP (e.g. genre-based studies, corpus-based studies, academic vocabulary studies).

Skills

- EAP-specific linguistic skills should be covered (grammar of academic discourse, academic vocabulary, language of negotiation, discussion, presentation, argument, etc.) as well as general academic study skills such as critical thinking, comparing sources, using the internet, conducting research, independent and collaborative learning.

Activities

- Language-focus activities should be integrated with meaning-focus activities. Activities encouraging self- and peer-evaluation using a variety of evaluation checklists should be included.
- There should be a communicative link between activities in terms of topic and outcome in order to sustain student interest and to reflect the holistic nature of academic study in real life. For example, the act of writing an essay does not occur in isolation in academic contexts, but forms part of a larger event which involves choosing the topic, discussing possible approaches, reading and discussing the relevant literature, listening to lectures and perhaps handing in a draft for the lecturer's comments prior to rewriting.

Current weaknesses of some EAP materials

Methodology

- The design of activities does not integrate current research on language teaching methodology (e.g. task-based approach).
- The focus is on *what* to teach rather than *how* to teach. For example, although many books we evaluated include a wide variety of useful materials, topics, texts, language points and activities, very little instruction is given in teacher notes concerning how to make the best use of these to maximize student motivation and language learning. Current findings in SLA (second language acquisition) research could be integrated in the organization and design of activities in the units of the books, creating conditions that allow for successful use of psycholinguistic and cognitive processes involved in language learning (e.g. noticing, consciousness-raising).
- Units in several books contain many tasks, but there is no clear communicative link between various tasks.
- The approach used in many books is PPP (Presentation of models or explanation of rules followed by Practice and Production). Although this is a very popular model used in many language teaching courses, it has received many criticisms, especially for its view of language learning as a

linear process, moving from presentation to product. There seems to be a need to use alternative approaches especially to encourage students to make discoveries about the language on their own. More consciousness-raising tasks are required.

Material

- Failure to develop a critical view of academic genres and norms. There is a need for students to critically examine the underlying strategies and principles adopted by academic discourse communities.
- Failure to use visual stimulus, pictures, and other audio-visual sources (e.g. TV, video) in order to stimulate student interest in the topics and the tasks.
- Failure to highlight the usefulness of academic skills and English in life beyond educational contexts.

Our Suggestions for Improvements

Many EAP course books tend to adopt an 'accommodationist' view of language learning, helping learners to accommodate towards a particular academic culture, equipping learners with a common core of academic skills and language. This is a very valuable approach in itself which, no doubt, works for many academic language communities and many levels. In recent years, however, there has been growing discomfort with this view of EAP. Several researchers have proposed the need to move away from an exclusive focus on text features to ways of understanding the social processes in which academic discourses are sited (Hyland and Hamp-Lyons 2002) and to a more critical approach (e.g. Benesch 2001). In her proposal of critical English for academic purposes, Benesch (ibid.) claims to combine the theory and practice of EAP with that of critical pedagogy. According to Benesch (ibid.), critical pedagogy is concerned with institutional power relations, and acknowledges students' and teachers' positions. Benesch proposes that EAP courses should encourage and allow students to shape their academic goals and the way they reach them. Bunch (2006: 299) argues that

> Given the wide range of ways in which language is used in academic settings, there are limits to what can be taught explicitly in separate language classrooms ... Clearly, we need to avoid framing discourse communities as determinate, static, autonomous, and predictable arenas of shared and agreed-upon values and conventions.

EAP is multi-faceted, researchers seem to say, and therefore deserves a multi-faceted approach to methodology and materials development. Todd (2003) contends that much previous work in EAP has focused more on the content of teaching than on the methodology. There is a need for a more balanced approach where students' learning needs (*how* students learn) are given equal weighting to their language needs (*what* needs to be taught).

Many students studying in pre-sessional EAP courses in Australia and New Zealand come from different countries and also differ in the range of subjects they would be studying at the university. These students are thus likely to encounter problems in their academic study not only due to their limited English language ability but also due to many other differences: the difference in the culture of learning and teaching between their home country and the host country, the difference between high school study and university study, and the difference in academic cultures between one discipline or one subject and another. It is thus very important that EAP courses prepare students for these various possible problems they may encounter in their study. There are several activities that should be included in EAP materials especially for Australia and New Zealand:

- developing students' awareness of different academic cultures and practices
- giving them plenty of opportunities for making discoveries about academic English and academic practices
- giving students an opportunity to make discoveries about the host country's academic culture and about their subject-specific academic practices
- creating the opportunity for students to exploit the multi-cultural context that exists in pre-sessional EAP courses in Australia and New Zealand
- giving students an opportunity to link the academic English and practices they learn in the EAP course books or courses with the real academic context outside the class. For example, projects can be designed, encouraging students to make discoveries about the academic practice and English used in the subject discipline they will be studying.

The diversity of students' backgrounds and their academic future is a challenge for many pre-sessional EAP teachers. Teachers are bound to experience problems concerning motivating students, especially when the topic of the course unit is not related to the subject discipline they will be studying. It is important that EAP courses include guidance for teachers with regards to how to make the best use of the materials in accordance with the diverse backgrounds and futures of students. The affective aspect of learning needs to be taken into account in the design of activities and materials. Suggestions for teachers should be included with regards to motivating students and maximizing their cognitive and affective engagement in the materials.

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Appendix: Examples

Example 1: Affective engagement (*Skills in English*, Level 2, Reading, p. 28)

Lesson 2: Reading

A Discuss these questions.

Are you married?

Yes

1 When did you get married?
2 Where did you get married?
3 Was it a big event? How many guests did you invite?
4 Did you get lots of presents?

No

1 When would you like to get married – soon, or after you finish your studies?
2 Why will you get married in the future?
OR
Why might you not get married in the future?

B You are going to read a newspaper article about marriage. Look at the headline, picture and topic sentences on the right. What will the main point of the article be? Tick (✓) one.

- ☐ Many people are not getting married because it is too expensive.
- ☐ Governments have the answer to expensive weddings.
- ☐ A history of marriage.
- ☐ Marriage is expensive, but there are ways to make it cheaper.
- ☐ The cost of marriage around the world.

C Read the topic sentences again.

1 What information do you expect to find in each paragraph? Think about this, then ...
2 Match each type of information in the blue box to the correct topic sentence.

D Read the article on page 14 of the Reading Resources book. Check your answers to Exercises B and C above.

E What conclusion do you expect to find in the final paragraph?

1 Discuss in pairs.
2 Read the final paragraph in the Reading Resources book.

F Summarise the article.

1 What is the main problem?
2 What are the solutions?
3 Does the writer mention any problems with the solutions?

Making Marriage More Affordable

A Do you want to get married in the near future?

B In many countries in the world, weddings are becoming extremely expensive affairs.

C Young people in these countries know all about the cost of a wedding.

D In some countries, men solve the problem by marrying foreign brides.

E What can a government do about the problem?

F Another possible solution is the mass-wedding – ceremonies with hundreds of brides and grooms at the same time.

G Couples can save a lot by hiring their wedding clothes, particularly the bridal dress.

a government attempts to deal with the problem
b information about mass-weddings
c information about the cost of weddings in different countries
d information about ways the bride and groom can save money
e introduction to the article
f quotes from young people about the cost of weddings
g reasons for (and problems with?) marrying a foreign bride

Example 2: Vocabulary review (*Skills in English*, Level 3, Writing, p. 39)

THEME 9 Sports and Leisure | As Figure 1 Shows ...

In this theme you are going to write about tourism in your country, using tables, graphs and charts.

athlete *(n)*
compete *(v)*
event *(n)*
gold medal *(n)*
point *(n)*
record *(n)*
score *(v)*
win *(v)*
winner *(n)*
attraction *(n)*
beach *(n)*
golf course *(n)*
heritage site *(n)*
museum *(n)*
statistic *(n)*

Lesson I: Vocabulary

You are going to learn some vocabulary that you will need to write about tourism.

Example 3: Lack of topic continuity (*Study Reading*, pp. 118–119)

Text exploration

Discourse study: Forms of argument 2

In Unit 8 we studied two forms of argument. Here, to sharpen your critical reading abilities, we will study some false forms of argument you may meet.

TASK 14 Read the following texts carefully. Think about the argument presented in each text. Does the argument convince you that the writer's conclusion is justified? If so, why? If not, why not?

Text 1

Women are more likely to strike than men because they take a more emotional attitude to problems at work. The majority of workers in the clothing industry are female. Hence labour disputes are a common feature in factories which produce garments.

Text 2

The 1920s in Western Europe were a period of high unemployment. In the late 20s and early 30s extreme right-wing political parties developed in Germany, Spain, Portugal and Italy. It seems obvious, therefore, that unemployment leads to the rise of fascism.

Text 3

Much of the success of Japanese industry is due to the way in which management and workers are treated as equal partners. There is no gap between white collar and blue collar workers. Both share the same canteens and there is only one entrance for all employees. If these measures were adopted in our country there would be much less industrial friction.

Text 4

Japan and Switzerland are both countries with few natural resources. Like Japan, Switzerland imports much of its fuel and almost all of its raw materials. Both countries base their economies on the production of high-quality, high-value goods like watches and machine tools. Like Japan therefore, Switzerland should have few labour problems.

Text 5

As Marx states, labour creates wealth and this wealth is divided between capitalist and worker. If wages rise, profits fall and if wages fall, profits will rise. Hence capitalists everywhere seek to keep wages at as low a level as possible so that they can maximise their share of the wealth.

Text 6

During the strike of power workers in the UK in 1975, factories were only able to operate for three days per week instead of the usual five. Nevertheless, productivity showed little change. This evidence shows that manufacturers have nothing to fear from reducing the working week by 40%.

Text 7

Workers who do boring, repetitive tasks, like assembly line workers, are more likely to strike than those who have varied and interesting work like craftspeople. Requiring workers to do the same thing, day in, day out, is likely, therefore, to lead to strikes.

Example 4: Cognitive engagement and awareness-raising (*Study Writing*, pp. 60–62)

Text B

World Over-Population and Its Effect

In 1995, UN figures suggested that the world population was expected to grow to 6 billion by 1996/8, 7 billion by 2005 and 8 billion by 2015. World population growth can be roughly classified into four main categories of percentage rates of growth on the evidence of the fertility of parents in the 1900–1994 period. These are as follows: (a) 0 to 0.79 per cent growth (UK and Ireland, Europe, Former Soviet Union); (b) 0.8 to 1.59 per cent growth (US, Canada, Caribbean, Australia and New Zealand, China and Eastern Asia); (c) 1.6 to 2.39 per cent (Central America, South America, India and Southern Asia, South-eastern Asia); (d) 2.4 per cent + (Middle East, Western Asia, Africa).

[Extracted from http://www.on-the-net.com/interskills/minis/popul.htm on 13/02/03]

Answer: ....

Text C

Infant Mortality in Viet Nam

Viet Nam has a fairly well-developed health care system. Although it is one of the world's poorest countries, its incidence of infant mortality is relatively low. The 1997 Viet Nam Demographic and Health Survey found that the infant mortality rate was 44 deaths per thousand live births (in the period 1989–1994), and the estimate from the 1999 census was 37 per thousand in 1999 (NCPFP, 1999). By comparison, the United Nations estimates that the infant mortality rate for countries in the world considered as the "least developed" averaged 109 deaths per thousand live births in the period 1990–1995 (United Nations, 1997).

[http://www.unescap.org/esid/psis/population/journal/2002/v17n1az.pdf retrieved 15/02/03]

Answer: ....

Text D

Go for wholegrains

The consumption of refined carbohydrates such as white bread, white rice and pasta causes the body to produce insulin and insulin-like substances that have cancer-causing potential. Wholegrains such as wholemeal bread, brown rice and wholewheat pasta limit the amount of insulin the body produces. They are also richer in fibre and nutrients, which help protect against cancer.

Dr John Briffa, So what does the doctor order? *The Observer* Sunday October 10, 2004

Answer: ....

TASK 2 *Identifying where the Honesty Principle has failed*

Look at Texts A to D again: one of them breaks the Honesty Principle because it has not produced any evidence nor has it been written in a way that avoids making too strong a generalisation. Which one is it?

TASK 3 *Ensuring generalisations have specific support*

Look again at the three texts above that adhere to the Honesty Principle: in each of them, the generalisation is accompanied by some specific evidence which supports the generalisation.

Choose one of the three texts and find some further support for the claim made; write an additional sentence (or two) that could immediately follow the text. If you do not have good evidence for a generalisation, you will need to ***hedge*** – see 'The language of generalisation' later in this unit.

Example 5: Troubleshooting for discovering English in use (*Study Listening*, pp. 22–23)

Section 2: List markers
Troubleshooting

TASK 5 When they listen to the next section of the talk, some British students find it difficult to identify all five consequences of urbanisation. Adrienne Hunter makes clear that she had five in mind. Identifying the first consequence and the last two is straightforward, but the second and third consequences tend to cause more difficulty.

1 Why should this happen? As you hear this section, **mark** the transcript (below) with a double slash // where you think Adrienne Hunter moved on to a new consequence.
2 Try also to **fill in** the words missing towards the end of the section.

I'm going to talk about five main consequences of this uncontrolled urbanisation / in the first instance there's the problem of the migration
20 of people from the country to the city / people living in the country often see the city as a more desirable place to live / whether they're living in developing or developed countries / but the problem is much more serious in a developing country / because there are / in fact more people who wish to migrate to the city / now the fact of people
25 migrating to the city causes a certain depopulation of rural areas / and a second consequence / is the result / or the result of this is a decrease in the production of food / and in the supply of food to the country as a whole / this in turn can also lead to a rise in prices / because of the law of supply and demand / as a result of people
30 moving to the city / you get a high urban population growth rate / now this isn't not this isn't due not only to the fact of more adults moving to the city / but can also be due to traditions of these people from the country / who perhaps from rural areas have a tradition of large families and so on / so the ci... population of the cities increases with
35 these numerous children of large families / this leads to a fourth consequence / which is a dramatic pressure on the supply of social services in urban areas / in particular / services related to health and education / in relation / in relation to health services / we can see that there are endemic diseases which could be made worse by
40 overcrowding / people coming from the country to the city / and for example in the stresses on services in education / with more children there's a need for more schools and more teachers and so on and so on / a fifth area which is affected by uncontrolled urbanisation is that of the labour supply / often uncontrolled urbanisation leads to an
45 excess of labour supply in the cities / and this can lead in turn to an informal kind of labour activity / which might be called low-prod... productivity activities / for example people selling things in the streets / or for example you often find in large urban areas in a developing country / ______________________ while their owners are
50 doing something else / and then they ______________ when the owners return / this is really a sort of undesirable type of labour / so these are in fact the main consequences of uncontrolled urbanisation /

Example 6: Lack of overall communicative goal (*EAP Now!* pp. 18–19)

This paragraph follows certain other rules because it is the *first or introductory paragraph* of the essay. It has stages. All introductions in English have stages. There are at least three stages to an introduction. Look at the stages outlined in the table on the previous page.

Task 8: Identifying paragraph requirements

In the following three paragraphs, underline and identify:

1 the topic sentence;
2 concrete supporting sentence/s;
3 concluding sentence;
4 find stages 1, 2, and 3 if you think the paragraph is an ***introduction***;
5 if a paragraph is not an introduction, then do not identify the 3 stages outlined above.

Paragraph 1

ESSAY QUESTION: Define survey research and discuss the method.

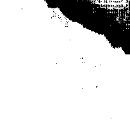
Survey sampling is a quantitative method of research wh[illegible] a 20[illegible] phenomenon with most of its growth since the 19[illegible] It [illegible] accepted method for providing statistical data [illegible] of subjects. **Disciplines** such as sociology, social [illegible] demography, **political science**, economics, **education** [illegible] **health** all rely on **sample surveys**.

Paragraph 2

Guting, **with** [illegible] **English-style villas**, has a **number of beauty spots. Perhaps** [illegible] **is the Cave of the Immortal, where the Daoist monk Lu Dongbin** [illegible] **have mastered the secret of everlasting life. The Botanical** Garden is the **only** sub-alpine **one of its kind in China. Visitors can also see the** former residence of Generalissimo **Chiang Kai-shek.**

Paragraph Three

ESSAY QUESTION: Refugees seeking safe havens around the world are becoming a global issue. Discuss.



Some twenty years ago, this writer read that in the new millennium, the biggest **problem on earth** would be homeless people seeking refuge. These people, it [illegible] **said, would sail** from port to port because their own countries were ruined [illegible] **of pollution**, war or famine. Other homeless peoples would be living in [illegible] **own countries, but** would have to live on the streets without shelter or employment. Sadly, it **appears** that this prophecy has begun to come true as countries [illegible] United Nations members seek solutions to the growing number of [illegible] a growing number of countries.

Task 6: Writing paragraphs

1 Write at least one paragraph based on the models above. The paragraph topic should be a subject you know about; for example, the subject you are studying or are going to study at university or business college, or any other English medium tertiary institution.

2 Exchange your paragraphs with another student and check them using the checklist your teacher will provide.

Chapter 6

Multimedia Materials in Developing Countries: The Malaysian ELT Experience

Jayakaran Mukundan

Introduction

English language teaching (ELT) materials in developing countries have kept up with the times, occasionally, it must be said, by clambering on to the latest bandwagon. The most recent such indulgence is multimedia materials, much to the anguish of experts who have been forced to watch from a safe distance as mobs of policy makers, implementers and teachers have become somewhat possessed by the euphoria that surrounds what some people claim are new tools for teaching. But to claim that this development itself is new (i.e. the fascination for multimedia) is quite inappropriate if one looks back carefully upon past trends in ELT in developing countries. Developing countries are constantly at risk of the 'approaching bandwagon' which simply gathers the gullible, leaving a long trail of dust that hardly ever settles as people are back again onto a new bandwagon. The reason as to why this is a major concern, hence the reason for writing this piece, is that there are implications for learning-teaching, mostly pedagogic and financial. From the point of pedagogy, people in ELT are baffled as to how to link this new genre of material to existing frameworks of methodology. From the financial perspective, policy makers, implementers and teachers are hard pressed to provide logistical support for the indulgence in this new-wave material which puts the laws of economics, especially 'opportunity cost', to test. Does the use of these materials make teachers forgo using some other materials, especially conventional ones, which have withstood the test of time and have been found to be effective?

A Look at the Bandwagon Theory in Operation in Developing World ELT

The bandwagon theory is widely discussed in communication theory as it is closely related to a phenomenon in the psychology of humans – people love a trend! Many trends, like those commonly found in the fashion scene, are

harmless – fashions come and go and indulgence in new clothes probably only affects individuals. Trends in the field of language teaching invite much attention from society itself. Some trends can have social, political and financial implications on societies, and adverse effects arising from bad investments in education usually leave long-term effects which can cause the system to move into regression.

Trends in ELT have been in motion from the start of ELT in developing countries. Like changing trends in fashion, novelty was something most English Language teachers in developing countries aspired to, although the costs involved in change were excessively high. A clear illustration of the degree of emphasis placed on new and expensive equipment and materials was when language laboratories first made their presence felt in a big way in countries like Malaysia in the early 1980s. Although cassette tape recorders were already widely in use, most school headmasters felt that language laboratories were an absolute necessity, rather than a luxury. Soon most residential schools, which were considered 'select' schools and had larger funds, had language laboratories, all of which soon became white elephants as teachers found using them difficult (some of them required teachers to be trained so that they could be used properly). Another factor that led to the gross under-use of these laboratories was that while the hardware was there, there was very little emphasis on acquiring the audio tapes that could be used. On reflection, many teachers found that the enormous amount of money spent on language laboratories (sometimes up to US$100,000 per laboratory) was wasted. The job of teaching listening could have occurred with the help of a simple cassette recorder. The language laboratory, which started as an extension of the ELT classroom (for listening and sometimes listening-speaking-pronunciation practice to be carried out) was soon seen to be stifling ELT pedagogy. Learners practised listening-speaking in practice sessions which were detached from the continuity of classroom instruction, and gradually more and more teachers realized that the laboratory should have only one function, as a self-access facility. The remarkable thing about the history of the period when trends changed continuously was that the basic listening activities that should have come with the textbook were presented in an outrageously incompetent manner. In order to save production costs on audio tapes, dialogues and other forms of text meant for listening activities were printed in the appendices section of the textbook and meant for the teacher to 'read aloud (this was quite a task as most of the activities involved dialogues where the teacher had to play all the roles!). Another dimension of the horror of this cost-saving move was that in retrospect many teachers realized that students looked too comfortable when doing listening exercises. Many never realized at that time that the students were already reading the transcripts in the appendices, thereby converting an entire listening exercise into a reading one!

Another trend was when educational television (ETV) broadcasts became a feature of the ELT landscape. Learners and teachers experienced an aspect of entertainment getting into their lives, in an era (in the 1970s and 1980s) where such syllabuses as the Structural Syllabus, which emphasized explicit teaching

of grammar, were embraced by the school system. The 'entertainment' value provided by ETV was a bonus in that some of the broadcast lessons incorporated aspects of story and as a result the grammar that was taught was implicit. This was beneficial although bewildering, in that whereas the main course offered strict explicit teaching of grammar, the television broadcasts de-emphasized it. It was probably due to what teachers themselves called a 'mismatch' that ETV was soon phased out. There were other reasons as well, mostly logistical – very few schools made their timetables compatible with ETV schedules, hence broadcast lessons which cost millions to produce were wasted because they were never utilized.

The demise of ETV in the late 1980s was also due to the pull from the inevitable introduction of an aspect of technology that hit the field of education – computer technology. New terminologies were soon coined, and an important one was 'Computer-Assisted Language Learning' or CALL. It was at this time (the early 1980s) that even university TESL (Teaching of English as Second Language) undergraduate programmes in Malaysia started incorporating CALL as one of the subjects in the curriculum. The ignorance of curriculum planners as we would be tempted to call it now must convince people into believing that the negative influences of the bandwagon can have far-reaching implications on the entire ELT landscape. So shallow in perspective was the structure of these new CALL courses that what students learned were simple programming operations (usually using the programming tool, BASIC). Many of the sessions in computer laboratories involved the development of gap-fill exercises and multiple-choice questions, the overall emphasis almost always on the development of test materials rather that that which helps with teaching (as the 'learning' in the acronym CALL suggests). The hurry in which ELT embraced CALL took away the focus from core learning activities that usually took place in conventional classrooms, and the infectious enthusiasm for laboratory-like settings once again enveloped ELT. The language laboratory soon began the slide towards redundancy and soon had to give way to yet another laboratory – the CALLL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning Laboratory).

The indulgence in Computer-Assisted Language Learning has moved through various phases from its humble beginnings to the present time, where such terms as internet learning and multimedia resources have become commonly used in ELT.

The Long March towards Multimedia in Developing World ELT

Just as CALL started with much novelty value and gimmickry, the advent of multimedia in ELT was much the same. Its introduction produced more confusion and unanswered questions concerning justification of use rather than assurances to teachers of its usefulness from the perspective of pedagogy. Multimedia materials seemed to be ranging from simple still-screen presentations to that which was interactive, the latter providing learners with the oppor-

tunity to manipulate features on the screen to extend the experiences in the learning process. However, the enthusiasm and desire of teachers to move into multimedia-assisted learning in developing countries like Malaysia were initially hampered by the lack of purchasing power. The promise of interactive multimedia was still distant and the only affordable multimedia were ones which were not interactive – usually still-screen ones with unsophisticated colour animation accompanied by text. The commercial enterprises, suspecting the gullibility of teachers, soon started creating simple programmes and claimed these to be multimedia. Even readers which were in book format in the past were converted into CD format, although the logic of the conversion process was suspect – the CD version resembled the book entirely. It comprised 'still pages' and the only difference was that it was just an electronic version of the reader.

Some Reasons for the Rush into Multimedia – The Malaysian Experience

There are several reasons for the rush into multimedia, the main ones being:

1. The blueprint 'Vision 2020' for the achievement of 'developed nation status' by the Year 2020 was launched and it brought about a greater emphasis on the use of computers and computer technology at all levels, both in the public and corporate sectors. The development of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), which was supposed to emulate Silicon Valley, started a rush among IT companies to venture into the development of software and multimedia for various uses, as many companies were aware of large amounts of money being allocated for the IT sector by the government. Many companies started work on multimedia products so as to prepare themselves for purchases by the government of multimedia products for use in schools.
2. The development of 'smart schools' which placed emphasis on education through the use of computers gave many IT companies the idea that the Ministry of Education was embarking on a programme to eventually convert all conventional schools (those that remained as traditional chalk board classrooms) into smart schools in stages. This made even traditional publishers move towards the development of multimedia, which then supplemented the traditional textbook.
3. The continued expansion of a large middle class within the Malaysian population led to a larger number of people having the purchasing power for personal computers for the home. This led to greater availability of computer software and multimedia products for the home-user. Most of the preferred multimedia seemed to be that designed for content-based school subjects rather than for ELT as the former was more sophisticated, with elaborate use of video clips incorporated within the products.
4. The implementation of a new policy which led to the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English started with a Ministry of Education

allocation of 5 billion ringgit (Pillay and Thomas 2004: 85), which was part of the 'deep end' strategy to get teachers of Science and Mathematics to be quickly proficient in the English language. This meant that more money was available and most of it would be spent on IT-related learning resources. This brought about a rush amongst IT vendors who wanted to sell almost anything that was even closely related to multimedia materials.

The Misconceptions about Use of Multimedia in ELT within the Developing World

Misconception 1: The belief that language classrooms can look like laboratories

When multimedia first became fashionable in Malaysia, one of the main setbacks in the introduction of it in schools was logistical. Not many people had ideas as to how it should be exploited. This was especially so because of the nature of the use of multimedia itself. Multimedia had to be worked with on the personal computer (PC) or its equivalent and, as such, the hardware took most of the space in classrooms. With average enrolments in most Malaysian classrooms being within the region of 40 to 45 per class, the idea of converting entire classrooms into those which are equipped with enough computers for students would be both a financial and a logistical nightmare. From the logistical point of view, classrooms would have to have fewer students and this was not going to be an option for consideration.

The alternative that most administrators believed would make them become a part of the IT revolution was to convert some of the classrooms into laboratories with rows of computers. In most cases two students shared a PC.

This idea of classrooms looking like computer laboratories brought back glimpses of the past when people believed that listening-speaking would be best done in language laboratories.

The lessons that took place in the computer laboratories for English language soon resembled those of self-access learning environments, with learners playing with language programs, the only difference being the teacher's presence. And more often than not the teacher whose role it was to be facilitator played almost no role in classrooms (except in providing instructions), especially since most of the multimedia were designed to be user-friendly.

The initial setback from the use of multimedia in laboratory-like situations was a feeling of insecurity in teachers, many believing that technology had moved pedagogy backwards. First, the idea of the laboratory-like settings in supposedly 'smart' schools brought ELT back into the teacher-centred learning environments of the past. While in the past the teacher was the biggest obstacle to the creation of non-threatening learning environments and student-centred teaching, at the present moment the smart schools, after succeeding in getting teachers sidelined in classrooms, brought about what can be considered as a situation that confronts language teaching pedagogy in schools. First, the rows of computers in 'smart' school classrooms became an inhibiting factor in

the learning-teaching environment. Then teachers were faced with a dilemma – were they directing a script or merely playing the role of 'laboratory assistants'?

The main task of educators in such a situation would be to provide justification on such drastic action leading to radical change by confronting the issues that surround such action and provide answers to several questions, mainly:

i) Is this new methodology?
ii) If at all this is new methodology is it backed by theory and do the sum results of learning-teaching that goes on in classrooms contribute to effective acquisition/learning?

Throughout the history of language teaching, the two main elements that have worked for language development in formal classroom settings have been undoubtedly the learner and the teacher. Much as they were contributions to the field that led to the eventual reduction of 'teacher presence' in classrooms, there was absolutely no basis for even suggesting that language learning can effectively take place without the teacher. The classrooms of the smart schools suggest that the computer plays the main role and as such it must question our beliefs on methodology. Does this situation suggest that there is new methodology at work or has the bandwagon derailed our attempts at making conventional methodology work as it should?

In suggesting that we look at the situation and determine if it is new methodology, we would have to confront the issue in an objective manner. We are now convinced that not all methodologies moved from Approach to Design to Procedure in sequential manner like the traditional approaches which include the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) or the Communicative Approach to Language Teaching (CALT). Lazanov's Suggestopedia started off as a promising trial and error sequence of procedures which seemed to work. When it did he rationalized the procedures with theories, in particular those associated with the affect. Hence there is a possibility that a new multimedia-enhanced learning environment with unique procedures can lead to the discovery of new methodology.

In our present smart school situation, however, if it were a series of procedures put in place to test hypotheses and eventually build theory then we must assume now that we have reached the expected conclusions – there is no basis for thinking of computers by themselves directing learning. Language cannot be taught with the teacher prancing in the aisle of rows in classrooms while learners work on activities using click-and-drag routines. Absolutely none of the features of communication simulation are present that would induce information gap or negotiation or other features of language learning that are present in conventional methodologies like the Communicative Approach to Language Teaching. Thus the smart school with its bias towards multimedia oriented learning is nothing more than an opportunity for individualized learning as there is no basis for it to be considered as methodology (although the proponents of this move had this misconception).

Misconception 2: The belief that there is such a thing as use of 'teaching courseware' in ELT and it can 'direct' teaching-learning in classrooms
'Teaching courseware' is probably terminology coined to justify the use of teacher-directed software in classrooms. In early 2001 in an effort to accelerate the development of the MSC the Malaysian government declared that it would invest heavily in computer hardware and software in primary and secondary schools throughout the nation. The allocation of millions of Ringgit for the development of multi-media for schools in English, Mathematics and Science soon started intense competition amongst local IT companies to bid for these lucrative government tenders. The project itself must be one of the most inspirational government projects of all time. It was unique, local and required companies to develop custom-made 'courseware' for the Malaysian school system. Tenders were thus open to Malaysian companies. This was a positive move as it started a number of local companies, all of which were new companies attempting to develop Malaysia-developed multimedia products. Some Malaysian companies, however, realized the time wastage that could come from developing products from 'scratch' (and in attempting to 're-invent the wheel') and settled for a collaborative effort with foreign companies which were already in the business of developing multimedia products.

The result of all this was the production of courseware, a massive project coordinated by the Curriculum Development Centre of the Ministry of Education. While most people were fascinated by the colour in the visuals and videos that were in CDs made for content courses like Mathematics and Science (as they made them a lot more interesting than mere explanations from the teacher), the teachers who were involved in teaching English using the courseware had reservations about this new development. First these teachers were in a dilemma – they had an abundance of resources. The Textbook Division of the Ministry of Education had in 2003 released the new textbooks after the 1989–2002 cycle of books were decommissioned. That very year, the teaching courseware was introduced to schools by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC). There was a case of 'competing resources' (Mukundan 2006: 42) and while it was mandatory to use the new textbooks, teachers were baffled as the CDC had developed 160 lessons of teaching courseware – more than enough to cover lessons for the entire school year, which meant that the textbook would have to be considered redundant.

The use of teaching courseware amongst teachers did not come without problems. Logistically, the preparation for classes was considered a nightmare by teachers who were long accustomed to the use of textbooks (although they never liked the textbooks either). Many teachers, after having to push trolleys consisting of notebook computers, LCD projectors and CDs and to install technology before the start of each class, soon became tired and weary after being made to work a lot harder with the introduction of teaching courseware. Teacher behaviour and orientations in the language classrooms also underwent much change. As with the advent of Power-point, the introduction of teaching courseware brought the teacher's focus more on the technology and brought about a divide between the teacher and the class. Teaching courseware required that the teacher click and drag on the screen. The teacher also had to ensure that the technology worked without glitches. Under these circumstances the

teacher merely became an extension of the technology that had somehow taken over. The courseware dictated the terms and the teacher clicked and dragged menus and conducted activities. The role of the teacher was reduced to that of a conductor in an orchestra, and this was by far the most important pedagogical implication of the use of courseware in ELT.

Misconception 3: The belief that teaching courseware can fit into language teaching pedagogy

The teaching courseware for ELT developed in Malaysia is a brave and unique effort in expanding the range of material that teachers can use for their teaching. But as mentioned earlier, the fact that 160 lessons have been produced is clear indication that these multimedia materials can be used for teaching throughout the year, thereby effectively eliminating the use of the newly commissioned textbooks. The Malaysian textbook, even if inadequate in some ways, is material which has been developed around a syllabus. The multimedia materials have been developed in isolation and were never meant to supplement the textbook. In fact the term 'teaching courseware' as made known to teachers were materials designed for day-to-day classroom teaching. Whether or not the use of the teaching courseware can be considered pedagogically sound would require a quick overview of what type of content is offered.

There are approximately 32 CDs produced for each level of teaching and each CD has enough material for five lessons. A typical CD (as the one that features in Unit 20, Form 1) has the 'Let's do something fun' as a theme and has the following five lessons in it:

Lesson 1: Meeting new people
Lesson 2: What makes a good friend?
Lesson 3: Sharing interests
Lesson 4: Making plans together
Lesson 5: Literature: Of Bunga Telur and Bally Shoes (Part 1)

The five lessons per CD are an indication that each CD will be used within a week as there are altogether five lessons for English Language per week. Most experienced teachers using the multimedia CDs were of the impression that the materials were purposefully made to be 'teacher-proof' so that even the worst teacher would never go wrong under any circumstance. Several aspects of the CDs were highlighted as being 'strange' to the learning-teaching situation, some of which were the following.

The teaching courseware had its own script and hence its own directions

The teacher operating the multimedia has to stand in front of the class and operate via click and drag routines on screens which are projected through the LCD projector on to a big screen. The teachers sometimes find themselves in awkward positions, like that of bystanders who are not directly involved in the teaching episodes. This is mainly because the teaching courseware 'speaks' even what is normally considered 'teacher talk'. Hence, as soon as the teacher clicks

on Screen 1, Lesson 1 (Unit 20) a series of pictures on sports events appears on screen, the program takes over and provides the instructions orally:

> Are these safe or dangerous? Look at the following activities. Do you know what they are? Would you like to do any of these?

The screen-by-screen approach to the operation of the teaching courseware would give the impression that this is a lecture and not a lesson. It may also mislead teachers into believing that screen-by-screen activation and 'instruction' followed by activity, as may have been successful in content-based subjects, might also be applicable to language teaching.

The teaching courseware may end up testing rather than teaching

A typical lesson has seven main screens and teachers using the multimedia material have come to view the material as having a strong test bias rather than a teaching bias. A typical lesson in the multimedia teaching courseware has screens which ask learners to identify correct items, sequence items correctly, identify errors or indicate whether things are true or false. The impression that it is more for testing rather than teaching is further reinforced with 'supplementary' worksheets which are also available at the click of a key. The idea that it is multimedia in use is highly ironical. Multimedia is supposed to enrich the learning-teaching environment by incorporating aspects of entertainment into education through varied and rich media. Under present circumstances, coloured screens with limited use of animation but with abundance of tasks would lead learners to believe that it is the near equivalent of the textbook, the only difference being the former is projected onto a screen.

Learning-teaching has never been this 'unnatural' as the LCD projector is switched on throughout the lesson

While the use of multimedia teaching courseware is still in early years and very little research, especially 'impact studies', have been completed, one can assume that some basic principles of learning-teaching have been breached with the use of teaching courseware. An unnatural environment emerges in classrooms where the LCD projector is turned on throughout the 40-minute lesson. This results in the attention of learners being focused on the projection all the time. The assumption here is that such learning situations may have negative implications for both learners and teachers. The learner would probably come under severe duress due to long exposure to light projections while the teacher, who is constantly in the shadows of the projection, may be restricted in terms of natural movement in the classroom.

Conclusion

Conventional materials like textbooks have often been considered part of the reason as to why language lessons have been considered to be dull. The use of

other media, especially multimedia, has thus been encouraged so as to allow for the interplay of a variety of media resources to enrich the learning-teaching environment. This is notably so since research especially on affect has shown that input from a variety of sources and in various forms can lead to storage and recall from both the left and the right brain. Multimedia can also offset the negative effects of incompatibilities that come from learning-style preferences and teaching methods. As many learners have been found to be 'experiential' rather than 'studial' in their orientations, it is believed that multimedia use will help them adjust accordingly by allowing them to experience language use in many more ways than the textbook is capable of providing.

It is however important to realize that the pitfalls of over-indulgence in multimedia can provide the wrong signals to people in education who believe that multimedia can drive pedagogically sound methodology. This is dangerous as seen from the context of the teaching courseware context in Malaysia where the teaching courseware directs classroom teaching in a prescriptive manner. This is in direct contrast to sound language teaching pedagogy where the teacher and the teaching script lead learners into the expected as well as unexpected in joint exploration of language experience.

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Chapter 7
Self-Access Materials

Lucy Cooker

Introduction

Self-access centres (SACs) are exciting for me in the same way that cookery shops or garden centres are exciting. Arrays of 'stuff', all with enormous potential – if only you know what to do with it all! In this chapter I aim to give some guidance on some of the more popular 'stuff' in SACs. Firstly, I shall be examining some common features, then critically evaluating a selection of specific materials, and finally discussing some of the improvements that could be made to published materials for the self-access market.

In this chapter, I use the term 'self-access materials' to mean those which are designed for use in 'open-learning' environments, in other words, the kind of learning which takes place outside the traditional classroom-based, teacher-led model. Learners may have access to SACs (also known as 'independent learning centres' or 'open learning centres') where banks of resources are available, or they may be working on their own at home, either within the structure of a distance-learning course or in a completely self-directed way. Thus, here, the term 'self-access materials' is not limited to those materials used in an SAC, but refers to all materials designed to be used without the direction of a teacher, although SACs will be referred to throughout. Furthermore, self-access materials may be published in a paper-based format or online, or they may be made available in audio-visual formats (cassette tapes, video-tapes, DVDs) or non-web computer-based formats (CD-Roms). Equally likely, materials may be unpublished and designed by learners themselves (Malcolm 2004) or by teaching staff (Lin and Brown 1994). However, in this chapter we are not concerned with in-house materials, but will look solely at materials commonly available on the English language teaching market.

Overview

Despite the rise in SACs and systems over the last 20 years (Cooker and Cutting 2002; Gardner and Miller 1999), most published English language learning materials are produced for class use, with very few materials produced specifically for self-access or self-study. Nevertheless, if one were to browse inside any SAC at random, one would inevitably encounter a fairly large range of materials

of different types. A brief online survey of SACs in UK universities indicates all or some of the following materials are provided for learners, and from my experience of visiting SACs in Japan, Hong Kong, Australia and New Zealand this list is similar worldwide:

a) Authentic materials such as magazines, television programmes, films and music
b) Graded readers (some with audio components)
c) Language learning software/web-based resources (CALL materials)
d) Drama-based language learning materials
e) Coursebooks
f) Texts for specific skills (e.g. listening, reading, speaking, writing, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation)
g) Examination preparation texts.

In the following section I am going discuss some of the more salient features of these materials in general. In the next section I will draw on my experience of working with learners in an SAC to evaluate some specific examples of materials from the categories indicated above. I have chosen these because of their particular suitability for the self-access context.

Authentic materials such as magazines, television programmes, films and music

Magazines and newspapers are popular in SACs because they are visually appealing, up-to-date and cheap. If a subscription is too expensive for an institution then it is possible to ask staff and students to donate items which are only recently out of date. Consequently they are an effective means of keeping an SAC stocked with engaging material. Television programmes, films and music are extremely popular with learners – they are enjoyable (and therefore motivating) and allow learners to feel that they are not really involved in a serious language learning activity. Learners can use both print-based materials and audio-visual materials creatively to help them overcome the challenges faced in using authentic resources. For example, a great deal of support is given to the learner through the pictures and graphics, and it may be helpful for a learning adviser to recommend that learners use these visual aspects to help them focus on the whole meaning, rather than concentrating first on the challenging linguistic input. Similarly, reading a newspaper or periodical in the first language prior to attempting an article on the same topic in the target language can be helpful. For those learners who are strong readers or who come from less oral-based learning cultures, films in DVD format offer valuable support as the closed captions can be switched on and read whilst watching the film.

Graded readers

Graded readers are either original stories, or retold classic or contemporary novels, available for adults or children, and written usually using language graded for learners of English, and coupled with plentiful pictures and

graphics to add meaning and interest to the texts. Therefore graded readers are not authentic materials, because of the careful selection of language and the fact that they provide far more support for the learner than would be found in an authentic novel, but neither do they take samples of language in order to overtly 'teach' learners about that language. Series of graded readers come in various levels divided according to grammatical complexity and number of keywords or headwords. An exception to this is the *World Wide Readers* series (Tomlinson and Maley 2004), which does not use graded language at all, but is written intuitively for learners of different ability levels. Others, such as the *Cambridge English Readers* and the *Black Cat Reading and Training* series are levelled according to examination. For example, *Cambridge English Readers* are levelled according to the Cambridge ESOL Examination levels. Readers often range from 'starter' texts, for those who are just starting to learn to read in English, to advanced texts which are close in style and format to an authentic English novel. They are often accompanied by an audio recording of the story, which can be useful for encouraging extensive listening. Many series also contain accompanying exercises and activities, either in the back of the book, or in a downloadable format. These tend to be divided into pre-, while- and post-reading sections, allowing learners the opportunity to practise specific reading skills such as skimming and scanning, although such exercises are not concordant with the notion of encouraging reading for pleasure. Examples of series of graded readers are *Penguin Readers, Oxford Bookworms, Oxford Progressive English Readers, Macmillan Readers, Cambridge English Readers, Black Cat Reading and Training, Scholastic ELT Readers* and others from small publishing companies worldwide. For a comprehensive survey of graded readers see Hill (2001).

Language learning software/web-based resources

In many SACs nowadays there tends to be an emphasis on language learning software and web-based resources. I will use the term CALL (computer-aided language learning) materials to refer to both of these. The popularity of CALL is due to a variety of factors, including a lack of storage space for books, the pre-supposition that interest and motivation can be derived from CALL materials and the ease of delivery – all that is needed is a computer terminal rather than an array of different types of equipment. Indeed nowadays some SACs are totally virtual, such as the VSAC (Virtual SAC) at the University of Nottingham in the UK. Above all, CALL materials are particularly useful in an SAC simply because they are very easily accessed. Most CALL materials are not written to be mediated by a teacher for classroom purposes in the same way as many coursebooks are, and therefore independent use is facilitated by clear rubrics which do not include instructions which would only make sense for class-based learning situations.

There is an enormous variety of materials within the CALL genre so that it is difficult to draw generalizations. Chapelle (1994) speaks of commonly drawn dichotomies such as learner-controlled vs. program-controlled, intelligent vs. non-intelligent software and games vs. tutorial. One feature which is more prominent and distinctive in CALL materials compared to paper-based versions

is the 'games' aspect and many materials such as Mario Rinvolucri's *MindGame* and *Who is Oscar Lake?* exploit this. One difficulty faced by educational software developers in general though is the increasing sophistication of learners who are used to ever-evolving, complex gaming systems. Keeping learners engaged in using more basic language learning software, which does not have millions of pounds spent on it in terms of research and development, will be a challenging task for the future.

Drama-based language learning materials

Drama-based language-learning materials are not a very large category of EFL language materials. However, I have included them in this list because they tend to be multi-skill, difficult to place in any other category, and above all sadly under-represented in the English language learning market. Personally I feel that such materials are very under-rated and offer the self-access learner an excellent opportunity to develop proficiency in all four skills. In the next section I shall discuss a specific example of drama-based self-access materials called *Connect with English*. Other examples of this genre include *Search* published by the BBC, and stand-alone drama-based language learning components included with some coursebooks, such as the *Headway* series, the *Interchange* series and the *New Cambridge English Course*. These materials usually comprise a specially written drama or dramas, either delivered through video, DVD or online formats, with accompanying activities for the practice of all four skills plus grammar and vocabulary. The benefits of these drama materials are similar to those of graded readers in that the learner is exposed to a significant amount of language in context. As the storyline grows, and the learner becomes more familiar with the characters and the plot, so understanding of the language develops.

Coursebooks

Coursebooks tend to be widely available within SACs because they are easily sourced, because there may be a lack of awareness of what constitutes good self-access materials, and perhaps because the work done in the SAC is a follow-up to work done in the classroom with the coursebook. Having said that, coursebooks do not make ideal self-access materials. This is because of the fact that they are usually designed to be used within a teacher-directed classroom environment. The majority of coursebooks include instructions such as 'Tell the class', 'Ask your teacher about ...' or 'Work in groups of four', or alternatively activities may be labelled as 'Group work' or 'Class activity'. Even if the self-access learner is working with a partner or a group of friends in the SAC, these instructions can be distracting and deterring. Whilst it is possible for learners to choose those activities which are not suitable for the manner in which they want to work, or to adapt the activities for their own use, a certain amount of learner-training is required to ensure that learners' experiences with coursebooks in SACs is problem-free. It requires a sophisticated learner to navigate through the book selecting appropriate activities.

The advantages of coursebooks are that they are usually published in series

to suit a range of levels, and the layout is very attractive with glossy covers and colourful graphics and images. This can be important in a 'supermarket' style SAC (Gardner and Miller 1999: 63) where learners are given a wide range of materials to select from.

Texts for specific skills

Texts for specific skills are very popular materials for self-access learning because they directly meet the needs of learners who are often looking to improve one particular skill. Skill-based texts take a variety of forms and are much more varied than coursebooks in terms of their content and layout. Skill-based texts may combine two or more skills together in one book, for example the *Just* series combines reading & writing, and listening & speaking, or they may focus on just one skill area, such as pronunciation in *Ship or Sheep*. Some skill-based texts have the same drawbacks as coursebooks in that they are designed for class-based work, but a large number are designed and marketed for self-study purposes.

Paper drills are a sub-set of texts for specific skills and tend to be very highly structured and prescriptive. Common features include explanations and examples of discrete language segments, usually with a unit or a chapter focusing on one topic or language area. The explanation is followed by several exercises which the learner is required to complete using the target language. These exercises normally take the form of gap-fill activities, or matching activities, which are non-contextual, with little or no creative input on the part of the learner. The stand-alone unit structure means that language is not recycled or reviewed. Examples of paper drill texts on the market are the *Grammar/Vocabulary/Idioms in Use* series and the *Penguin Test Yourself* series.

Texts for specific skills are often levelled and provide a platform for learners to work through developing the relevant skill as they go. For this reason, learners often find them very motivating as they can see a progression in their learning as they move from one level to another. Within the skill-based texts there are some which are particularly appropriate for self-access learning. For example, texts for listening skills and reading skills are easily designed or adapted for self-access study because these skills can be practised individually and do not require an audience. Furthermore, feedback on listening and reading tasks is easily generated in the form of answer keys and transcripts. However, writing skills and speaking skills can be problematic in a self-access context as they are less easily practised individually and do require an audience (at least an imagined one). In addition, feedback is much harder to provide – samples of written and spoken language can be included for learners to compare with their own language production, but this requires the learner to accept a certain amount of ambiguity as there is no single 'correct' answer. The *Just* series by Jeremy Harmer is an exception to the standard materials of this genre as it encourages creativity on the part of the learner, and encourages the learner to deal with ambiguity in answer production. This series includes *Just Reading and Writing, Just Listening and Speaking, Just Vocabulary* and *Just Grammar*, in both British English and American English versions.

Examination preparation texts

Like coursebooks, exam preparation materials tend to be widely available in SACs. This is for several reasons. Firstly, there is a great emphasis in the English language teaching world on tests and examinations, partly due to pressure on learners from employees and universities to prove they have achieved a certain level of proficiency. This means that studying for tests such as IELTS, TOEFL, PET, KET, FCE, TOEIC and BULATS is extremely important to the learners themselves, and thus SACs often have a big demand for such materials. Secondly, these materials are some of the better-designed ones for self-access use. They contain activities which are easy to complete in an open learning environment either solo or with a partner. In addition they tend to be easily navigable as they have different sections for different skills, thus allowing learners to select activities according to their needs and interests. In the past, I have often recommended exam preparation texts to learners who are not interested in taking the exam, simply because they are the best materials available for self-study of a particular language item or skill. Exam preparation materials are published in very large quantities and thus there is a great choice available for anyone who is interested in sourcing texts for an SAC, or obtaining them for their own study.

The biggest drawback with examination preparation materials is that they can be dull and repetitive with lots of drills and gap-fill activities which do not engage the learners cognitively, affectively or in any other meaningful way.

Evaluation of Self-Access Materials

Graded readers

(With specific reference to *Oxford Bookworms*, *Oxford Progressive English Readers*, *Penguin Readers*, *Cambridge English Readers* and *Black Cat Reading and Training*)

Criteria	5	Comments
1 To what extent do the materials provide exposure to English in authentic use?	3	Whilst most graded readers are written using graded language, they are arguably authentic in terms of purpose, because one of the main aims in publishing readers is for the learner to enjoy the process of reading, just as a native language user can. In most graded reader series language awareness activities and exercises are placed at the end of the book or story, as they are with *Oxford Bookworms* and in the *Black Cat Reading and Training* series. Alternatively, they may not be in the book at all, but downloadable online (as they are with *Cambridge English Readers*, for example). This means that graded readers provide the learner with sheltered authenticity: depending on level the uses of vocabulary,

Criteria	5	Comments
		collocations, written speech, and grammatical structures may be almost identical to uses in first language novels, however the grading allows learners to follow the story without continual interruptions to check meanings
2 To what extent is the exposure to English in use likely to be meaningful to the target learners?	5	If an SAC has a large range of readers, then learners are able to select one which will match both their proficiency level in English and also their interest. These resources then stand a high chance of being meaningful to learners not only through the content, but also because each reader is a complete, self-contained activity. The act of getting lost in a book becomes possible for learners, despite the fact they are reading in a second or other language. If the level of the graded reader is a little above that of the learner's level, they will be building on language previously encountered, reinforcing important vocabulary and grammatical structures and doing so with language which is completely in context
3 To what extent are the texts likely to interest the learners?	4	Of course not every learner will be interested in every graded reader, but the advantage of readers is that so many are published, that learners are afforded a great deal of choice. Graded readers come in many forms, from non-fiction (e.g. *Oxford Bookworms Factfiles*) to novelizations of popular films (a large proportion of the *Penguin Readers* series are this style), to re-tellings of classic stories (all the *Oxford Progressive English Readers*) to original fiction specially written for English learners (e.g. all the *Cambridge English Readers*). The *Penguin Readers* series accompanying website contains factsheets for each book, giving background information about the author and the book to help develop interest. The *Black Cat Reading and Training* series includes excellent Internet Project sections throughout their books, and these serve to give increased reading practice online, and to stimulate learners' interest in the topics by relating what has been read about in the book, to real-world stories and information

<table>
<tr><th>Criteria</th><th>5</th><th>Comments</th></tr>
<tr><td>4 To what extent are the activities likely to provide achievable challenges to the learners?</td><td>5</td><td>Whilst proponents of the benefits of extensive reading differ in their attitudes towards text difficulty and the effect of this on the reader (Nation 1997; Maley, Chapter 8, this volume) what is agreed upon is that consuming large numbers of readers is beneficial to the language acquisition process (Prowse 2002). Thus the concept of achievable challenge should be understood in terms of quantity rather than difficulty. Learners can be advised to set themselves goals for reading 1 book per day or per week, or whatever is appropriate according to their reading speed and other demands on their time.
When the graded readers are accompanied by pre-, while- and post-reading activities, these can be placed at various points along the continuum of achievable challenge → pointless activity. The pre-reading activities are either schema building questions, predictive questions using various clues in the design, graphics and text or connective questions drawing the reader into the book by having them relate their own experiences to the text. These are more cognitively challenging than the closed-answer, gap-fill and comprehension style questions which often make up the while- and post-reading activities.
The notable exception to the standard activities are the Internet Projects in the *Black Cat Reading and Training* series in which learners are required to carry out real world reading activities by investigating the topics in the books using the recommended websites. The more open-ended nature of these tasks is more likely to provide an achievable challenge to learners than most of the activities in other graded reader series</td></tr>
<tr><td>5 To what extent are the activities likely to engage the learners affectively?</td><td>5</td><td rowspan="2">Just as some books are enjoyable and interesting to read on both an emotional and an intellectual level, so it is just as likely that we will start a story and never finish, or that we would avoid ever picking up a book because we know we would not be interested in it. It's the same for second language learners. In a well-stocked, SAC library or bookshop, a learner will be able to select their own graded reader, thus allowing them to choose a story or topic which they will find engaging on both the affective and the cognitive levels</td></tr>
<tr><td>6 To what extent are the activities likely to engage the target learners cognitively?</td><td>5</td></tr>
</table>

Criteria	5	Comments
7 To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for learners to make discoveries about how English is used?	4	As discussed above, the graded language does place limits on the authenticity of the language in graded readers, however the amount of language in graded readers, even those at the very lowest starter levels, mean that learners can notice a great deal about how English is used. In my experience, learners have reported an increased awareness of individual vocabulary items, grammatical structures, collocations, and pronunciation from reading graded readers and listening to the accompanying audio components. One particularly interesting pedagogical aspect of readers is that those which are simplifications of modern or classic novels tend to come in a range of levels, maybe across publishers or within one publisher. For example, in the *Penguin Readers* series, a learner could read the story of Romeo and Juliet in a level 3, 4 or 5 book. This means that learners can build confidence with vocabulary and grammatical structures, and familiarize themselves with the story at an easier level, before progressing through to the higher levels
8 To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for meaningful use of English?	2	It is argued that graded readers give learners a 'general language workout' (Dawson 2005: 6) as regular reading helps not only the development of reading fluency and speed, but also vocabulary, grammatical structure and writing. If audio components are also used, then listening and speaking (especially pronunciation) can be added to this list. One of the most meaningful uses of English afforded by graded readers is the opportunity for learners to discuss their opinions about the books they have read. Just as we may discuss with friends a book we have enjoyed in the first language, so language learners can experience real communication, and gain pleasure and confidence from discussing well-loved books with their friends and classmates. It is surprising how little this activity is suggested within the graded readers themselves (in fact I have never seen it), as it also requires a good understanding of the book and the recycling of vocabulary and structure for an in-depth discussion

Criteria	5	Comments
9 To what extent do the materials provide opportunities for the learners to gain feedback on the effectiveness of their use of English?	2	In terms of overt feedback, very little is available to learners in their independent use of graded readers. Whereas in a classroom, the teacher could check understanding of the story, or learners could talk together about their stories and their experiences of reading, in self-access these opportunities are less likely, unless there is a language adviser, a reading group or a study buddy or friend to support the learner. The self-access student could use the activities available with many graded readers to help give them some feedback on their comprehension and reading skills. Answer keys are often available online, and can be downloaded, printed off and stored in the centre for students to access themselves
10 To what extent are the materials likely to sustain positive impact?	4	If the learner has chosen a text which interests them, then it is very likely the materials will sustain a positive impact. The wide choice of titles available means that learners should be encouraged to stop reading a book which does not interest them, and to choose another (particularly in a self-access context where learning should be regarded as enjoyable, not as a chore). I have always found this a successful way to limit negative responses to extensive reading in the target language
11 To what extent are the materials navigable in a self-access context?	4	Graded readers are easy to use, although sometimes the accompanying activities and audio components may need to be made more easily accessible. In the case of downloadable activities, this may mean a language adviser, teacher or SAC staff providing print outs of the activities. Levels are clearly marked on all series, allowing learners to select texts easily, according to their level
12 To what extent do the materials support learner training?	1–3	Learner training features vary from series to series. The *Black Cat Reading and Training* series is arguably the most original in terms of explicitly guiding learners in the use of reading skills such as skimming and scanning

Criteria	5	Comments
13 To what extent are the materials attractive to the learner?	4	Graded readers vary in their attractiveness. All series, especially at the lower levels, are illustrated, and it has become increasingly usual to publish them in colour. The importance of the illustrations to enhance or detract from the enjoyment of the reading experience should not be under-estimated. I have personally heard learners recommend or condemn readers on the basis of the illustrations! *Scholastic ELT Readers* and *Black Cat Reading and Training* are particularly colourful with attractive graphic design features, including a lot of photos. The *Oxford Bookworms Library* series are more sombre, with predominantly black covers and less colour used for the in-text illustrations, although the *Oxford Bookworms Starter* series for beginners are an exception to this

Summary of the Evaluation
Graded readers are an excellent resource for SACs. They are attractive to learners, easy to use in a self-access environment and provide learners with ample opportunities to discover and learn from language in context. In a well-stocked centre, learners will be able to choose from a wide range of readers and will almost certainly find a title which they find engaging and which is appropriate for their level. Most readers include schema-building, text-work and follow-up activities which differ in the extent to which they engage learners. The *Black Cat Reading and Training* series is rated particularly highly in all areas

Language learning software/web-based resources

(With specific reference to *Pronunciation Power*, produced by English Computerized Learning Inc. www.englishelearning.com/en/)

Criteria	5	Comments
1 To what extent do the materials provide exposure to English in authentic use?	1	*Pronunciation Power* comprises two types of pronunciation lessons in which learners are shown in diagrammatic form how the mouth produces the 52 sounds of English, and how the wave-forms of the sounds look. Then follow seven different types of exercises, most focusing on minimal pairs, and all of them following a listen and repeat format. Thus there is minimal exposure to English in authentic use

Criteria	5	Comments
2 Meaningful English	1	Sounds and words are presented in isolation, and sentences are presented out of context. There is very little that is meaningful in the examples given
3 Interest	3	Learners are often initially interested in the lessons, especially the mouth formations and the graphical representations of the wave-form for each sound. However, the engagement is limited, and in my experience learners become bored with the exercises very quickly
4 Achievable challenge	3	Learners are able to work through the sounds at their own pace. Therefore, they can choose which sounds they are having difficulty with. This may be challenging to some extent, but the software does not challenge learners cognitively or affectively, and thus engagement tends to be transitory
5 Affective engagement	1	
6 Cognitive engagement	1	
7 Opportunities for discovery about how English is used?	1	The software follows an audio-lingual type methodology, and therefore there are minimal opportunities for learners to make discoveries about the use of English. Interesting pronunciation features common to everyday language such as connected speech and emotive changes in pronunciation are not included
8 Opportunities for meaningful use of English	1	The previously mentioned features of *Pronunciation Power* such as the emphasis on discrete sounds and minimal pairs, and the presentation of out-of-context sentences for listen and repeat type drills means that there are almost no opportunities for the learner to use English in a meaningful way
9 Feedback on the effectiveness of use of English	4	*Pronunciation Power* gives thorough feedback to learners on their performance in the lessons and exercises. Viewing the wave-form is exciting for learners, as they consider this a very scientific, objective indication of their pronunciation. Having said this, the model wave-form depiction is extremely hard to replicate (even for native speakers!) and therefore does sometimes lead to frustration. The exercises are all recordable, and the learner is able to compare his/her voice with the model voice. This is a useful feature, and provides fast, direct feedback, which is very useful in a self-access context

Criteria	5	Comments
10 Positive impact	2	As already mentioned, reactions to *Pronunciation Power* are initially very positive, but then learners tend to become disillusioned with the software. This may be because of the repetitiveness of the activities, or because the quest for perfection (e.g. with the wave-form) and the lack of fast progress may lead to frustration
11 Navigability	5	*Pronunciation Power* is very user-friendly for any learner who is reasonably computer literate. There is a choice of instructional language which the learner can select at the beginning, and all rubric is presented in this language. The buttons and icons are reasonably intuitive, and a help page is available if needed
12 Learner training	1	There is no learner training element to *Pronunciation Power*
13 Attractiveness	4	*Pronunciation Power* is produced to a very high professional standard and looks polished. The amount of selection available (e.g. the 52 sounds) can be a little overwhelming for learners, but overall the screens are simple and easy to read

Summary of the Evaluation
Pronunciation Power is a professional and polished product which is easy to use. It is designed for controlled practice of discrete sounds, and as such it is an excellent resource. However, there is little to engage the learner cognitively or affectively, and learners soon become bored with the drill-like exercises

Drama-based language learning materials

(With specific reference to *Connect with English*, produced by WGBH Boston with books from the McGraw-Hill 1998.)

Criteria	5	Comments
1 Exposure to English in authentic use	4	*Connect with English* is a drama-based language learning resource centred round the story of a young girl following her dream to be a musician. The language used is carefully simplified and the speaking speed is slightly slower than in a regular television drama,

Criteria	5	Comments
		so that English language learners can follow the story without the difficulties they would normally encounter. However, one of the most appealing aspects of this resource is that the language grading has been very carefully done so that it does *appear* to be authentic. In addition, the drama is interspersed by groups of English language learners reviewing the storyline and discussing their opinions of the programme. The language of these discussions is truly authentic and, as well as providing learners with naturally graded language input, serves also to provide a model for how to participate in such a discussion
2 Meaningful English	5	The drama comprises two introductory episodes and 48 storyline episodes and, in soap opera style, each one builds on the characters and story development of the previous one. Thus as the story unfolds, so the learner becomes involved in the story and the meaningfulness of the English increases. The discussion group sections allow the learner to compare their own reactions with those of the participants, which again allows for a very meaningful context for the language
3 Interest	4	The extent to which learners are interested in this resource tends to depend upon the extent to which they are able to relate to the characters in the story. Again though, in true soap-opera style, the range of characters involved in the story means that a wide cross-section of learners are able to find a point of interest. The main protagonist – Rebecca – is a young adult female student who experiences many of the anxieties and excitements of any young person this age. Her boyfriend, father, brother, best friend, godmother and friends also feature in the story. As the story develops, so interest builds in what will happen next to Rebecca and the others in her life
4 Achievable challenge	4	The *Connect with English* drama in itself provides an achievable challenge due to the fact that it is almost authentic. Most learners will find some level of challenge in understanding the spoken language. For example, for the advanced

Criteria	5	Comments
4 Achievable challenge – *continued*		learner slang and casual English are fairly plentiful, and yet for lower level learners there is plenty of support (strong visual clues, appropriate body language, and closed captions) to help them generate meaning The video (or online) film component of *Connect with English* is accompanied by five different kinds of texts – one for grammar practice, one for speaking practice, one for listening comprehension, a video-script and a series of graded readers. These offer more didactic challenges and progress in difficulty slightly, in line with the episodic structure of the drama
5 Affective engagement	5	Arguably one of the most positive features of drama-based resources is that the learner is drawn into the story on both an emotional and intellectual level. Personally I find *Connect with English* very engaging – I want to know what happens next and I am interested to know whether the participants in the discussion group at the end of each episode will have the same reactions to the plot as I have had. Sadly, all too often, English learning materials do not engage native speakers in this way, as the texts are too bland and uninspiring. The fact they are uninspiring for adult native speakers suggests that English learners will also find them dull. I believe that materials such as *Connect with English*, which are engaging for me, will also be engaging for adult learners of English
6 Cognitive engagement	4	
7 Opportunities for discovery about how English is used	4	Once again, the near-authentic nature of the text and the naturalistic conversational exchanges allow learners to discover for themselves how English is used
8 Opportunities for meaningful use of English	3	The coordinated books which accompany the series provide activities which allow learners to practise the language encountered in the drama. The Conversation Book encourages groups of learners to discuss the themes arising from the drama and their reactions to the drama in a similar way to the discussion group participants featured at the end of each

Criteria	5	Comments
8 Opportunities for meaningful use of English – *continued*		episode. This is meaningful because it is also a very natural activity – it is common within real life to discuss television programmes we have enjoyed or had a particularly strong reaction to
9 Feedback on the effectiveness of use of English	2	There are few opportunities for feedback built into these resources, although the instructor's manuals accompanying the coordinated books do contain answer keys
10 Positive impact	4	Learners react very positively to these materials although it often takes a little time for them to become accustomed to using them. *Connect with English* needs commitment – in total the series provides 12½ hours of viewing time – but once the learner has become interested in the story and established a viewing routine, positive impact is easily sustained
11 Navigability	3	The large number of episodes means that the DVD and online formats are both easier to navigate than the video format. The accompanying texts are a little less straightforward to use and there is not always a clear connection between the language presented and practised in the texts and the language used in the accompanying drama episode
12 Learner training	2	There is little explicit learner training included in these materials, but the review at the end of each section serves as an implicit reminder to learners about good study habits and the importance of reviewing their work
13 Attractiveness	4	The drama is produced to a very high professional standard. It was first broadcast in 1998 and so now is a little dated. Similarly the accompanying texts are mostly black and white. However, these factors do not seriously detract from the overwhelmingly positive aspects of these materials

Summary of the Evaluation

Connect with English is an excellent drama-based resource. The soap-opera style of the drama engages learners on many levels and provides a platform for effective understanding and meaningful interaction with a near-authentic text

Texts for specific skills

(With specific reference to the *In Use* series, including *Grammar In Use, Vocabulary In Use, Idioms In Use, Pronunciation In Use, Collocations In Use* and *Phrasal Verbs In Use*)

<table>
<tr><th>Criteria</th><th>5</th><th>Comments</th></tr>
<tr><td>1 Exposure to English in authentic use</td><td>2</td><td>Although some titles may claim to have been written using a corpus of real English, the language is usually contrived and out of context, as well as being too limited a language sample to be a useful exposure to authentic English</td></tr>
<tr><td>2 Meaningful English</td><td>2</td><td>As self-access texts, in my experience the In Use series are generally used by learners who have selected them because they have a particular need to visit, or re-visit, a set of lexical items, grammatical structures or pronunciation features. Thus the learners are able to derive meaning from the language according to their own specific set of circumstances</td></tr>
<tr><td>3 Interest</td><td>3</td><td>The texts and exercises are not intrinsically interesting. However, some learners are drawn to these materials simply because they fill a need that is not addressed for them in the classroom. Despite the lack of context of the language, and the lack of creativity of the texts generally, learners are attracted to the uses of the language segments</td></tr>
<tr><td>4 Achievable challenge</td><td>2</td><td>Whilst these texts are available at different levels, and learners may select the level according to their need or interest, the exercises themselves are not integrally challenging</td></tr>
<tr><td>5 Affective engagement</td><td>1</td><td rowspan="2">There is very little substance in the texts to engage learners affectively or cognitively. The paper drill format simply demands repeated and highly controlled use of discrete segments of language which is meaningless to learners outside the context of language practice</td></tr>
<tr><td>6 Cognitive engagement</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td>7 Opportunities for discovery about how English is used</td><td>1</td><td>The paper drill nature of these books allows for almost no discovery of language by learners. The quantity of language is too limited, and the often ambiguous nature of language is not accounted for: learners are presented with correct answers which take no account of alternative uses of language or the often idiosyncratic nature of everyday language</td></tr>
</table>

Criteria	5	Comments
8 Opportunities for meaningful use of English	1	The texts themselves provide almost no opportunities for real communicative use of language. Each unit focuses on one aspect of the target language which results in a lack of 'communicative reality' (Lin and Brown 1994: 154). The limited language used, and the prescriptive nature of the texts, mean that the learner is focused far more on language accuracy than on meaningful use
9 Feedback on the effectiveness of use of English	3	These series of books are popular in SACs because they comply with the traditional understanding of what make good self-access materials. In other words, they are short, easy-to-complete units with answer keys, so that learners can check their own work. However, the feedback available is simply whether the answer is correct or not. For more information the learner has to return to the grammar/ vocabulary explanation page on the left-hand side of each double-page unit, or to use further resources such as grammar texts or the advice of a language adviser or teacher to help them understand the reasons for their errors
10 Positive impact	4	It never ceases to surprise me how much learners like these materials. They appear dull to use, and involve no creativity or imagination; nevertheless I have had learners return to these time and again. I have overheard learners recommending them to each other for independent study, and have observed SAC users work their way through complete books. It would seem, therefore, that learners are motivated to continue to use the materials
11 Navigability	5	One of the strengths of this series is that it is very easily navigable. The format is consistent across titles with explanation of the grammar, vocabulary or idiom appearing on the right-hand side, and with the drills on the left-hand side. Answer keys are at the back of the book and clearly indicated by colour. Units of work stand alone, and learners may select relevant units according their need or interest

Criteria	5	Comments
12 Learner training	2	Few strategies or learner training techniques are incorporated explicitly into the texts, although the *Vocabulary In Use* books do contain units on how to organize a vocabulary notebook and how to use a dictionary. Nevertheless, the navigable features described above enhance learner choice and therefore could be argued to develop autonomous learning skills
13 Attractiveness	4	The simple layout and the introduction of colour to this series means that they are appealing to the eye

Summary of the Evaluation
Paper drills are, by definition, repetitive, highly prescriptive and controlled in their presentation and use of English. Despite the fact that the texts allow very little engagement on an affective or cognitive level, and learners are unlikely to find them challenging, they do nevertheless seem to find the exercises satisfying and motivating to use in a self-access context. This may be attributed to the lack of ambiguity in the language and task and the ease of navigability of the materials, which comply with many of the accepted criteria for selected self-access materials (e.g. Reinders and Lewis 2006)

Suggested Improvements

As I discussed in the introduction to this chapter, there are very few materials available which are tailored specifically to self-access learning, and there are even fewer *good* self-access materials. Furthermore, I would maintain that good self-access materials differ from what is normally cited as being good. For example, Reinders and Lewis argue for an evaluative checklist for self-access materials as follows:

1. Have clear instructions
2. Clearly describe the language level
3. Look nice
4. Give a lot of practice
5. Give feedback (show answers or let me know how I am doing)
6. Make it easy to find what I want
7. Contain a lot of examples
8. Tell me how to learn best. (Reinders and Lewis 2006: 275)

These are *surface-level* criteria which do not address real learning issues. By these measures, the *Vocabulary In Use* series, evaluated above, would make ideal self-

access material. However, as I have stated, in my opinion they are lacking in core principles, such as the ability to interest and engage learners, to be meaningful and challenging and to have a sustained positive impact, which should apply to any learning materials. Here I will describe the changes that I feel should be incorporated into materials design, in order that learners can engage with language in meaningful ways, and yet still navigate their way effectively through the materials without the direct presence of a teacher or learning adviser. The key word here is direct presence, and much of what I make the case for below assumes that good self-access learning environments are not devoid of human support for language learning, and that there will be a learning adviser, teacher or academic support person available to whom learners can turn for guidance and advice where necessary.

Firstly, an increased affective and cognitive engagement to be provided for through the materials is called for. By using engaging texts and by considering authentic reactions to texts, materials developers would allow for a greater emotional and intellectual stimulation in learners. Two examples described earlier include learners considering and talking about their reactions to reading materials and to authentic audio-visual materials such as films and music, as they would do in their first language. Communicating with others about our shared experiences in this way is fundamental to our existence as human beings, and is evident in any British pub on a Friday night! The supposed difficulty here in the self-access context is who to talk to? This in itself supposes that self-access is a solo activity, which is often, but not exclusively, the case. In situations where learners are participating in solo self-access work, they may be encouraged to talk to themselves, whilst recording their voice for review and analysis later.

The difficulties of solo self-access work bring me to my next two points: firstly that the type of feedback available with good self-access materials should be more creative, and perhaps ambiguous, than is commonly the case, and secondly that there is a need for increased use of self-diagnostic and self-evaluative tools and suggestions throughout the materials. Let us continue with the above example of solo self-access speaking work. Ideally learners should be encouraged to diagnose their own speaking difficulties using various means: feedback from teachers and advisers, checklists of skills against which to compare their own speaking or models of native speakers and successful users of English (SUEs) (Prodromou 2007) against which to compare their own performance. Similar evaluative tools should be included throughout the material in order that learners can monitor their own progress and gain a sense of achievement. Of course in order for this to happen feedback on tasks and activities is also important. All too often learners have been led to expect 'correct answer' type feedback, and whilst this is useful for many didactic and discrete activities, it is not helpful for encouraging the learner to think more broadly about their language development and proficiency. Again taking speaking as our example, models of spoken English can be provided for learners to compare their own language production to. These may be from native speakers, SUEs or less-able learners. If the learner is aware that the feedback is derived from a range of sources including other learners, then the sense of achievement is likely to be more realistic, and more real, if they are

able to place themselves on a continuum of proficient → less proficient, than if they are constantly trying to achieve the unobtainable by using native speaker models as their goal. These self-diagnostic and self-evaluative methods, and types of feedback, are a form of learner training and encourage the self-access user to think more autonomously about their learning. Such development in learners is crucial if self-access learning environments themselves are to function successfully.

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Chapter 8

Extensive Reading: Maid in Waiting

Alan Maley

Introduction

Extensive Reading (ER): that is, reading large quantities of text at an appropriate level of difficulty as an effective way of acquiring a foreign language, is far from being a new notion. It has survived the methodological swings and roundabouts of the past 40 years, and emerged stronger than ever. Indeed it is now widely regarded as the single most effective way of acquiring and maintaining a foreign language (Day and Bamford 1998).

In the annals of the modern, 'scientific' development of language teaching, ER appeared early, in the 1920s and 1930s, through the work of Harold Palmer and Michael West in particular. It was West, working in Bengal in the 1920s, who first perceived that reading interesting texts with a carefully controlled vocabulary was far more effective than the methods then in use to teach English to Bengali children with no access to the language outside the limited context of the school. This insight led to the publication of the New Method Readers from 1927 onwards.

West's work on vocabulary selection ran concurrently and in collaboration with Palmer and Hornby's work in Japan. It was after meeting West in 1931 that Palmer published his *The Grading and Simplification of Literary Material* (1932), and with A. S. Hornby the IRET 600-word *Vocabulary for Story-Telling* (1932), which later evolved into their *Thousand Word English* (1937). Meantime, West and Palmer, along with the Briton, L. Faucett, and the American, E. L. Thorndike, were working on what eventually appeared as the *General Service List of English Words* (West 1953). The *General Service List* then served as the bible of writers of simplified and graded readers well into the late twentieth century when it was superseded by computer corpora.

The groundwork for ER had been laid by these early pioneers, who also shaped and determined the direction it would take until very recently. In particular, the emphasis was on vocabulary control through frequency and other measures, and on reading materials which were simplified from 'authentic' texts, usually literary classics. It is only latterly that there have been any real departures from these emphases.

There was a significant development of extensive reading in East Africa during the 1960s based on the work of Bright and McGregor at the Institute of

Education, Makerere University, Uganda. Under their influence, extensive reading came to make up 50 per cent of the school curriculum. Their work formed the basis for the programme in the Malaysian residential schools in the 1970s. However, apart from this bold experiment, which was in any case short-lived, ER has 'been gradually excluded from the syllabus' (Hill 2001: 302). English Language Teaching (ELT) has preferred to go the way of the spoken language. 'The communicative syllabi ignored stories and purists spurned graded readers – either because simple texts were not authentic or because simplifications did not do justice to the originals – extensive reading was reduced to a voluntary pastime that was only encouraged by enthusiasts' (Hill 2001: 302). ER remained a 'maid in waiting', not invited to the communicative wedding party!

Nonetheless, by the middle of the twentieth century, most major UK and some US educational publishers had established graded readers' lists, mainly on the basis of simplified editions of literary classics. One notable exception was the Heinemann Graded Readers, whose series editor, John Milne (1927–2004), was a seminal figure in the evolution of the genre. He was series editor for 19 years from 1973, and, both as a writer of graded readers and as an editor, was able to shape the series in original ways. Amongst other things, he took a flexible attitude to word frequency lists, overriding them when the story demanded it. Telling a good story always took precedence over slavish adherence to a vocabulary list. His *Heinemann Guided Readers' Handbook* (1977) provides ample evidence of this humane approach. He was also possibly the first editor to commission original fiction on a large scale for the graded reader market. This emphasis on original fiction found its full expression in the Cambridge Readers Series (1999 onwards), which only publishes original works. It is surely no coincidence that the Cambridge series editor, Philip Prowse, had worked as an author under John Milne's tutelage.

Serious study of graded readers as language teaching material was taken up by David R. Hill in Edinburgh, Scotland. In 1986 Hill set up the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading (EPER), which has built up a database and library of graded readers, and has conducted numerous studies and reviews of these materials (Hill and Reid Thomas 1993). The two survey reviews published in the *ELT Journal* (Hill 1997, 2001) offer the most comprehensive overview of publications in this field to date. In the latter, he reviews 28 series from eight publishers. This gives some idea of the important, though not central, place which graded readers occupy among ELT publishers. (New series continue to be added to the quantum of available series in what seems to be a limitless market.) What it does not do is indicate how the readers are used, nor where, nor to what effect.

The whole issue of reading has, of course, been dealt with thoroughly in the mother tongue context through the seminal work of Goodman and Smith (Goodman 1996; Goodman and Gollasch 1982; Smith 1996, 2004). The cause of ER in the second language has been taken up more recently by Richard Day, Julian Bamford, Rob Waring, Paul Nation, Stephen Krashen and others, to the extent that it is possible to speak of a renaissance of interest in the approach (Krashen 2004b; Tomlinson 2000; Waring 2006). The establishment of the

Extensive Reading Foundation by Day in 2004 was a landmark event (www.erfoundation.org). However, before reviewing the current situation, it will be useful to define just what ER is.

What IS Extensive Reading?

Richard Day has provided a list of key characteristics of ER (Day 2002). This has been supplemented by Prowse (2002). While these lists do not command universal acceptance, they are nonetheless useful as a benchmark and a basis for discussion. Table 8.1 is a digest of the two lists of factors or principles for successful ER.

Table 8.1: Successful Extensive Reading

1. Students read a lot and read often.
2. There is a wide variety of text types and topics to choose from.
3. The texts are not just interesting: they are engaging/ compelling.
4. Students choose what to read.
5. Reading purposes focus on: pleasure, information and general understanding.
6. Reading is its own reward.
7. There are no tests, no exercises, no questions and no dictionaries.
8. Materials are within the language competence of the students.
9. Reading is individual, and silent.
10. Speed is faster, not deliberate and slow.
11. The teacher explains the goals and procedures clearly, then monitors and guides the students.
12. The teacher is a role model … a reader, who participates along with the students.

The model is very much like that for L1 reading propounded by Atwell (2006). It has been variously described as Free Voluntary Reading (FEVER), Uninterrupted Silent Reading (USR), Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) or Positive Outcomes While Enjoying Reading (POWER). (Kyung 2004, 2005; Jolly 1984.)

However, it is clear from a simple survey conducted worldwide to assemble information for this chapter (see Appendix A) that actual practice is often at odds with these principles. In many cases (see 1 in Table 8.1), students do not read much or often. The extensive reading is frequently no more than part of a lesson or one lesson per week. Materials are often narrow in range (see 2) and confined to a compilation of extracts in a course 'reader'. The texts read rarely meet the requirement in 3 in Table 8.1 that they be not merely 'interest-

ing' but, in Krashen's words, 'compelling'. The question of interest is clearly a contentious one – what is interesting for Peter is dull for Paul – but some texts are equally clearly of little interest, and certainly not compelling, to anyone! Furthermore, students are rarely given a choice of what to read (see 4). They are more often simply required to read a book or books selected by the teacher or the institution: often for good logistical or financial reasons. Principles 5, 6 and 7 are often transgressed. Reading is rarely regarded as sufficient in itself. The insatiable urge to teach, to test, to monitor, to intervene, often means that the flow of the reading experience is constantly being interrupted. According to Krashen at least, 'The more we check comprehension, the less readers understand, and the less they acquire' (Krashen 2007). All too often Principles 11 and 12 are also not observed. Many teachers 'teach' extensive reading simply because it is there. All too frequently teachers themselves are not committed readers, and do not fully understand why reading is so valuable both as a language learning resource and as an educational accomplishment. Clearly, in cases like this, students draw the inevitable conclusion: that reading is a chore to be endured and is of little use to them in passing the examination!

These issues reflect the paradox inherent in the intersection of the essentially private, free activity of reading with the institutional constraints implicit in public systems of education. Reading in the sense of ER is not amenable to the kinds of control so beloved by institutions. When these constraints come into play, it is therefore hardly surprising that the true nature of reading is so often subverted.

Types of ER Materials

There is a tendency to believe that ER equates with using graded readers. This is by no means the case, however. ER can be experienced with any kind of written text. Indeed, ideally, the task of language teachers is to wean learners off graded readers and expose them to ungraded texts at the earliest opportunity. In this section we shall critically examine a number of types of ER materials.

Graded readers: simplified/adapted editions of originals

For many years this was the main if not the only kind of material on the market. Some classic titles, such as *Jane Eyre*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, exist in a large number of simplified versions, at several levels of difficulty.

Such simplified editions are often defended on the grounds that they afford readers access to quality texts which have stood the test of time. It is sometimes even claimed that readers, having read a simplified edition, will later return to read the original.

Simplified classics are criticized by others for trivializing the content of the original. It has also been shown that the good intention to simplify may sometimes make a text more difficult to decode by removing precisely those connective features from the original which signpost the thread of the story. It is certainly true that many graded readers, particularly at more elementary levels,

offer a stilted version of the original which makes for very disjointed and fragmented reading, as well as offering an impoverished version of the storyline. It has even been argued (Long and Ross 1993) that what is needed is a more elaborated form of the text rather than a pared-down version. Recent work by Hoey (1991, 2007) on lexical priming suggests too that simplification which offers the reader inauthentic collocations will not be helpful in acquiring the language.

Whatever the pros and cons of such editions, they continue to be published in large numbers by most publishers of readers. The survey mentioned earlier (Appendix A) also shows that they are in wide use in a variety of contexts, both geographical and institutional, worldwide. The EPER evaluation offers teachers who wish to use them the best guidance available.

Graded readers: original stories

Though not entirely new, as we have seen in the discussion of Milne's work, this type of reader has gained prominence in the past few years. Indeed, the Cambridge English Readers publish originals only, though all the major publishers include at least some original titles. This new(-ish) genre goes some way to countering one of the criticisms levelled at graded readers, namely that they trivialize great originals. An original story allows the writer to develop a storyline without the trammels of a pre-existing plot. The truly skilled writer can also deploy simple language in the service of an interesting plot. Sadly, not all writers of these stories demonstrate the requisite level of skill.

There are, however, two distinct types of original stories: those which are written with a set of vocabulary and structural controls, and those which allow the writer and editor to determine level intuitively on the basis of teaching experience. Whether this is preferable to strict linguistic grading is an important issue and will be discussed below (see 'Some Key Issues'). Intuitively graded readers come much closer to originals not written for the language teaching market, discussed below under the heading 'Simple L1 reading materials'. At the very least, therefore, they can be seen as the penultimate step for FL learners before they embark on completely original texts produced for L1 readers. So far, there are relatively few such readers, though Penguin (Allsop 1989: Maley 1995, 1997) made a tentative step in this direction with the Penguin Very Short Stories, now discontinued. The main recent venture is the World Wide Readers Series (Tomlinson and Maley 2004), which have the additional novelty of being produced as e-books.

Richard Day and Julian Bamford, in their book *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom*, make a convincing case for what they term 'Language Learner Literature' (Day and Bamford 1998: 63–79). In response to criticisms that graded readers offer an impoverished type of writing, they point out that such writing is highly audience-specific. In the same way that children's writing or teen-fiction is directed towards a certain age-group, so graded readers are likewise addressed to a specific audience of language learners. They thus deserve recognition as a sub-genre of fiction in its own right. This claim covers both simplified originals and simple original fiction, though the claim stands

up better in the latter case. There is a very real sense in which the highly crafted fiction produced as original stories for language learners constitutes a recognizable sub-genre. Perhaps the litmus test for this new sub-genre is the extent to which adult L1 readers can read it and find it 'compelling', just as they do with some children's (e.g. *Where the Wild Things Are*) and teen literature (e.g. *His Dark Materials*). Titles such as *Jojo's Story* (Moses 2004) certainly pass this test with flying colours.

Simple L1 reading materials

This refers to two kinds of material: books produced to teach reading to L1 learners, and books which are intrinsically simple in terms of the language, though not of the content.

Readers used to teach reading to L1 students

An example of this would be the Ladybird series, which in fact enjoys considerable success with L2 learners though it is not designed for them. The Oxford Language Tree is another series sometimes used with L2 learners, although it was designed to teach reading in the L1. Some other series of L1 readers, such as Stone Arch books, have also been slightly adapted for the L2 market, not always with notable success. One disadvantage of much of this material is that it is distinctly uncompelling! The stories are for the most part both trivial and dull.

Unsimplified materials

Relatively short fiction, written in a straightforward style, is also used on occasion. Examples would include Steinbeck's *The Pearl*, Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston, Seagull*, Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, Roald Dahl's shorter fiction, Paolo Coelho's fables and other teen fiction by writers such as Sue Townsend in her Adrian Mole books. The relatively new sub-genre of 'Flash Fiction', comprising very short, short stories, is also drawn upon, though concision is no guarantee of simplicity (see for example Dave Egger www.books.guardian.co.uk/shortshortstories/0,,1178980,00.html). The now dated but still strangely popular writings of Enid Blyton, as well as titles such as Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* and E. A. Nesbit's *The Railway Children*, also continue to be used, along with more recent cult fiction such as the *Chronicles of Narnia*, and, of course, the Harry Potter collection. Many of these also benefit from having been made into best-selling films or TV adaptations. The great virtue of this type of material is that the intrinsic interest of the content appears to override any linguistic difficulties. It is, in short, compelling!

Other authentic, unsimplified, L1 reading matter

This would include magazines or periodicals such as *National Geographic, Readers' Digest*, international editions of newspapers, locally produced English-language newspapers, such as the *China Daily*, etc. Manga cartoon publications in English such as *Shonan Jump* are also popular (Krashen and Ujie 2005; Kyung 2005). So, increasingly, is material drawn from the unlimited resources of the Internet, whether of the non-interactive variety, such as Wikipedia, or interactive sources

such as chat groups, discussion groups, blogs, e-mail and the like (Crystal 2001). It is difficult to assess just how much of such material is used for ER, since it is often chosen by teachers for more structured language work, and is in any case difficult to track. The way readers access text from the screen would also seem to be different, and to require different, specific skills from the way they access print from the page. Work on non-linear reading at Macquarie University is suggestive here (Corbel 1997; Richards 2000; Murray and McPherson 2005).

Some Alternative Directions

A number of interesting and potentially valuable alternative types of material are beginning to emerge.

Student- or teacher-generated texts

One problem for learners, particularly those from non-European backgrounds, is their unfamiliarity with the cultural settings and background assumptions of much of what is available from metropolitan publishers. Some publishers have, of course, tried, with varying degrees of success, to mitigate this problem by publishing titles with non-Western settings. Another, and arguably preferable, way to deal with this problem is for teachers to write fiction for their own students to read, or even to generate student-writing which can serve as input to reading for other students. There is relatively little of either teacher or student fiction to date but there are one or two straws in the wind worth mentioning.

Pearson Malaysia has supported the efforts of a small group of Asian teacher-writers who have, since 2003, met once a year in a different Asian country with the express purpose of writing original stories (and poems) which could be used in an Asian setting (see www.creative-writing.net/index.htm for details). So far four collections of short stories and three volumes of poems have been published (Maley and Mukundan 2005; Maley 2007a, 2007b). The stories are written at a level intuitively decided by the teacher-writers in the light of their experience. One advantage of this type of reading material is that it is likely to be more accessible culturally to the intended audience. Significantly, there is no exercise material!

A more radical experiment is ongoing at Assumption University, Bangkok. The project was conceived by William Denmark. His classes for undergraduate students (non-English majors) are entirely devoted to producing an original novel in English. Students first discuss topic, plot outline and characters. They then divide the work among them, with either each group or each individual drafting a chapter. There is then discussion and coordination to harmonize the story. Only at the final stage is a native-speaker editor involved. So far, four titles have been published (Denmark and Miles 2004–2007). The great strength of this kind of material is that it not only reflects the students' own interests but it also solves at one stroke the issue of language level. Students can obviously only write at their own level, which is more or less the level of those who will read the completed books. Bingo!

Whereas initiatives like these (for instance *Children's Own Stories* USM 2005) are unlikely ever to take over from the better-resourced and more lavishly produced series of the major publishers, they are nonetheless significant. Small can be, not only beautiful, but also effective.

e-publications

These are innovative in terms of delivery rather than form. In some ways it is even easier to publish rubbish on the internet than in hard copy. Perhaps the only series of readers solely available as e-books to date is the *World Wide Readers* (Tomlinson and Maley 2004). The series aims to offer inexpensive, original fiction, intuitively graded for enjoyable reading. There are no exercises or activities involved. Doubtless, there will be more e-books on offer as the Internet takes over more of our lives.

There are also many websites which offer relatively short and simple reading matter suitable for self-access (see 'References' for Zen stories, Hasidic stories, Nasruddin stories, etc.)

Online reading materials

Some companies are now harnessing the power of the Internet to offer online reading materials which are 'scientifically' selected to suit the level of the reader. One such is Lexxica (www.lexxica.co.jp/index.html). This Japan-based company allows subscribers to take an online test to establish their vocabulary level. They are then directed to materials in their vocabulary range. They can then progress at their own rate to higher levels. This is, in effect, an online variant of the Reading Lab (see immediately below).

Reading laboratories

Essentially a reading laboratory, at least as marketed by SRA (Science Research Associates), is a large box containing colour-coded reading cards at a number of levels of difficulty. Students take a test to determine the level at which they should enter the programme. They then read their way progressively through the levels, making their own selection along the way. There is no reason, of course, why the texts should be boxed up: any teacher could build up a set of reading texts for self-access in the same way. An interesting project for designing 'organic, universal, online' materials at the University of Limerick (Mishan 2007) is a case in point. One advantage enjoyed by such collections is that they can include non-metropolitan materials and a wide variety of Englishes across the whole range of text-types. They are also flexible as to mode of use: the user is in principle free to decide whether to simply read or to read plus completing exercises.

Forms of Support

Many of the materials available make efforts to render the task of reading them less arduous by offering students various kinds of support. The following are the ones most frequently encountered in the materials sampled:

Layout, font size, illustrations
Text which is too dense or too small clearly poses unnecessary problems for the reader. Most current materials are careful to allow plenty of white space on the page, to use fonts which are easy on the eye, and in some cases even to use fonts larger than the standard 12 point. Some publishers even publish large format books ('Big Books'): the Oxford Classic Tales Big Books are a good example.

Particularly at lower levels, most readers now use full colour illustrations and artwork. In evaluating the illustrations, however, it is important to distinguish between those which are purely decorative and those which enhance or support the understanding of the accompanying text.

Illustrations also have a potentially negative aspect. A reader tends to construct a series of visual images on the basis of the text. Illustrations tend to pre-empt the formation of these images and to that extent to come between the reader and the text. This is, of course, one of the arguments against video versions too.

Background information
Most published readers provide background information of one kind or another. At the very least, there will be a back-cover blurb, describing and extolling the virtues of the title. In many cases there will also be information about the author, about the historical or cultural setting of the story, maps or diagrams of the locations involved or a summary of the plot. Undoubtedly, such information can often help the readers to position themselves mentally with respect to the story. However, in the case of plot summaries, there is a danger that the motivation to find out 'what happens next' will be undermined by providing this very information.

Glosses
Glosses offer the reader synonyms, paraphrases, explanations or sometimes even translations of 'difficult' words or phrases in the text. Sometimes these are set out in the margin of the text, sometimes they are flagged in some way (e.g. by a different typeface, or underlining or a colour symbol) and are set out at the end of chapters or the book. How useful are they? Using a gloss is an admission that the vocabulary items are too difficult for the reader to work out from the context. The whole point of ER is defeated if glosses have to be used. What is more, glosses interrupt the flow of rapid, natural reading, where the focus of attention should be on the story, not on the items that get in the way of telling it!

Translation
There are a number of ways in which translation can be deployed to aid comprehension. Translations can be provided as glosses. These suffer from the objections to glosses noted above. It is also possible to print bilingual editions with facing pages with the original on one side and the L1 translation on the other. In practice, this is rarely encountered in English readers, though it is somewhat more common in readers of other languages, such as Italian. This

too can slow down the rapid, fluent reading of the FL text but, in some ways, it can also facilitate the accessing of the text. Anecdotal and personal experience shows that the facing page of translation can, on occasion, offer a fast and helpful support for rapid reading of the original.

An alternative way to use translations is for students to first read a book translated into their first language, and then to read it again in English or the target language. In this way, students are already familiar with the plot, characters and setting. As they read it again, in the target language, much of the meaning load is already known, making it easier for them to guess or skip over unknown vocabulary.

Teacher reading aloud

One form of support not often mentioned these days is the teacher reading aloud from the text. This can either be from a text everyone is reading, in which case it can move the reading along by giving the students a break from silent reading, motivate them by demonstrating how interesting the story is and help speed up their own reading as they 'read along' using the print version. It can also be from a completely different text, where the objective is to interest them in one or more texts they might then wish to read later. A teacher who reads regularly – and expressively – to the class almost always succeeds in drawing students into the book being read and to motivate them to read more.

Audio and video versions

It is now almost standard practice for readers to be accompanied by an audio CD. Unlike visual material, an audio version allows the readers to create their own visualizations. There is substantial anecdotal evidence to show that readers who listen as they read the text improve both speed and comprehension. The fact that the spoken version is relatively rapid encourages the reader to keep pace in the print version. It also seems likely, though perhaps unproven, that accessing the text through more than one sensory channel has the effect of making it easier to comprehend.

There are now TV and film versions of many novels, both classical and contemporary. The range is now extended by the ubiquity of DVD. While such versions can provide a useful foil for the actual reading of print versions, and can extend the 'exploitation' of the text for explicit language learning purposes, their value for supporting reading is less certain. Critical comparisons of print and film can of course be useful but only on the condition of having read the book first. Such comparisons can be revealing but they are ultimately time-consuming too, and often involve close reading of a more intensive kind, so that time is subtracted from that available for reading more, and more extensively.

Preparatory activities

Many graded readers provide pre-reading activities to activate the schemata of the reader. Questions and discussion points to prime the reader for what is to come undoubtedly do help establish a mental set towards the text. The teacher reading some key passages aloud can also serve to interest them in the book to

be read (see above). There is also considerable virtue in helping apprentice readers assess whether they wish to read a given title or not. Guidance on how to read titles, blurbs and covers, on how to assess tables of chapter headings, on how to sample a book by flicking through it are all invaluable in coming to a decision. Arguably, not enough time is spent helping students come to this kind of decision. This is perhaps because, in most institutional settings, they are not required to. Instead, these decisions are taken out of their hands when the book is chosen for them rather than by them! Yet an important stage in becoming a reader – a member of the confederacy of readers – is making judgements about what to read, or whether to read at all.

Reading Circles: Fostering a Reading Community

One of the most powerful modes of support is for the teacher to organize a group support system. Reading Circles are one way of doing this. In small groups, students consult with each other and the teacher and agree to read a given book within a fixed period of time. They then meet and discuss their experiences and impressions of it. Underpinning this is the support the teacher can give by being available for informal consultation at any time, and by showing, by example, what it means to be a reader.

Modes of Use

There are two principal modes of use for ER materials. One is in class, the other outside class.

Reading in class

The results from the survey (see Appendix A) suggest that in most cases reading takes place in class, often with the whole class reading the same title or the same extract at the same time. While there are undoubted logistical advantages to this practice – it facilitates control and 'coverage' of the syllabus – it is also highly artificial. Real readers read at different rates, with different degrees of attention or commitment, with differential comprehension and interpretation and with different personal preferences for what they read and how they read it. To require everyone to read the same text at the same pace and for the same purpose (usually in order to answer questions about it) is a seriously distorted version of ER. There seems little doubt that, in many countries, such as China, what is labelled as ER is, in fact, a version of Intensive Reading, where the value of the text as reading material is subordinated to its use as an exemplar of grammatical and lexical forms. This is an inevitable consequence of systems of education where the text is regarded as something to be learned (and checked on through testing) rather than engaged with intellectually and affectively, or even, God forbid, simply enjoyed! (Raj and Hunt 1990.)

In an ideal world, it would seem preferable in terms of time saved, and effort

best deployed, to reserve class time for more explicit forms of instruction, and to encourage ER out of class.

Reading outside class

In the relatively fewer cases where reading is done outside class periods, the main arrangement seems to be to set up and utilize a class library. (This was essentially the approach taken in the highly successful 'Book Flood' programme in Fiji (Elley and Mangubhai 1981)). There is ample advice available as to how to do this (Kitao *et al.* 1990; Hill EPER website; Schmidt 2007)) though the evidence to hand seems to indicate that only isolated enthusiasts actually follow it. Normally, such a library system entails some form of checking of what has been read. This often takes the form of record cards of one kind or another. Robb (2002) takes the view that in institutional settings there is no way around the need to check and grade reading. However, checking with a light touch is essential if motivation and interest in reading is to be sustained. Bamford and Day (2004) contains a number of helpful ideas for minimal yet effective checking. The heavier the load of 'activities', 'questions' and 'reports' there is, the less time or inclination there is for actual reading.

Some Key Issues

Statistical or intuitive grading?

While few would disagree entirely that ER requires materials which are easy enough for the reader to access at speed and in quantity, there are those who challenge the wholesale and rigid application of vocabulary and structural checklists. Virtually all publishers of graded readers now provide such lists to aspiring authors.

Research has tended to show that unless some 95–98 per cent of words in a text are already familiar to the reader, it will present them with serious problems (Hirsh and Nation 1992; Laufer 1992; Nation 1997; Waring 2006). Day and Bamford argue that ER materials should be pitched at the level of i–1 rather than i+1. In other words, to ensure rapid, fluent reading, the vast majority of the text should present students with no problems of comprehension. One of the objectives of ER being to recycle and extend known items of language, it makes sense to render the texts easy to access.

Two issues arise, however. One concerns the best way of rendering the text easy to understand. Some argue that, rather than adhering to inflexible vocabulary and structural lists, it should be left to the intuition of the writer (who must clearly be an experienced teacher) in consultation with the editor, to write for a given level of competence, and that the story should be told in as authentic a manner as possible. (The best example of materials written in this way are the *World Wide Readers* series mentioned earlier.)

The critics point out that many, though not all, texts written following frequency lists offer a seriously impoverished and inauthentic model of the language.

Others argue that the whole idea of strict grading may have the effect of

removing just the challenge that some learners need in order to make progress. They would argue that, for students who are highly motivated, and for reading which is highly 'compelling', such grading is unnecessary, since the flow of the story will carry the reader over the shoals of linguistic difficulty. There is anecdotal evidence that this is the case with such readers: the case of Nelson Mandela, Malcolm X and others is sometimes cited. Likewise, the popularity of the Harry Potter novels in the original also seems to support this view. Such students, especially if they are adult, sometimes resent the thin linguistic gruel they are served. A low level of linguistic proficiency should not be equated with a low level of intellectual or affective maturity.

In a world of reading so variously and richly equipped, we should perhaps, at the very least, allow for different strokes for different folks: graded materials at i–1 for lower levels – a kind of LCD material – and i+1 materials for the more mature, slightly higher level learners who require a greater level of challenge – the HCF learners.

Teaching/testing or learning? The issue of add-ons

Most publishers from the series surveyed for this chapter provide some kind of additional 'activities' in the books they publish. These may take the form of questions to check comprehension, writing or discussion activities, games, quizzes, puzzles and worksheets, many of which may be made available on CD-Roms (Greenwood 1988; Mukundan *et al.* 1998). Even the *Cambridge Readers* series, which started out determined not to include this kind of matter, now provides additional, separate worksheets to accompany its readers.

The research evidence (Mason 2004, 2006; Smith 2006) tends to show that adding questions, writing or other activities does nothing to enhance either comprehension or language acquisition. Some, such as Krashen, would claim that the more such activities are used, the less is learned. The harder you try, the harder it gets! It is clear that the more time spent on checking and related activities, the less time there is for reading. If, as seems to be the case, ER in its 'pure' sense is what leads to language acquisition, there seems little point in cluttering up the process with activities of dubious value in this way.

These arguments are usually countered by the assertion, on the part of publishers, that this is what 'the market' wants, on the part of institutions, that they need to measure progress and, on the part of teachers, that they need 'materials' in order to teach. This is an issue returned to under 'Institutional cultures' below.

Cultural factors

'Culture' has become so ubiquitous and vague a term that it needs some further clarification.

Institutional cultures

As pointed out several times already, institutions (Ministries of Education, universities, schools, etc.) develop their own 'cultures', best summarized as 'the way we do things here'. Central to such cultures is the need to standardize and

to measure inputs and outputs. Curricula, syllabi, textbooks and examinations are all central to this process. Unfortunately, ER does not fit comfortably into this mind-set. It is an essentially free, individual and non-competitive activity. Even where ER is inscribed into the syllabus, it tends to be subsumed into the institutional culture, and becomes a 'subject', which is 'taught', and even examined, all of which is inimical to free voluntary reading. As we have seen, most published series of graded readers are complicit with institutions, providing them with the pedagogical baggage they require. The documented instances of successful ER programmes tend to have been the result of individual initiatives by enterprising teachers who have, usually for a brief time only, been able to bypass the institutional culture.

National cultures

It is often claimed that some national groups are simply not 'reading cultures'. Thailand and Malaysia are often cited as countries where little or no reading is done even in the L1. Any generalizations of this kind are bound to encourage negative stereotyping. While it may be true that in some countries reading is not as widespread as in others, there are often other reasons for this, such as lack of resources, unavailability of books, etc. Where appropriate resources are made available and skilled guidance by enthusiastic teachers is given, differences in 'national' cultures fade into relative unimportance.

Cultures of reading/the new visual culture?

It is widely held that we live in an age of visual culture, where print has been downgraded to a position subordinate to the image, and in particular the moving image. The advent of information technology, and especially the Internet, has reinforced this situation. The multi-layered visual-cum-print formats require a different form of processing from uni-dimensional, linear print formats (Murray and McPherson, *op cit.*). However, it is possible to overstate the current situation. We still depend to an extraordinary degree on print. Sales of newspapers are still significant, the 'culture' of fiction reading is healthy, with a strong media-driven advertising component, through the literary prizes/bestseller phenomenon. And children's and teen fiction in particular has seen a phenomenal expansion. It would be more accurate to insist that in this hybrid world of print/image/IT, we need increasingly to be multi-literate.

Hegonomic dominance

It is still true to say that the vast majority of graded reading materials are published in metropolitan countries, and particularly the UK. The major publishers of these materials are still based in UK (OUP, CUP, Macmillan, Penguin-Longman), and to a lesser extent in the USA (McGraw Hill, Thomson, etc.). One result is that most of the content of these readers is predominantly 'Western' in flavour and tone. Large and unwarranted cultural assumptions are made about the prior knowledge of the students who will read them. While some attempt is made to take cultural sensitivities into account, there are still glaring instances of culturally inappropriate content.

There are two possible responses to this issue. One is to defend such cultural dominance on the grounds of globalization. As the steamroller of Western-dominated business culture steadily reduces local cultures to rubble and re-constructs them in a homogenous global consumerist mould, everywhere becomes more and more like everywhere else. It is therefore in the interests of learners of English to learn what makes their new world go round. Contrariwise, local cultures can be supported by the development of reading materials in English which reflect local norms, practices and values. The enormous growth of Indian fiction in English (spearheaded by Penguin India) is one instance of this.

The Advantages of ER

Both commonsense observation and copious research evidence support the many advantages offered by ER (Grant 2007; Waring 2000). The research studies are now too numerous to mention in full. For a fairly recent review see Day and Bamford (1998: 32–39) and The Special Issue of *The Language Teacher* (1997) including articles by Paul Nation and others. See also the indispensable annotated bibliography, www.extensivereading.net/er/biblio2.html.

The journals *Reading in a Foreign Language* and the *International Journal of Foreign Language Learning* are also good sources of research studies supporting ER (see 'References' for websites).

It develops learner autonomy

There is no cheaper or more effective way to develop learner autonomy. Reading is, by its very nature, a private, individual activity. It can be done anywhere and at any time of day. Readers can start and stop at will, and read at the speed they are comfortable with. They can visualize and interpret what they read in their own way. They can ask themselves questions (explicit or implicit), notice things about the language or simply let the story carry them along.

ER provides comprehensible input

As we have seen, reading is the most readily available form of comprehensible input, especially in places where there is little or no contact with the target language. If carefully chosen as to level, it offers learners repeated encounters with language items they have already met, thus aiding them to consolidate and giving the opportunity to extend what they know. The only reliable way to learn a language is through this massive and repeated exposure to it in context: precisely what ER provides. One way of enhancing learning is through 'narrow reading', which involves reading texts by the same author, texts with a similar content or texts from a single genre (Krashen 2004a; Schmitt and Carter 2000).

It enhances general language competence

In ways we so far do not fully understand, the benefits of ER extend beyond reading. There is 'a spread of effect from reading competence to other language

skills – writing, speaking and control over syntax' (Elley 1991). The same phenomenon is noted by Day and Bamford (1998: 32–39) but they even note evidence of improvements in the spoken language.

It helps develop general world knowledge

Many, if not most, students have a rather limited experience and knowledge of the world they inhabit both cognitively and affectively. ER opens windows on the world seen through different eyes. This educational function of ER cannot be over-emphasized.

It extends, consolidates and sustains vocabulary growth

Vocabulary is not learned by a single exposure. ER allows for multiple encounters with words and phrases in context thus making possible the progressive accretion of meanings to them. By presenting items in context, it also makes the deduction of meaning of unknown items easier. There have been many studies of vocabulary acquisition from ER (Bamford 1984; Day *et al.* 1991; Nation and Wang 1999) but the most recent is Pigada and Schmitt (2006).

It feeds into improved writing

There is a well-established link between reading and writing. Basically, the more we read, the better we write. The precise mechanism which causes this to happen is still not understood (Kroll 2003) but the fact that it happens is well-documented (Hafiz and Tudor 1989). Commonsense would indicate that as we meet more language, more often, through reading, our language acquisition mechanism is primed to produce it as the occasion demands (Hoey 2007).

It creates and sustains motivation to read more

The virtuous circle – success leading to success – ensures that, as we read successfully in the foreign language, so we are encouraged to read more (Asraf and Ahmad 2003). The effect on self-esteem and motivation of reading one's first book in the foreign language is undeniable and well-attested in personal accounts of language learning (Stevick 1989).

Trends and Distributions

There are a number of indicators of the distribution of and trends in ER worldwide, though the survey of practitioners and the analysis of materials conducted is not exhaustive enough to come to firm conclusions. However, for what they are worth, the following conclusions seem warranted.

From the survey questionnaire (see Appendix A)

What emerges is that there are a number of geographical 'hotspots' for ER. Japan is a case in point, with a large number of hands-on studies. Malaysia and Singapore have also been prominent, particularly for the officially sponsored programmes to promote ER. In the survey, it was clear that, in some form or

other, ER is prominent in China, Korea and some Latin American countries. Most of the returns were in respect of university programmes with only a few relating to high schools.

The returns also confirm that ER tends to be part of the curriculum in places like Asia, but not in Europe. However, as already noted, inclusion in the curriculum tends to imply that its implementation is somewhat narrow and constrained, with excessive attention given to evaluation and testing. It is also clear that many teachers are either unaware of what ER is, or have a poor understanding of what it is and its benefits. The survey also shows that many teachers are unwilling to implement ER in their classes. Reasons for this will be discussed below.

From the sampling of published readers and informal interviews with publishers

Publishers are understandably wary about revealing details of their business. Such market information as is available indicates high sales in Europe and the Far East. Africa hardly figures at all, and figures for Latin America were not reliable.

The major trends discernible from an examination of catalogues and publications from the major international publishing houses are two:

a) There is a trend to publish more materials at a lower age level or proficiency level. Whereas formerly a series would start at Level 1, there are now almost always levels below that, named 'Starters', 'Easystarts' and the like. Presumably, this is because the young learner market has grown so fast. However, in a world where English is becoming a 'given' and where increased levels of competence are being demanded, there is perhaps a case for developing more materials at the top end of the market too.

b) Graded readers tend increasingly to come as part of a package of supporting materials: exercises, activity sheets, CDs, etc. As we have seen, the evidence does not support the use of this kind of material. Every moment taken up with activities is time subtracted from reading itself: and it is reading, not activities, which is of prime value.

The Irony of ER and the Paradox of L2 Teaching

So, ER is the most efficient way of promoting foreign language learning. It is therefore ironic that most programmes of instruction make little or no room for it or deform it in some way. On the one hand we have a proven resource for promoting language learning. On the other a massive indifference or even resistance to it. How do we explain this paradox?

The reasons given in the survey conducted (Appendix A) were as follows:

a) Insufficient time.

b) Too costly.

c) Reading materials not available.
d) ER not linked to the syllabus and the examination.
e) Lack of understanding of ER and its benefits.
f) Downward pressure on teachers to conform to syllabi and textbooks.
g) Apprehension on the part of teachers, who find it impossible to stop teaching and to allow learning to take place.

This is summed up by Cunningham (1991: 675):

> Teachers in Zanzibar like the visible results of vocabulary list learning, words pronounced correctly, answers rightly given and skills accurately performed. In comparison, the more indirect and slower skill building of the reading programme carries less classroom credibility.

For as long as this institutional mindset is maintained, all the effort and ingenuity expended on developing ER materials, and all the research evidence accumulated to support their use will have been in vain. Until administrators and teachers are willing to take 'the leap into the abyss' they will never discover the joys of flying!

Appendix A

Extensive Reading Survey. Alan Maley yelamoo@yahoo.com

Any information about Extensive Reading (in English) in your country, or any countries with which you are familiar, would be gratefully received. In particular, the following:

1. Is Extensive Reading part of the school or university curriculum?
2. Is there a general awareness among teachers and administrators of its value?
3. What kinds of materials are in frequent use?
   - graded readers?
   - materials included in the coursebook or as part of the course material?
   - general reading matter? E.g. *Reader's Digest*, *National Geographic*, etc.
   - others? eg. Webzines, www sites, etc.
4. Re-graded readers, which are most used:
   - series from international publishers (OUP, CUP, Penguin-Longman, etc.)?
   - locally-published series?
5. How is the material used? For example,
   - as part of the regular English class?
   - as an out-of-class 'library' activity?
6. If ER is not much practised, what are the reasons usually given for this?
7. Do you know of any other useful sources of information on this subject? E.g. e-mail addresses of likely informants, websites, etc.

Your name and contact details.

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Useful websites

www.emb.gov.hk/index.aspx?langno=1%nodeid=2773. Hong Kong Education Department. See V guidelines and lists of recommended titles

www.erfoundation.org. Website of the Extensive Reading Foundation

www.extensivereading.net. Full of useful practical information about implementing ER programmes

www.extensivereading.net/er/biblio2.html. A must for access to the widest range of published articles and books. Accessible as abstracts by topic, author or date

www.extensivereading.net/er/whatis.html. A useful compilation of many articles on ER by Rob Waring in Japan

www.geocities.com/kjschjp/eng_learn_res. Ken Schmidt website

www1.harenet.ne.jp/~waring/er/series.htm. Rob Waring 'Graded Readers series and other reading materials'. It lists most current publishers of graded readers

www.ials.ed.ac.uk/eper.html EPER. Complete list of graded readers with evaluation on 5 star scale

www.ials.ed.ac.uk/eper/eperpubs.html. David R. Hill, 'The EPER Guide to Organizing Programmes of Extensive Reading'

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www.learningmedia.co.nz/nz/online/authorsartists/seriesguidelines/school-journal. School Journal (New Zealand)
www.lexxica.co.jp/index.html
www.ncte.org/about/over/positions/category/read/118620.htm. NCTE Guidelines
www.nflrc.hawaii.edu/rfl/. Complete run of numbers from Reading in a Foreign Language. (see 'References', above, for specific articles)
www.oupjapan.co.jp/cluboup. Seven personal accounts of using ER in Japanese schools and universities
www.readingmatrix.com
www.readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF. Reading Online electronic journal of the International Reading Association
www.sdkrashen.com. A rich collection of materials related to ER. See in particular: 88 generalizations. Free Voluntary Reading; new research (2005); *The Case for Narrow Reading* (2004a)

Publishers' websites

Black Cat. www.blackcat-cideb.com
Cambridge University Press. www.cambridge.org/elt/readers
ELi (European Language Institute). www.elionline.com/en/catalog/eng.htm
Foreign Languages Press, Beijing. www.fltrp.com.cn
Helbling Languages. www.helblinglanguages.com
McGraw Hill. www.elt.magraw-hill.com/l/Reading/r_cgr.shtml
Macmillan. www.macmillanenglish.com/readers
Marshall Cavendish. www.mcelt.com/readers
Mary Glasgow/Scholastic. www.link2english.com/readers_home.htm
MM Publications (local). www.mmpi.net
Oxford University Press. www.oup.com/elt
Penguin Longman. www.penguinreaders.com
RIC Publications Japan, Korea, Taiwan. www.ricpublications.com/home.html
Shanghai Foreign Languages Press. www.sflep.com.cn
SRA. www.sraonline.com/products.html
SSS (Start with Stories) Japan. www.seg.co.jp/sss/english/index.html
Thomson. www.elt.thomson.com/thomson_graded_readers
www.seg.co.jp/sss/information/SSSER-2006.htm>
World Wide Readers. www.ebooksworld.de/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=30Itemid=63

Story sites

Awesome Stories. www.awesomestories.com
Daily Nasreddin Hodja Stories. www.readliterature.com/hodjastories.htm
Hasidic Stories. www.hasidicstories.com
Zen Stories to Tell Your Neighbours. www.rider.edu/~suler/zenstory/zenstory.html
101 Zen Stories www.thesegoto11.com/zen

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Part 3

MATERIALS IN USE AROUND THE WORLD

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Chapter 9

Materials Used in the UK

Brian Tomlinson and Hitomi Masuhara

Materials in Use: Introduction

ELT materials are used in the UK either by new residents of the UK who are learning English as a second or other language (ESOL) or by visitors to the UK who are learning it as a foreign (EFL) or international language (EIL), or are aiming to improve their English for specific or academic purposes (ESP or EAP).

The ESOL learners are either young learners from immigrant communities who are taught English at school or adult immigrants who are learning English in colleges and community centres or in the workplace. Both young and old tend to start their courses as beginners or false beginners. Until recently the second language learners were mainly of South East Asian origin but there has been a recent influx of such learners from Eastern Europe. Nearly all of these learners have an urgent need to develop communicative competence in English as soon as possible so that they can function in society, integrate with communicative native speakers of English and make academic or professional progress. Because of the comparatively small number of these learners there is little incentive for the major UK publishers to produce course materials specifically aimed at satisfying their needs. This means that in many institutions their courses are based on materials written for EFL learners, on DfES publications matched to the DfES Skills for Life National Curriculum (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus), on ESOL materials downloaded from the web, on materials developed by the institution or to a large extent on materials adapted or developed by their teachers. Such teacher-based materials can have the advantage of local relevance and current energy but can also suffer from a lack of face validity, of credibility and of quality control.

The EFL and EIL learners come to England either for short intensive courses or they attend English courses prior to or in parallel with the professional or academic course which is their main reason for coming to the UK. An increasing number, however, spend extensive periods in the UK to learn English. They get themselves a job and either do part–time English courses, use English materials downloaded from the web or invest in a self–access course. Most EFL/EIL learners who come to England have already achieved at least a pre-intermediate level and most of them are using materials published by the major British publishers. Often these materials take the form of global course-

books and therefore do not directly cater for the needs of learners of English who are actually in England.

Those learners aiming to improve their English for specific or academic purposes often attend courses claiming to be designed to cater for their specific needs. If the specific purpose is related to a very 'popular' profession (e.g. business) then there are sometimes enough students to make specific open enrolment courses and textbooks economically viable. However, if the profession is less 'popular' (e.g. diplomacy or pharmacy) the students either come to the UK in closed groups paid for by a sponsor who specifies their needs or they do General English courses with adaptations in relation to their needs. In either case the ESP elements of their course are usually catered for by institutional and teacher developed materials. Those students aiming to improve their English for academic purposes tend to do pre-sessional courses at universities and colleges which are designed to prepare them to study other subjects through the medium of English. They tend to use generic textbooks aiming to help them to improve those skills they will need on academic courses in the UK (e.g. note taking and essay writing) or they use materials designed by their institution and/or teachers aiming to help them prepare for specific subject studies (e.g. legal studies). Most ESP and EAP published materials still seem to be language or skills driven but institutions and teachers seem to be moving more towards a content-driven approach in which the students acquire more English and develop greater skill whilst focusing on learning more about their profession or academic subject (Snow 2005).

Having briefly described the different types of ELT taught to non-native speakers in the UK, we would like to question how valid and useful it is to create all these distinctions. ESOL, EFL, EIL, ESP and EAP learners might eventually need to use English for different purposes and in different ways but they share the same basic wants as human learners of a language and the same principles of language acquisition and development should apply to the materials they use. There is a danger in focusing on specific needs that the emphasis in materials development is on ensuring appropriate input rather than facilitating effective intake. It is important therefore that many of the criteria for developing and evaluating materials produced for the learners described above focus on means of helping learners to achieve intake.

We also think that a vital criterion of evaluation for materials for learners of English in the UK should be, 'To what extent do the materials help learners to take advantage of the English-speaking environment outside the classroom?' Not many of the commercial or institutional materials we have looked at try to achieve this, though students at Leeds Metropolitan University who are taking a Foundation course do a project which involves them in going out into the city to experience and use English.

ESOL Materials in the UK

There are very few ESOL materials available to UK institutions from the commercial market. We recently surveyed ten pages of 'ESOL Materials' on Google

and could not find reference to a single coursebook for ESOL learners in the UK. However, there were hundreds of websites offering downloadable materials to ESOL teachers and learners. Some of these were global courses, some were USA specific and some were UK specific. Most of the materials on offer, however, were grammar or vocabulary drills which were no different in content or methodology from those to be found in the majority of EFL coursebooks. For example, a downloadable series of Activity Sheets (*Community ESOL Materials for Classroom Use by ESOL Teachers*) developed by Hillingdon Adult Education consists mainly of grammar and vocabulary sentence completion and matching exercises and makes no reference to or use of the English outside the classroom. In addition there were some location-specific materials (e.g. a set of downloadable ESOL materials produced by the National Museum for use by teachers and learners in conjunction with a visit to the museum) and there were attempts by publishers to persuade ESOL teachers and learners to use their EFL global coursebooks. For example, Macmillan has a webpage devoted to 'ESOL mapping' in which they give links to ESOL mappings for their books *Inside Out*, *Reward* and *Straightforward* (i.e. they indicate how these books can be mapped to the ESOL National Curriculum). The emphasis is on, for example, 'seeing how *Inside Out* covers the generic skills in the curriculum' and on 'finding activities in *Inside Out* to cover particular curriculum skills'. There is no mention that *Inside Out* and *Reward* are written predominantly for EFL learners and that they make no attempt to cater specifically for the needs and wants of ESOL learners. Macmillan has also recently published *Straightforward*. This is 'a new general English course' which is aimed at the global EFL market but also tries to attract ESOL teachers by offering ESOL mapping and lessons which 'provide students who use English in their daily lives with language that is immediately useful'.

We also Googled British publishers and could find no reference to books designed specifically to cater for the needs of ESOL learners (although we did find that Garnet Education offer to produce tailor-made courses).

Our survey of the Google pages was rather disappointing in that it seemed to reveal a situation in which ESOL teachers are faced with the choice of making use of often inappropriate EFL published materials, of downloading ESOL materials which often seem to us to have made little effort to cater specifically for the actual needs and wants of ESOL learners (see below) or developing of their materials themselves.

One noticeable feature of the Google pages we surveyed was the number of websites offering preparation materials for immigrants intending to sit the Cambridge ESOL Skills for Life examinations (www.cambridgeesol.org/sfl/) and the new Life in the UK Test (a compulsory requirement for immigrants applying for British citizenship). For example, DfES publications offers a whole range of materials matched to the DfES Skills for Life National Curriculum (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus) and the City College Manchester offers a 'Citizenship Materials for ESOL Learners Pack' and a 'Life in the UK Test Website', as well as ESOL classroom materials 'ready to print and use' and a link to an extensive reading website. From talking to ESOL teachers in the UK

and from their responses to our questionnaire, it would seem that the DfES Skills for Life materials are the major resource for most of them.

It seems that government bodies, institutions and companies are responding to the obvious instrumental needs of ESOL learners in the UK but not necessarily to their wants as human beings living in an unfamiliar culture. Having said this, there seems to a commendable effort by TESOL teachers to fight the UK Government's recent proposal to restrict access to ESOL by the launch in early 2007 of the 'Save ESOL' campaign (see 'Anger mounts as door closes on learners', *Guardian Weekly*, 19 January 2007, www.education.guardian.co.uk/tefl/story/0,,1993567,00.html).

Our impression of the ESOL teacher's life as being interestingly demanding was reinforced by the publication in November 2006 of the National Research and Development Centre's report on *Effective Teaching and Learning: ESOL*, which makes the point on page 9 that effective ESOL teachers 'can plan on the spot, and like a bricoleur, can pull together whatever is at hand to make the class work'. The report goes on to say that ESOL teachers use 'the eclectic "bricolage" approach to materials, adapting, picking-and-mixing, and cutting and pasting and creating their own. Some used EFL textbooks to help them present grammar (seen as lacking in rigour in the AECC Skills for Life materials) while being concerned about their over-representation of people with middle-class lifestyles' (p. 9).

Our experience of situations in which teachers do not have a suitable textbook to depend on has been that it can be liberating and can stimulate creative teaching. However, it can also be excessively demanding in terms of time, energy and creativity and can sometimes lead to teachers settling for what is easily available. To find out what teachers feel about this situation, we gave some ESOL teachers a questionnaire about their use of materials and their answers are summarized in Table 9.1

Table 9.1: Teachers' Views on ESOL Materials

Question	Answer
1 Which age group(s) do you teach? Young learners, teenagers or adults?	They all taught 11–18 year-olds
2 Do you use a published coursebook?	Some teachers used 'extracts' but nobody used a 'whole book'
3 i) If your answer to 2 is Yes, which coursebook(s) do you use?	
3 ii) If your answer to 2 is NO, do you use institutional materials, materials downloaded from the web or your own materials?	All the teachers downloaded materials from the web and used materials developed by their own and other institutions. Most of them also developed their own materials

4 What is the best feature about the materials you use?	Their comments included: • appropriate to language needs • relevant to learners' lives • suitable for learners' levels • interesting for students. The most obvious advantage seems to be that teachers have a wide choice to make suitable selections from
5 What is the biggest problem with the materials you use?	Their comments included: • have to do a lot of photocopying • difficult to 'differentiate' • it's 'costly' • 'school ban on some websites'. The most obvious disadvantage seems to be the time and money which needs to be spent finding, adapting and copying suitable materials
6 What improvement would you most like to see in materials for ESOL?	Their comments included: • more curriculum-related content and language activities 'within the given context' • more downloadable ESOL materials for secondary school students • relevant topics for students living here • more attention given to students from different backgrounds • need age specific materials • need intermediate materials for early teens (most available materials are for adult beginners) • more school-subject-related materials. Most requests seemed to be related to the need to connect the materials to the learners' previous and current lives

The sample of teachers who responded to the questionnaire was very small and we would not claim typicality. However, what the teachers said does seem to coincide with what other ESOL teachers have told us. They like the freedom

to select and/or develop their own materials but resent the time they have to devote to it. They do not like the linguistic focus of many of the available materials and want to see more emphasis given to providing more culturally, educationally and personally suitable materials.

EFL Materials in the UK

EFL is an acronym of English as a Foreign Language, which is normally associated with English Language Teaching (ELT) in countries where English is not spoken as common language (e.g. France, Japan). Year after year, a lot of EFL young adult and adult learners visit the UK to enrol in courses to improve their English, thus creating a large market for EFL materials. These learners need English as lingua franca for communication; they also need English for better future job prospects or academic advancement. The English that these learners are taught can be called EFL because these learners are visitors and not residents in the UK. Such EFL courses, however, are usually called 'General English (GE)' or 'Intensive Courses'. In UK GE courses tend to be short, often 2–4 weeks, and attended by young adults/adults who do not have as strong specific post-course objectives as those in EAP, ESP or business courses. There is some variation of GE such as English Plus which is a combination of General English and special interest (e.g. culture, tourism, sport) or work experience. GE courses are normally offered by language schools, further education colleges or sometimes by certain sections of universities.

The GE materials are called ELT coursebooks or, simply, coursebooks. Interestingly, these coursebooks cater for General English in the UK but also for EFL overseas as global coursebooks (see Chapter 2 in this book for a detailed discussion). This creates a huge market and thus EFL coursebooks constitute the major undertaking of British ELT publishers.

Coursebooks come with colourful and glossy Student Books, Teacher's Books, Workbooks and other additional materials such as CD-Roms, cassettes, videos, supplementary booklets, etc. Coursebooks are displayed prominently in the ELT section in major bookshops all over the UK and especially in such places as Bournemouth, Brighton, Cambridge and Oxford where there are a lot of private language schools catering for EFL learners. Also at any major ELT conference (e.g. the annual IATEFL Conference) teachers are hit by an amazing selection of coursebooks in exhibitions, with new (but similar) coursebooks competing for attention.

In major UK publishers' websites, ELT coursebook sections are flagged. Oxford University Press (www.oup.com/elt/catalogue), for example, offers an impressive list of coursebooks at primary, secondary and adult level in British (and American) English. The biggest selection is offered for British English at adult level: 15 courses including *New Headway, Clockwise, English File, Landmark, Grapevine, International Express, Streamline* and *Natural English.* Cambridge University Press (www.cup.cam.ac.uk/elt/catalogue) offers nine courses for adult including *Face2Face, Language in Use, New Cambridge English Course* and

True to Life. Macmillan (www.macmillanenglish.com) has seven adult courses in British English, including *Inside Out, Inspiration, Straight Forward, Move, Reward* and *Accelerate*. Pearson Longman has *New Opportunities* and *New Cutting Edge* in British English and Marshall Cavendish is flagging their *Just Right* course.

Unlike ESOL teachers who have a scarce supply of quality teaching materials, it seems that GE/EFL teachers and learners are spoilt for choice. Does this mean that teachers are happy with the current provision? We have asked teachers if they use coursebooks, what aspects of coursebooks they are happy with, what they feel are their problems and what improvements they would like to see. The size of our sample is too small for us to claim typicality or generalizability for our findings. However, responses we receive from GE colleagues at work or from participants in teachers' conferences seem to echo what is reported in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2: Teachers' Views on GE/EFL Materials

Question	Answer
1 Which age group do you teach?	• Young adults/adults • From 12–80 years old (one respondent) Majority of GE courses seem to be for young adults/adults. Judging from teachers' responses and from publishers' provision, obviously the young adult/adult GE/EFL market occupies the largest market share
2 Do you use a published coursebook?	• Yes (majority) • One respondent combines published materials with his/her own materials. One of the informants, a Director of Studies, explained that he needs a few coursebooks in parallel, which are similar in coverage, to satisfy repeaters and also to prevent teachers from being bored with the same course year after year
3 i) If your answer to 2 is Yes, which coursebook(s) do you use? 3 ii) If your answer to 2 is NO, do you use institutional materials, materials downloaded from the web or your own materials?	• *New Cutting Edge* (majority) • *New Headway* (also often used) • *English File* • *Inside Out* • *Total English* • Mixture of various courses

Question	Answer
4 What is the best feature about the materials you use?	• provide readily available resources • help in planning lessons • give focus in teaching. GE teachers need to teach several classes consisting of mixed level and nationality for a relatively short time to learners that come and go. Therefore it seems they tend to require ready-made coursebooks
5 What is the biggest problem with the materials you use?	• there are too many dry and dull texts • many of the texts are not authentic or real • texts and activities are not preparing students for real life situations • texts and activities do not engage the interest of foreign students • texts and activities seem to be culturally biased towards white middle-class British • grammar exercises are often not related to the texts • there are so many activities to get through • formats are repetitive. Similar complaints are observed in Students' Questionnaires on General English coursebooks (reported in Chapter 2 in this book)
6 What improvement would you most like to see in materials for GE?	• more interesting units • better coherence • fewer dry texts • more realistic tasks • prepare students for real life situations • more holistic approach to texts • ideas which don't involve photocopying from a textbook. Similar complaints are observed in Students' Questionnaires on General English coursebooks (reported in Chapter 2 in this book)

Busy GE teachers who deal with a lot of different temporary mixed level and mixed nationality groups of students seem to appreciate having coursebooks which provide readily available texts with activities and various resources. On the other hand, they seem to feel that the texts and activities are not particularly relevant to students' needs and wants in that they do not prepare learners to operate in the environment around them. The dry texts and activities seem to be a target of criticism in many cases. It is very interesting that students in a similar but separate survey we conducted at the same time revealed a very similar attitude.

The mismatch that teachers and students feel from these GE/EFL coursebooks may be coming from the fact that the same GE materials target the EFL market, which has different contexts and needs and wants (e.g. needs for exam preparation, comprehensive vocabulary and grammar coverage for exams, limited English-speaking environment outside classes). GE specific materials could use the outside English-speaking environment more as well as exploit the day-to-day authentic interactions provided by TV, newspapers, magazines, the cinemas, visits to institutions and interaction with local people at various social and commercial venues. Our evaluation in Chapter 2 revealed that GE coursebooks rarely take advantage of the English environment. This is probably why GE teachers report that they hope for 'more realistic tasks that prepare students for real life situations'.

EAP Materials in the UK

Googling 'English for Academic Purposes' reveals a huge stock of commercially published and of downloadable web-based material for the EAP teacher to select from. For example, the Cambridge University Press English for Academic Purposes webpage (www.cambridge.org/elt/cataloguer/catalogue.asp?cid+6) advertises 14 EAP textbooks. Some of them are targeting students of specific academic subjects (e.g. *Academic Encounters: Life in Society* introduces 'students to topics in sociology') but most of them are designed as generic courses for 'intermediate and above students' who 'hope to begin university or college studies soon'. All of them focus on skills and strategies which need to be developed in order to be successful on academic courses, with reading, listening, note taking, writing and discussion receiving most attention. All the other major British publishers seem to be offering similar textbooks providing complete courses for teachers and learners to follow – a very different situation from that which TESOL teachers find themselves in.

In addition to all the commercially published materials available in the UK there are many websites offering UK-specific EAP materials. Some of them offer actual materials ready to use, some are the personal websites of EAP academics (e.g. Tim Johns of Aston University has a website on which he even makes available his tutorials with EAP students) and some offer materials reference services (e.g. Andy Gillett of the University of Hertfordshire offers an amazing service which gives students access to practice materials for a large number of academic sub-skills (www.uefap.com/materials/ueapm.htm).

We gave some EAP teachers a questionnaire about their use of materials and their answers are summarized in Table 9.3. It is striking that all the teachers seem to be aware of the essential criteria for effective materials and that they do not consider that published materials match these criteria. I wonder how difficult it would be for publishers to re-design their courses so that they provide the flexibility and the potential for personalization and engagement which the students need and the teachers want?

Table 9.3: Teachers' Views on EAP Materials

Question	Answer
1 Which age group do you teach?	
2 Do you use a published coursebook?	Only one respondent used a coursebook. Given the number of EAP coursebooks on the market in the UK, this might suggest that our small sample is untypical. One respondent stressed that the available coursebooks are 'too general for the needs of our students'
3 i) If your answer to 2 is Yes, which coursebook(s) do you use? 3 ii) If your answer to 2 is NO, do you use institutional materials, materials downloaded from the web or your own materials?	 Most respondents write some of their materials themselves, use materials written by colleagues and download their other materials from websites. Some use extracts from coursebooks
4 What is the best feature about the materials you use?	The teachers who took responsibility for finding/developing materials themselves stressed that they were: • personalized • focused on specific needs • tailored to meet their students' real needs • adaptable to different cohorts • current • 'They're mine and I can improve them' • developed in collaboration with the students.

5 What is the biggest problem with the materials you use?	The respondents stressed that their eclectic approach: • was time and energy consuming • didn't provide opportunities for trialling and revising the material • was expensive • required a lot of photocopying • One respondent complained, 'They're mine! And other people use them.'
6 What improvement would you most like to see in materials for EAP?	The respondents wanted: • More interesting materials related to UK life • More integrated skills materials • More materials aimed at lower levels ('our university and others take international students with IELTS 4.0') • More materials for dedicated courses (e.g. 'computer science, architecture') • Continued updating of topics, etc. • 'something not as dry'. One respondent wanted 'Everything' to improve

ESP Materials in the UK

ESP stands for English for Specific Purposes. ESP has been a separate branch of English Language Teaching since the 1970s (Dudley-Evans 2001). ESP is designed to meet the specific needs of the learner based on needs analysis. The learners of ESP tend to be young learner/adults at intermediate or advanced levels who need English for particular academic or occupational purposes (e.g. medicine, law, hotel and catering, aviation, diplomacy, journalism). ESP makes use of the methodology and activities associated with the relevant disciplines or occupations. ESP courses may be offered in language schools, FE colleges, university sections or at work.

In the past, ESP included ESAP (English for specific academic purposes) or EGBP (English for General Business Purposes). Market demands and purchasing power control supply. For example, if the number of ESAP students (e.g. medicine, law) is small, ELT institutions might offer general EAP courses for students with different disciplines. Consistent provision of EAP courses has led to the formation of a professional organization; the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes (BALIP: www.baleap.org.uk) and

publishers have extensive lists of EAP materials (see EAP section above in this chapter).

Likewise, Business English seems to have become a huge industry in itself. Googling Business English courses will bring up a remarkable number of courses and materials. Cambridge University Press no longer has an ESP section in their web catalogue. Instead they have a Professional English section. 32 out of 47 books (68%) focus on Business English of various kinds. The rest of the books are on tourism and hospitality (2 books), medicine (2), law (2), ICT (Information and Communication Technology) (2), finance (1), telephone skills (3), cultural skills (1). A similar ratio was observed in the Business/Professional section of the web catalogue of Oxford University Press. Twenty-eight books out of 46 books (i.e. 61%) on the list were business related. The rest were more or less spread out: six books on Technology, three books on Tourism, three books on language and communication, two books each for engineering and general work/professional preparation and one book each for science and law.

In sum, although a journal called English for Specific Purposes (www.elsevier.com) may be available, ESP seems to have been overshadowed by more specific EAP, Business English or EPP (English for Professional Purposes). Depending on the demands, EPP may turn into EICT (English for Information and Communication Technology) or ETH (English for Tourism and Hospitality).

We see some growing tension in EPP. English teachers, teacher trainers and materials developers have traditionally come from disciplines such as Applied Linguistics, Literature, or TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). EPP teaching and materials development requires more specific professional and content knowledge and experience. How the teachers and materials will respond to such new developments remains to be seen.

Our Evaluation of Materials

An evaluation of a sample of ELT materials used in the UK

In order to find out a little more about the degree of match between materials currently used in the UK and what we know about language acquisition and development (Ellis 2007; Tomlinson 1998, in press, and see also Chapter 1 of this volume) we took at random two samples of ESOL, of EFL, of ESP and of EAP materials (see 'Key to materials evaluated' below). We did this by taking the first downloadable ESOL material we found on the web (we have not found any ESOL published coursebooks) and by picking off a staffroom shelf coursebooks at approximately equivalent levels (i.e. Intermediate) which we have not used ourselves and which represent a range of different UK publishers. We then individually evaluated the materials against the 12 criteria below, before averaging our scores and agreeing on our comments.

It is important to stress that we are not saying that these books are good or bad. All we are doing is presenting our pre-use evaluation of the effect these materials are likely to have on the target learners in relation to their language

acquisition and development (Tomlinson 2007). Our selection of criteria and our use of them is inevitably subjective and can do no more than reflect our own personal views of what facilitates language acquisition and development based on our aggregate of 70 years of experience using ELT materials and researching language learning. The scores below are an average of our individual, independent scores.

As indicated, we scored criteria 1–8 out of 10 each and criteria 9–12 out of 5 each.

Key to materials evaluated

Materials 1 (ESOL) = *Community ESOL Materials for Classroom Use by ESOL Teachers*, devised by Liz Chiu, Hillingdon Adult Education

Materials 2 (ESOL) = *The British Museum. ESOL Materials* for students and tutors

Materials 3 (GE/EFL) = Garton-Sprenger, J. and Prowse, P. (2006). *Inspiration Student Book 3*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.

Materials 4 (GE/EFL) = Redston, R. and Cunningham, G. *face2face Intermediate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Materials 5 (ESP) = Naunton, J. (2005). *Profile 2 Intermediate – Oxford Business English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Materials 6 (ESP) = Schofield, J. (2004). *Double Dealing – Intermediate Business English Course*. Oxford: Summertown Publishing.

Materials 7 (EAP) = Folse, K., Mahnke, K., Solomon, E. V. and Williams, L. (2003). *Blueprints 2 – Composition Skills for Academic Writing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Materials 8 (EAP) = Jordan, R. R. (1999). *Academic Writing Course – Study Skills in English*. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Criteria	1*	2*	3	4	5	6	7	8	Comments
1 To what extent do the materials provide exposure to English in authentic use? (10)	1	6	7	4	5	6	4	6	There seems in most of the materials to be a tendency to focus on transaction rather than interaction. One exception is Material 6 in which the importance of interaction in informal e-mails is stressed
2 To what extent is the exposure to English in use likely to be meaningful to the target learners? (10)	3	6	8	5	5	7	3	5	In many courses the English seems to be unlikely to be meaningful as it is not related to their lives and to what matters to them

Criteria	1*	2*	3	4	5	6	7	8	Comments
3 To what extent are the texts likely to interest the learners? (10)	3	6	8	6	6	7	3	4	This seems to be a common problem in course materials (the notable exception being Material 3). Many of the texts are unlikely to interest the learners because they are dry, bland, neutral and often trivial
4 To what extent are the activities likely to provide achievable challenges to the learners? (10)	6	7	7	5	5	7	5	6	Many courses seem to provide a lot of fairly easy practice of bits of English rather than challenging opportunities to use English to achieve outcomes
5 To what extent are the activities likely to engage the learners affectively? (10)	4	6	7	5	5	6	3	4	Most courses seem unlikely to be able to really engage the learners affectively because the texts and tasks are safe, uncontroversial and unlikely to stimulate emotional involvement
6 To what extent are the activities likely to engage the target learners cognitively? (10)	4	6	7	5	5	6	5	5	Most courses seem unlikely to be able to really engage the learners cognitively because they rarely involve the students in thinking for themselves
7 To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for learners to make discoveries about how English is used? (10)	1	2	5	3	3	4	3	4	For us this revealed a great weakness in the lack of activities designed to foster self-discovery

8 To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for meaningful use of English? (10)	4	6	6	4	5	6	4	5	Another general weakness, with most of the activities not involving the students in attempting to achieve intended outcomes
9 To what extent do the materials provide opportunities for the learners to gain feedback on the effectiveness of their use of English? (5)	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	Very little attempt is made to provide ways in which learners could gain useful feedback on their fluency, accuracy, appropriacy or effectiveness
10 To what extent are the materials likely to sustain positive impact? (5)	1	3	4	2	2	4	1	2	For both of us, courses Materials 3 and 6 stood out as being much more likely to sustain positive impact
11 To what extent do the materials help the learners to make use of the English speaking environment outside the classroom? (5)	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	3	None of the books seem to really help learners to make use of the English which is in the out of school environment everywhere
12 To what extent do the materials help the learners to operate effectively in the English speaking environment outside the classroom? (5)	1	2	3	1	3	4	1	2	Materials 3, 5 and 6 are likely to lead to the learners operating effectively in the English-speaking environment outside the classroom – a very positive quality in our view
Total out of 100	33	53	67	43	49	61	35	49	

* We were a little worried that our random selection of ESOL materials might have resulted in us evaluating an untypically language focused sample and so we looked again for other more communicatively focused ESOL materials. We did not find many but did, for example, come across a downloadable ESOL resource pack of materials relating to living the Victorian experience at the Salford Museum and Art Gallery. And we did come across *The Weekly News*, an apparently weekly newsletter for ESOL students which features reports, photos and tasks of current relevance (Frances Bruce: www.talent.ac.uk).

Our scores for the courses are not very high (apart from Materials 3 and 6, both of which scored well on such important criteria as affective and cognitive engagement, interest and meaningfulness) but we should stress that our criteria were very much related to our own views about what fosters language and development and did not include such conventional criteria as those relating to the clarity of grammar instruction, the attractiveness of the appearance or the quality of examination preparation. We should also stress that these courses were selected at random and no claim is being made about their typicality.

Summary of Our Views of the Main Strengths and Weaknesses of the Sample

There is no way that we can claim that our selection of material to evaluate is representative of materials currently in use in the UK nor that our evaluation of these materials is at all objective. However, it is noticeable that in all the materials we evaluated the emphasis seems to be on providing input rather than facilitating intake and that the materials feature far more language practice exercises than language use activities (similar findings to those of Tomlinson *et al.* (2001)). It is also noticeable that all the materials received low grades for helping learners to make use of the English-speaking environment outside the classroom. In none of the units evaluated where the learners involved in projects outside the classroom and none of these units made use of television, radio, the press, the cinema, the web or face-to-face interaction with English speakers.

Whilst looking through the materials subjected to the criterion-referenced evaluation above, certain other characteristics of the materials struck us. One characteristic was the apparent lack of recycling within coursebooks used in the UK. Mukundan (2006) and Mukundan and Hussin (2006) report how concordance software has revealed inadequate recycling of lexis in Malaysian textbooks. What we did was to take a structure and a group of lexical items taught early on in one of the EFL and one of the ESP textbooks evaluated above, and to count how many times each is recycled in the remainder of the book. In Material 4 the vocabulary of 'likes and dislikes' is taught in Unit 1 on pp. 6–7 but none of the items seem to be recycled on any of the other pages in the book. In the same book question tags are taught on pp. 10–11 but do not seem to be recycled anywhere in the book later. In Material 5 Unit 3 the language for stating preferences is taught on pp. 26–27 and the present perfect is taught on p. 25. Further practice is given for both in Unit 3 of the accompanying CD-Rom self-study section but neither appears to be recycled later in other units.

Other characteristics which struck us were:

- the apparent tendency of the writers to do what the 'expert' authors researched in Johnson (2003) did and to use their repertoire of previously used task types rather than design novel tasks appropriate to the objectives of the unit.

- the sameness of each unit in a book as a result of using a standard format which helps the publisher, the teacher and, possibly the learner, but which does not provide the variety and novelty of stimuli which would be more likely to stimulate acquisition.
- the tendency to provide a lot of easy practice and to set very few of the achievable task challenges which we have found can create readiness for acquisition and raise the learner's self-esteem (Tomlinson 2003a, 2003b).
- the unlikelihood of many of the courses stimulating the affective and/or cognitive engagement needed for durable acquisition (Tomlinson 2003a, 2003b).

Of course, other people might have been struck by the attractive appearance of many of the courses and by the carefully manipulated progression from the apparently simple to the apparently complex. They might have been more impressed by the materials than we were.

We have no intention of providing detailed critiques of each of the courses but we have specified below those characteristics of the courses which stood out to us as likely to facilitate or inhibit language acquisition and development.

Materials 1

They are very much traditional grammar drill based materials which seem to assume that input = intake = acquisition. There is very little match with currently accepted SLA theories (Tomlinson 1998, Tomlinson 2007, Tomlinson in press) and very little application to real life.

Materials 2

These materials provide authentic texts in the sense that the materials are written to inform, interest, provoke thoughts and help visitors understand more about the museum, and the learners are treated as intelligent beings that have views and opinions. However, they are not likely to be very useful if the learners:

- are not interested in museums
- have problems with language systems and use
- want to learn various language skills/strategies for different purposes in ESOL situations.

Materials 3

The topics and texts are up-to-date, varied and chosen to interest intelligent teenagers. The writers seem to be aware of SLA theory. For example, they try to cater for different learning styles, they try to achieve cognitive and affective engagement in most of the units, they aim at enhancing self-esteem by providing an 'achievement list' of 'can do' statements on pp. 104–105 and they believe in materials offering opportunities for educational development.

Materials 4

The texts are short and rarely exploited or personalized, and language items

seem to us to be excessively highlighted throughout (e.g. in the actual reading texts and in the review sections).

Materials 5
The very short texts and the many bits and pieces of activities could frustrate the learners. There are some interesting topics but they tend not to be explored, and the focus is mainly on the explicit teaching of language (e.g. CV on p. 19).

Materials 6
The storyline creates motivation and needs and wants for particular skills. A variety of nationalities is represented in context, thus facilitating cross-cultural and language awareness, various kinds of contemporary genre are focused on (e.g. e-mail, newspapers) and English is presented as an international language. The content is likely to be affectively and cognitively engaging for adults but unfortunately a lot of the activities (e.g. listing useful expressions, gap filling, error correction) seem to encourage little more than the memorizing of correct expressions/sentences.

Materials 7
The materials use a prescriptive way of teaching absolute rules and techniques of essay writing and seem to make the incredible assumption that if you explicitly explain how you write different kinds of essays, the learners will be able to write them. What each student brings to class does not seem to be taken into account at all and neither do learning styles or preferences.

Materials 8
The Presentation Practice Production (PPP) approach is used (as it is in most of the materials) but varied examples of texts from different subjects and repeated practice for each type provide some opportunities for exposure to language in use. There is some flexibility in the learning sequence of units of the book, student discussion is encouraged and there is some personalization of what learners have learned in the unit (e.g. describing learners' countries; drawing a classification diagram of the education system in the learners' countries).

Our Suggestions for Improvements

Brian Tomlinson's suggestions for improvements

I accept that many of my criticisms of the materials currently used to teach English in the UK are related to my personal preferences (but then these preferences are based on my 40 years' experience of teaching plus my study of SLA research). So rather than demanding that everything is changed according to my requirements I will just make a plea for course materials in the UK to help learners to acquire English and develop the ability to use it effectively by:

- making more attempt to engage the learners affectively and cognitively

through the use of reading, listening and viewing activities which encourage personal responses to stimulating texts
- providing more opportunity and encouragement for learners to make discoveries for themselves about how English is used
- providing more opportunities for learners to use English to achieve intended outcomes rather than just producing English in order to practise it
- helping and encouraging learners to make more use of the opportunities for acquisition and use provided by English in the environment outside the classroom.

Hitomi Masuhara's suggestions for improvements

ESOL, GE, ESP and EAP learners all have different needs and wants. How can materials producers and users ensure appropriate provision for such a variety of target learners? From the point of language teaching, the kinds of texts and methodology should be different for different types of learners. Such an undertaking seems massive. From the point of language learning, however, all the materials producers and users could focus on one thing: helping language learners to achieve intake.

In this sense, I endorse all the points Brian Tomlinson has made in his Suggestions for Improvement section in that materials should be developed and used, in accordance with what we understand about language acquisition and development (Ellis 2007; Tomlinson 1998; Tomlinson 2007). There are a lot of practice activities which are typically used in coursebooks in the UK (e.g. PPP approaches, exam preparation, rote memorization of vocabulary and grammar) for which there is no evidence that they are valid or effective. We would save a lot of energy and resources by focusing on effective intake, acquisition and development in materials development.

I would also like to see research/theory and practice enriching each other. Being the Course Leader of the MA in ELT and Materials Development at Leeds Metropolitan University, I am fortunate enough to be able to work with a number of GE/EFL/ESL/ESOL/Business English teachers. Through our action research, we are finding that, for example, close to 85 per cent of business communication is done by e-mail these days but that the materials in Business English are still focusing on business letter conventions and how to write them. Another example may be that we have a lot of insights on cross-cultural awareness (see Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) on incorporating such awareness into language teaching) and yet cultural awareness in Business English seems still at very superficial and stereotypical level. In order for such synergy between research/theory and practice to happen, we need more open discussion and cooperation, through, for example, MATSDA (the Materials Development Association) workshops and conferences.

Our Conclusions

It would be very satisfying if the commercially published coursebooks could give teachers the flexibility that they seem to want and give the learners the

opportunities for engaged experience, use and reflection that they need, whilst still providing the attractive, credible and trialled materials that they are so successful at doing.

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Chapter 10

Materials Used in the USA

Julia Frazier and Patricia Juza

Introduction

It goes without saying that the diversity of English language teaching (ELT) materials in the United States reflects the diversity of learners, teachers, programs, and subcultures across this vast country. Thus, writing a chapter encompassing everything would be impossible. Instead, this chapter will focus on general trends observed in ELT materials for academic, post-secondary programs. These programs mainly enrol students who are relatively new arrivals, who may or may not have completed secondary school in the United States, and would like to continue their education to receive a university diploma from a US university. There are some international students who come to the USA for a short period of time or to do an intensive English program before beginning studies in a US university. A third group, which we will discuss in further detail, is Generation 1.5: those students who were born in the USA or moved here at a young age, but have not developed the academic language skills necessary for completion of a US university course of study. Academic programs have the responsibility of indoctrinating these groups of students into the US university culture, language, and experience.

Although academic programs are the focus of this chapter, there are two overwhelming trends in K-12 and adult programs that should be mentioned, so we will begin with a brief overview of their situations. All levels of education in the United States today have been affected by the standards movement and accountability requirements carried out through standardized testing. This fact comes through above all others no matter where or how one researches English language programs and materials. Equally important to understand is that today the publication of ESL materials, like many educational materials, is market-driven. That is, most US publishers develop and produce textbooks and materials which they believe they can sell to the largest audience. This audience includes not only students and teachers, but also schools, school districts and regions, and even states. The adoption states of Florida, California, and Texas have such a profound affect on what gets published that smaller states often align their standards with one or more of the 'Big Three' in order to find textbooks and materials which complement their learning objectives. Therefore, their standards and accountability mechanisms are considered foremost in the materials development process.

With No Child Left Behind (NCLB),[1] the pressure on K-12 administrators, teachers, and students to achieve success as defined by the current Administration in Washington and demonstrated through standardized test scores has grown exponentially. English language learners (ELL) must take the same tests (in every subject, not just English) as their native English-speaking classmates after they have been in the United States for one year. These tests are not only high-stakes for students but also for teachers and administrators. For example, principals whose schools attain a certain average test score receive bonuses. Native English-speaking students are beginning to show signs of burn-out by fourth grade, and this is being attributed to the new culture of testing prevalent in our schools. The stress this could place on newcomer ELLs is much greater.

ELT materials for K-12 are reflecting the emphasis currently being placed on tests and standards. Textbooks assist teachers to align their lessons with the content and ESL standards, and many provide test-like practice questions at the end of the chapters. ESL textbooks are aware of the need for students to jump into content as early as possible. Therefore, books are becoming increasingly tied to content, using themes that reflect content area topics and providing a variety of discourse types and supplementary materials. (*Shining Star* (Chamot *et al.* 2004) is a general example; *Voices in Literature* (McClosky and Stack 1996) and *Gateway to Science* (Collins 2008) are subject-specific examples.) For example, understanding charts and graphs depicting scientific information is a skill students practice from the lowest levels of ESL. The push for success on standardized tests has also led teachers to call for more grammar materials for their secondary school students. The most popular books in K-12 are all correlated to state standards, standardized tests, and even grammar books. In addition, they offer online support for students and teachers, including extra practice, quizzes, and exercises.

But the testing does not stop with secondary school; adult programs are now tied to standardized tests as a form of accountability. The passage of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in 1998 provided federal funding for a variety of workplace and job training programs including ESL programs for adults. The law requires that each state set accountability mechanisms tied to standardized tests for any program receiving funding. Although the law opened up many possibilities for free or low-cost ESL classes for adults, it has also transformed the world of adult ESL. National and state organizations and governments have drawn up standards for adult education to link the testing to practice in a goal-oriented way. New textbooks being developed for adults are also tied to the standards and the most widely used tests (CASAS: Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System; and BEST Plus) and are marketed as such. All major publishers' websites offer correlations tables which outline how their materials, either collectively or individually, are correlated to other books, major tests, and local, state, and national standards. *Step Forward* (Adelson-Goldstein 2007), Oxford University Press's newest adult series, includes these in the scope and sequence, making a two-page spread. *Ventures* (Bitterlin *et al.* 2007), put out by Cambridge University Press, also outlines alignment with standards and

tests, but their outline is separate from the scope and sequence. Both books offer practice exercises throughout the books that are written in the style of the major tests in order to help students prepare for these question types.

In the adult market, there is a growing respect for adult learners as adults with skills, knowledge, and experience of their own. With this respect comes the acceptance that class is not always the adult learner's first priority. Adults who miss class might quit attending altogether because of the amount of material they have already missed or because they no longer feel like a part of the classroom community. The newest materials are addressing this issue: learner persistence. By creating stand-alone lessons that are not dependent on the previous lessons for success, encouraging self-study through websites and answer keys, supporting a community of learners through the use of a classroom buddy system and group work, and supporting learners' sense of progress and success through the use of techniques such as learning logs, books such as *Ventures* hope to help learners persist in the learning process. Of course, learner persistence will also contribute to a program's attempt to meet accountability benchmarks.

Trends in Materials for Academic Programs

Unlike K-12 and adult programs, academic programs are free from most of the standardized tests. The one big test that nearly all students will take at some point is the TOEFL. Aside from that, though, the teachers and students in academic programs are most focused on preparation for a successful and smooth transition into mainstream university coursework. We see trends falling into two general categories: 'Content' and 'Technology'.

Trends in content

As the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is a hurdle most students bound for university study in the United States must jump, many academic materials provide test preparation. The new TOEFL iBT has been having a positive backwash effect by leading to exercises that reflect academic tasks more closely. Practice questions for this new examination appear in many of the newest materials, not merely those designed specifically for test preparation. *Grammar Connections* (O'Sullivan *et al.* 2007) and *Lecture Ready* (Sarosy and Sherak 2005) are two such examples. They have integrated TOEFL-like exercises into their chapters in a way that shows students how to transfer the skills they have learned in the chapter to their test taking strategies.

Corpus research is also playing a growing role in materials in the USA. This can be seen in academic materials in all the skills as well as the more obvious vocabulary and grammar texts.

There is an ever-increasing use of authentic and authentic-like materials in texts for all skills. *Discovering Fiction* (Kay and Gelshenen 2006) is one text that uses short excerpts of American fiction to make manageable lessons for English language learners. *Face the Issues* (Numrich 1996) is quite well known as one of the earlier books to be based on authentic radio programs. Today's listen-

ing and speaking texts, in addition to using radio and television, are using university lectures and discussions in order to expose students to the discourse patterns unique to those genres (*Lecture Ready* (Sarosy and Sherak 2005), for example). Closely related is a trend that seems to be just gaining momentum – the move away from clean, safe issues. There is a growing list of materials that, while not being exactly controversial, do tackle issues that do not always have neat answers. These topics themselves are more authentic for academic English. We will discuss why we would like to see more of this sort of topic in materials in a later section.

Recently, publishers have heeded the call for materials that address the needs of the Generation 1.5 population. These students were either born in the USA or moved to the USA at a very young age and are often fluent in English. However, they do not always have the academic language and skills needed for college success. Colleges have struggled with finding appropriate academic preparation materials for these students. Books written for recent arrivals typically make reference to issues which the Generation 1.5 students cannot relate to. For example, these students may not have experienced topics such as 'moving to the USA' and 'adjusting to US culture'. Even the term 'ESL' turns some of these students off because they consider themselves native speakers of English.

While college programs requested more appropriate materials for Generation 1.5 students, content-based instruction had grown more popular in the field of TESOL. This led publishers like Houghton Mifflin to develop the *English for Academic Success Series*, which consists of books for grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening and speaking, reading and writing. The series focuses on the improvement of academic skills through authentic texts in academic subject areas. For example, students research and write an essay on one of the Ten Amendments. This could be viewed as a modified assignment for a first year political science or US history course. College programs viewed these materials positively because they help Generation 1.5 students build their academic skills while expanding their content area knowledge.

Trends in technology

For at least the last 30 years, technology has played a major role in ESL materials. Textbooks were frequently supplemented with audio and video tapes, giving students access to dialogues, practice drills, real life role-plays, newscasts and lectures. Audio and video tapes were utilized in class, language labs and at home. These media provided necessary linguistic input and language models and allowed students to hear English speakers other than their instructor. They also added variety to class, which helped keep students motivated. Additionally, audio and video tapes enabled students to build a greater awareness of culture and background knowledge which their teacher and textbook alone could not achieve. Partnering with media outlets such as CNN, NPR and ABC News, publishers (Heinle, Longman and Prentice-Hall) integrated authentic current events, history, social and cultural issues into ESL materials.

Recently, ESL technology has shown enormous growth, particularly in the area of academic post-secondary materials. Publishers no longer supply just

ancillary audio and video tapes for textbooks. CD-Roms, websites, podcasts and electronic test-makers are just some of the new resources designed to help students and teachers. Oxford University Press provides a student webpage called 'I'm learning English Online Practice!' where students can take diagnostic tests to assess their strengths and weaknesses and play games and do practice exercises to reinforce textbook material. Online support for faculty is even more developed. For example, the Houghton Mifflin College ESL Division maintains a rich website for instructors using its English for Academic Success Series that includes teaching notes for each chapter, answer keys, downloadable quizzes, transparencies, sample syllabi, audio scripts, handouts and a listing of the books' competencies. Teachers also have access to a newsletter containing suggested activities for material extension and professional development webcasts. The upshot of all of this technology development is that students and teachers have easier access to quality materials. This is particularly helpful for students and faculty who are balancing multiple jobs, school and family.

While students and teachers have been consumers of ESL technology for a significant period of time, there is an increased movement toward their becoming producers of ESL technology materials. The explosion of WebQuests for K-12, adult and academic post-secondary audiences has encouraged students and faculty to design their own websites, produce their own digital stories (students storyboard an idea, create slides, write a narrative, record the narrative and then put the whole thing together electronically), keep electronic journals, participate in discussion boards and chat rooms and give PowerPoint presentations. Schools and graduate programs offer classes and ongoing professional development courses for faculty so that they can build their technical skills and design activities, which foster students' critical thinking and problem solving abilities in addition to their English language proficiency.

Strengths

The trends above show clearly that materials writers and publishers are taking teachers' feedback seriously and are making some welcome changes to the materials we use. One strength is the increased use of authentic materials and the contextualization of exercises. Theme- or content-based units are nothing new to reading and listening/speaking texts. Now, more grammar, writing and vocabulary texts follow a content theme for each unit, increasing contextualization to the unit level. Also, in all the skills as well as grammar and vocabulary, the context used is more often content that mirrors content students will encounter in mainstream university courses. There is still room for improvement, however, which we will discuss in the next section.

A second strength is the integration of skills and more academic-like tasks. Integrating skills is not a new idea, but books that were not written as 'integrated skills' texts were slower to adopt the approach. Today, even within a book that is designed for the teaching of one specific skill, skills are integrated. For example, a writing skills text may come with a video and recommended

listening activities in addition to the model readings and discussion tasks. As students complete a unit, their use of all four skills works to build proficiency in the target skill. This reflects the increased awareness of the wholeness of language learning. Although we can isolate a skill to practise a discrete facet, a skill cannot remain in isolation and be of use to a language learner. And putting in tasks that apply the new skills to academic projects students may encounter in mainstream classes helps students see the progress they are making towards their target language goals.

Another strength of the materials in use today is the increased use of technology. In addition to audio and video supplements, many, if not most, materials come with CD-Roms and ever greater numbers are coming with their own websites for both students and teachers. They are helpful resources for teachers and students. Students find the opportunity to use the publishers' websites motivating when they need to do additional practice or study for a test. While there is still more that can be done to exploit technology in the classroom, the publishers are working quickly to keep up with the latest coming from the world of computers and electronics.

Weaknesses

Even though positive changes have been made, much remains to be done. The most significant weakness lies in the mismatch between what teachers are taught and know about language learning and second language acquisition and the standardized tests and standards that materials are targeting.

Recently, many teachers have begun developing their own sustained content courses. In these courses, a topic or theme is studied in depth for an entire semester. Readings, writing assignments, video/audio listening, and speaking activities all relate to one topic, and generally students tie it all together at the end of the semester in the form of a paper or a culminating project. Needless to say, preparation for such a course is extensive. In most cases, teachers use authentic materials such as short stories, poetry, newspaper articles, movies, television shows, and the like upon which to build the course. They design their own tasks to accompany these materials. There are good reasons for putting in this much effort: this type of course more closely mirrors university courses in the content areas, and students experience a feeling of accomplishment studying a subject in such depth and being able to produce a final project related to it. Research from a variety of fields[2] underscores how important it is to offer students the opportunity to become more deeply engaged in a topic. However, the demand on teachers' time and resources required to create a good content-based course is the most often cited drawback to such courses (Sheppard 1997; Short 1997; Wegrzecka-Kowalewski 1997). Sheppard found that most teachers use materials for 'regular' courses and 90 per cent also create their own materials. Wegrzecka-Kowalewski describes a high school which has successfully implemented content-based instruction (CBI). Their teachers had to be provided with release time to create materials and with good photocopying facilities to

reproduce and share the materials they created. It is possible to find materials today that cover a content area in more depth, such as *Academic Listening Encounters* (Sanabria 2005). These are excellent content-based books, but they fall far short of sustained content in its purest form.

Another weakness of materials is the topics of the content they cover. It can be a real challenge to find a book that has topics that will be really engaging to students. Yes, it is possible to build a lesson around colours and their connection to people's emotions, but where is the edge? Getting into controversial topics in class can be like walking into a minefield. Teachers and materials writers do not want to risk offending students; that would hardly be conducive to language learning. Perhaps what we need more of is content that does not always have a neat answer. With more grey areas, students and teachers can more genuinely explore an issue from a variety of dimensions. The language stimulated by such exploration is bound to reflect more closely the language used in many university and work settings where real problems are grappled with every day. There are some materials that have begun to present such topics (*Thinking Critically: World Issues for Reading, Writing, and Research* (Shulman 2004) is an advanced example), but most materials continue to use bland topics that are hard to make stimulating to learners.

A third weakness in materials today is the limited opportunity for individual connection to the material and self-expression in relation to the material. Most books include a warm-up activity at the start of each chapter that helps students activate their prior knowledge of the topic and an activity near the end that helps students reconnect to their lives. In the bulk of the chapter, however, it is rare to find examples of real student input that reflects their individuality. Some have argued that greater personal involvement leads to greater comprehension and retention (see Masuhara 2003; Tomlinson 2003a). This is more than schema activation; it is an interactive approach to the material. In reading, for example, Masuhara (2003) suggests four principles for reading lessons and materials: engage learners' affect; allow learners to listen to a text before reading in order to focus on meaning; help learners develop mental representations of the reading material; and help learners experience the text before focusing on the language within it. An example of how such an interactive approach can be put into materials can be found in *Reason to Write: Low Intermediate* by Judy Miller and Robert Cohen (2001). One chapter presents a fable, Little Red Riding Hood, and presents a modern version of the same fable written by James Thurber. Students are then asked to consider a fable they know, either from American culture or their own. They are given the choice to write the fable as they know it or to update it. There are guidelines and graphic organizers provided in order to support students through the process, both for writing the fable and for updating it. This activity is not an extension activity but a central activity of the chapter.

A fourth weakness is the lack of choice within a particular textbook for both teachers and students. Textbooks seem to be written with the intention that teachers and students use every bit of every chapter. There is little or no choice of activity order or activity type included in published materials although

choice is an empowering tool for students and teachers. Some books offer a choice of writing stimulus, for example, but no choice of reading matter, what direction to take a reading and its follow-up discussion and activities, or other deeper choices. Choice would give users of materials a greater sense of ownership – they would follow *their* interests and needs to make *their* course – rather than following someone else's course. Not only would this change the power dimension between the students/teacher and the text, but it would also help to empower the students in co-ownership of the course with the teacher. The sense of ownership would in turn lead to greater self-confidence and motivation. Perhaps it would be too costly to publish a book with two to three times the amount of material that is needed to complete the course. Or perhaps if textbooks offered more choice, teachers would adhere more closely to them.

A fifth weakness is the lack of engaging materials for low-level learners. Teachers who would like to use authentic and authentic-like materials with beginning and low-intermediate level learners find themselves on quite a quest. Most materials for these levels are written for ESL rather than adapted or taken from manageable authentic texts. The lack of authenticity moves the class a step further from the target language in real use than the classroom already has. This separation can make class seem irrelevant to the students and is not stimulating for the students or the teacher. The converse could be true: imagine a student's pride after reading and analysing a real poem in English after a few weeks in class. The popularity of abridged books in ESL classes should be proof enough that authentic materials, even when adapted for English learners, are motivating.

Additionally, there seems to be a big jump from lower-level materials to advanced materials. Therefore, teachers of upper intermediate and advanced classes find that their students often need more scaffolding than is provided.

How the Materials Are Used

With the weaknesses above in mind, it is not surprising that few teachers in the United States use a chosen textbook with only occasional adapting and supplementing.

If we consider material usage on a continuum ranging from strict textbook use with little adapting or supplementing to no textbook use whatsoever, most teachers would fall somewhere in the middle, leaning toward their own materials. Teachers will choose to supplement with materials that compensate for what they perceive as their textbook's weaknesses. In a writing course, for example, a teacher may supplement with readings to use as models or as springboards for discussion and analysis. In that same course, a teacher may also supplement with a targeted grammar exercise to address a problem area noticed widely in the students' writing. Few teachers follow the book strictly, and most teachers actually fall to the left side of the continuum in Figure 10.1. The materials that are used to supplement may be designed by teachers based on authentic materials such as realia and authentic texts, or they may be photocopied prepared

materials from other ELT materials. In some cases, teachers use student-generated materials as the basis for their teaching.

continuum:	no book all teacher-designed materials	more teacher-designed materials than book	book with frequent adapting and supplementing	strict book rare adapting and supplementing
	←			→

Figure 10.1: Materials Usage Continuum

Teachers are taught in teacher education programs a variety of things that would naturally lead most to use prepared materials judiciously. And in fact, they are taught that they are not really doing their job if they 'simply' take the textbook and teach straight from it day after day. In teacher practice, if a student teacher does teach a lesson directly from the book, the supervisor is likely to question the student teacher quite thoroughly to ascertain why there was no adapting or supplementing. In fact, some programs, such as the COPE Program at Hunter College, do not even give student teachers textbooks to use in order to help them learn to choose from prepared materials and to design their own materials to meet their learners' needs. In short, what we see in teachers' use of materials is transfer of training.

A main reason that teachers supplement is to explore current beliefs in language teaching methodology and second language acquisition. This can be seen most prominently in the effort by teachers to provide more authentic and sustained content. This sort of engagement should lead to deeper linguistic processing and a more stimulating learning environment, to name just two benefits. As mentioned before, there really is no material out there now that caters to this style of teaching. Thus, teachers are forced to create their own course. Some begin with a textbook that comes close and supplement it with more input and activities to deepen the students' experience with each topic. Others create their course from scratch.

Another reason for supplementing is that in teacher education programs, learning styles and strategies are taught with emphasis on the fact that every learner is different (Oxford 2001). In order to meet the needs of the diversity of learners in the classroom, teachers should tailor their plans to include activity types for different learners in each lesson. Textbooks are two-dimensional. They do not move on the table, nor do they get up from their seats. There are textbooks that encourage students to get up and move around, to take surveys of their peers for example, but there is nothing like personalization for such an activity to really bring it alive in the classroom. And one survey or 'find someone who ...' per unit will not meet the needs of a class with many kinesthetic learners. Good teachers supplement their books with activities to meet their students' preferred styles.

Additionally, teachers are taught to help students make connections to their background knowledge and to personalize the topic. Textbook writers in the

USA cannot possibly know what learners will be using their books, except to anticipate that there will be a diversity of backgrounds. But where one teacher may be using a book with a diverse group of learners with ten language backgrounds represented, another teacher may be using the same book in a class of Korean students. Clearly the personalization and background connections that would be made in these settings would be vastly different. Therefore, teachers adapt and supplement the text to suit the backgrounds, experiences, and goals of their class.

It seems that even publishers do not expect teachers to use textbooks exclusively. On a one-on-one basis, in conversation with a sales representative for example, it is often clear that drawing on a variety of prepared materials as references is expected. In fact, some publishers are beginning to offer books that are spiral bound and 'photocopiable', albeit at a higher price, in an effort to allow teachers to pick and choose their materials without violating copyright laws. Materials like this are usually popular with teachers. They support the teachers' inclination to use published materials like reference materials from which to draw when planning lessons and courses.

Our Suggestions for Improvements

While we have already seen many positive changes in materials in recent years, we still find ourselves searching for the 'perfect' book. Maybe it will never be out there. Maybe it is time to rethink the nature of materials. With the explosive growth of technology, particularly the internet, and the training of teachers to create courses tailored to their students' needs and their own beliefs, will textbooks ever hold the prominence they once did? As teachers, we would definitely appreciate a publisher's willingness to work with us to develop the materials we want to use, in the way we want to use them.

Our main requests would be:

- more engaging, thought-provoking content with the possibility to pursue it in greater depth
- more engaging materials for low level students with a more structured transition to upper level materials
- more materials and activities to address the individual learners in each class (their learning styles and their ability levels, as well as their interests)
- more opportunity for affective engagement in materials
- more ways for teachers and students to exercise individual choice in the design of the course they follow.

One thought is that it might be time to move away from a coursebook and toward a course. One school that implemented CBI found that a resource box for each unit worked for them (Gianelli 1997). In the resource box were teacher-created materials and materials that had been collected from other

sources. There were also lists of suggested resources available in the school library, suggested sections of class textbooks, and suggestions for appropriate realia. This sort of resource lends the teachers and students support and structure for a course, but does not dictate exactly how the materials will be used. In the published materials world, how could this be realized? Since many publishers are already providing correlations of how their texts match up, it would not be too much more to make those chapters available singly, not only in their textbooks. Using the internet could facilitate this. Publishers could provide resource boxes, similar to what they already provide for classrooms of younger learners. These boxes could include tasks and activities for varying ability levels and varying style preferences. In this way, teachers or students who want to focus on more grammar could access those materials, and teachers or students who want more exposure to related readings could access those materials, just to give an example.

It would be interesting to pursue this also at the content or task-based level. If publishers could develop activities for a variety of texts and language features, teachers and students could choose the way they delve into the materials. Here's an example. Suppose a class wants to do a sustained content course on the Harlem Renaissance. They could access the writers, musicians, artists, and politicians of the time, with their related works. And suppose another class wants to do a sustained content course on jazz. Some of their materials would intersect the Harlem Renaissance, but other materials would come from New Orleans, Detroit, the nineteenth century, the 1920s, the 1950s, and so on. They could pull the musicians from each of those places and periods. A third class, working on academic writing, could pull stimuli and models from a range of topics for each of their focus tasks (persuasive essays, comparison and contrast, etc.). Not only could the topics be chosen by the class, but the teacher could select the input and tasks appropriate to the students' ability level. Tasks that would help classes focus on the form of the language could be easily integrated into such a format. With the internet and CD-Roms, this sort of fantasy course design should be able to become reality.

We would also like to see, either in our fantasy course format or in traditional books, more opportunity for individual expression. One thing we liked about the newest materials for adults is that the publishers provide activities on different levels for use in multi-level classes. But unfortunately these activities are designed so that students at each level come out to the same answer. This may be helpful for some exercises, but it is when students share their opinions and ideas that real language is produced and negotiated. It is also this sort of analysis and synthesis of ideas that is common in university courses. In courses designed to prepare students for university and professional work, it is crucial that students be exposed to these real life tasks while they are learning. Pally (2000) explains that in her experience, students transitioning into university courses from EAP programs could not do the academic work because they had not been exposed to that level of academic inquiry in their ESL classes. She underscores that it is not just the materials, but also the tasks that teach students the pragmatics of academic and professional English.

Conclusion

In recent years, we have seen some very positive changes coming from the publishers of ESL materials. From talking with publishers' representatives, we know that they and their offices value the feedback that teachers give them. Representatives make notes of what requests, compliments, and complaints they hear most often. They report these to the publishers, who in turn hold meetings to synthesize what they are hearing from across the country. They then work to develop materials that meet the needs of the users. This method seems to be working – we are seeing more of what we like. But the world of ELT is changing quickly. Technology, accountability, even the nature of ESL programs, have necessitated a renewed look at the materials we use, need, and would like to see.

Endnotes

[1] The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001, better known as No Child Left Behind, was signed into law by President George W. Bush on 8 January 2002. It increased accountability for states, tying federal education funding to improvements in standardized test scores. The goal was to make sure states were providing every student in every school the same chance to succeed. However, the emphasis on testing along with controversy over the funding states are actually seeing from the federal government have led many groups, not least the National Education Association (the largest teachers' union), to seek improvements as NCLB goes to debate for reauthorization in Congress in 2007 (at the time of writing).

[2] Grabe and Stoller (1997) cite support for content based instruction (CBI) from SLA research, training studies, educational and cognitive psychology, and outcomes of CBI programs.

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Chapter 11

Materials Used in Western Europe

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Methodological Correctness in Materials Production

Introduction

This chapter aims to provide a critique of some current trends in the writing and production of textbooks in Western Europe and will use case studies from two European countries as illustrations. It will review postwar trends in textbook design as a background to throwing light on the state of play in a globalized market, not only in ELT but in the market as a whole, of which ELT is but a part. The chapter will review the developments in materials design within the framework of 'methodological correctness' (on the model of 'political correctness') and will thus refer to the importance of ideology in understanding textbook production in a 'material world'.

The tendencies in international markets initiated in 1989 and gaining momentum in the 1990s can be summed up as the tension between global spread and local needs. In the context of ELT, the global textbook, which dominated markets before 1989, still has a strong presence, but in recent years has been challenged by locally produced textbooks. The tension between global and local has not created a new paradigm but has modified the paradigm which prevailed in the 1980s, and was known variously as 'Communicative', 'Functional', 'Notional-Functional' *et al.*

The new world order does not put all in doubt – the native-speaker centre is still in place – but some of its dictates, such as the role of L1-user authenticity, target culture and the priority of use over form, have been questioned (Prodromou 1988; Adaskou *et al.*, 1990; Cook 2001, 2002; Alptekin 2002) or made part of a new synthesis (Swan 1985; Marks 2004; Andrewes 2005).

The native-speaker centre and the publishers based in the centre still promote approaches to materials emanating from Anglo-Saxon applied linguistics departments. Many of the principles of textbook design and methodology in general bear the hallmarks of the latest trends in academic circles, e.g. L2 acquisition research which sees the native-speaker as the norm for L2 users, the importance of noticing and classroom tasks and so on. This is, on the one hand, healthy, as research into L2 acquisition continues and our understanding of it deepens. For example, where once language learning was conceived as a behaviourist response, giving rise to approaches such as the Audiolingual method

(see under the heading 'The background' below), today we have a broader understanding that includes a growing knowledge of how the brain works, the importance of affect, and so on. On the other hand, teaching approaches developing out of this 'growth area' must necessarily be greeted with caution. The L2 acquisition paradigm with its deficit view of the L2-user is increasingly questioned (Firth and Wagner 1997; Block 2003). At the time of writing, the prevailing trends emanating from applied linguistics and with an impact on the classroom and materials production include: task-based syllabuses, corpus linguistics, lexical approaches and the 'can do statements' associated with the Common European Framework.

These developments represent an evolution and a refinement of the communicative paradigm. There are forces in the native-speaker centre which would like to see the Task Based Learning (TBL) focus applied more generally as a 'good thing', if not a best method, in terms of promoting learner-centred learning, autonomy and communicative language use (Willis 1996; Skehan 1998; Ellis 2003).

Methodological correctness

Indeed, in some local areas, the new methodological trends are accepted and adopted as 'correct', given the authority of native-speakers and academics based in prestigious Anglo-American – and, indeed, Australian universities. ELT practitioners are often swept along by the latest trends, reluctant to criticize the fruits of academic research, even if that research is partial and still ongoing (Sheen 2003; Swan 2005). Methodological correctness (MC) can thus be defined as 'as a set of beliefs derived from prestigious but incomplete academic research in the Anglo-phone centre that influence the decisions one makes regarding materials and methods in the classroom, even if those decisions are inconsistent with the local context and particular needs and wants of the students one is teaching'. The work of Holliday (1994, 2005) has contributed a great deal to our understanding of the attitudes and mechanisms which go into the producing of MC.

The creation of a new MC is reinforced by the views of conference speakers who often have a global mobility, and teacher training courses in, or emanating from, the Anglophone centre. A crucial player in the process of creating materials and attitudes towards them is the ELT publisher, and here it is important to remember that publishers have a more pragmatic view of MC and will adopt policies that give the best return on their investment. This perspective will produce contradictory but expedient solutions, depending on whether the market for the 'product' is specified as global or local or both. Market research into which new products are likely to sell well is becoming more complex and sophisticated.

Publishers and project managers, driven largely by the profit-motive, are more likely to be flexible regarding questions of correctness. Editors, on the other hand, who have great responsibility in shaping the final product: the book and its component parts (which nowadays include workbooks, Teacher's Guides, DVDs, CD-Roms and websites), may act upon MC to a greater degree

than the publisher. This may be because editing ELT materials has become an increasingly specialized process with practitioners holding MAs in Applied Linguistics from Anglophone universities in the centre (UK, USA, Australia, etc.). Editors will tend to be caught between the market-driven agenda of the publisher and what they as mediators of the latest 'best practice' perceive as methodologically correct.

Thus, one sees materials being produced along 'communicative' or 'task-based' lines for markets in which the majority of teachers are L2 users of the language and may be more comfortable with an upfront approach to the teaching of grammar and with techniques of traditional language teaching which have become taboo in the Anglophone centre: 'explaining' the grammatical system, controlled practice, accuracy, the use of L1 or translation (Cook 2000, 2001, 2002). An editor labouring under the weight of MC may even reject the evidence from the 'market' if it does not match his or her preconceptions of how learning takes place according to the insights gained on an MA course in Applied Linguistics or on a prestigious teacher training Diploma course. There is an element of neo-colonial arrogance in the more extreme forms of MC (Canagarajah 1999; Pennycook 1998, 2001). In practical terms, materials produced by the lights of MC may fail in the classroom and in the long-run will lose the publisher money as teachers abandon the product as 'lacking in grammar' or having 'too much group-work'.

The roots of MC go back to the early days of modern ELT when British publishers (and to a lesser extent US publishers) virtually had a monopoly of ELT materials used in classrooms around the world. It is to the emergence of MC in early ELT publishing that we now turn.

The background

In the early 1970s, on the threshold of the communicative revolution in ELT, the most successful writer of ELT materials in countries like Greece (see the Greek case study below) was A. S. Hornby. The titles of his books for teachers, dating from the mid-1950s, sum up the approach: *A Guide to Patterns and Usage in English* and *The Teaching of Structural Words and Sentence Patterns*. These were the linguistic basis for his highly successful coursebook for students, *The Oxford Progressive English Course*. These books were still in use in 1973, as was Gatenby's *A Direct Method English Course* (first published in 1952). Typical of these books was a tabular style of presentation and an inductive approach to grammar (without the problem-solving/discovery element that characterizes inductive approaches today). These books were essentially based on the Direct Method, with influences from a structural approach to grammar. Along similar lines, but more explicitly audio-lingual, were the highly successful textbooks of L. G. Alexander such as *First Things First (New Concept English)* (1967a) and *Look, Listen and Learn* (1967b).

The focus in these books was clearly on the forms of the language rather than meaning, use or context. There was no sense at all that English was an international language largely spoken by L2 users and that even in its standard forms it was heterogeneous rather than uniform. Yet, in this scheme of

things, lesson planning was a relatively simple process of Presentation, Practice, Production of the forms through a variety of controlled or, at best, guided activities. There was little freedom for self-expression (except at higher levels) and no opportunity for students to work things out for themselves. The form of English presented made little distinction between written and spoken English, let alone international varieties of English. The model was a kind of uniform, monochrome 'spoken prose', based on the written medium and thus placing a premium on accuracy in the standard written forms of the language. This is an irony in that the audio-lingual approach prioritized speech over writing ('listening, speaking, reading and writing' – in that order' – was L. G. Alexander's audio-lingual mantra).

As the 1970s wore on, writers tried to cover up the poverty of content with humorous situations and storylines (e.g. *Streamline* (Hartley and Viney) and *Access to English* (Coles and Lord), both Oxford University Press) while O'Neill *et al.*'s *Kernel Lessons* series (Longman) opted for a storyline based on suspense. These 'entertaining' devices were designed to lighten the load of the dreary drills that characterized nearly every lesson in this paradigm. Though these books were commercially successful and even popular with students and teachers, the audio-lingual structural approach had reached its limits.

The transition

The late 1970s saw the beginnings of a paradigm shift in ELT towards the Communicative Approach, and 'functional' textbooks, such as the *Strategies* series (Abbs and Freebairn 1976ff.) and Leo Jones' *Functions of English* (1982), enjoyed considerable commercial success. Many of the tenets of the structural-audio-lingual approach were overturned and reversed: the syllabus was meaning-focused (everyday functional expressions, making invitations, requests, and so on), all the skills were given their due, both as skills in their own right and as integrated skills; 'authentic material' (written for native speakers by native speakers) expressed the reaction to the artificiality of language in the structural syllabus. But teachers began to feel these books were too much like phrase books in disguise, with lots of useful expressions from which it was difficult to make generalizations about the language. As for students, they missed the copious grammatical – or structural – presentation of traditional approaches.

Synthesis

A book which has become a byword for commercial success in recent years is the *Headway* series (Soars and Soars 1986ff., Oxford University Press). It is worth pondering the puzzle of the *Headway* phenomenon in order to understand not only its success but the nature of the relationship between the textbook and the market: What it DOESN'T owe its success to is author promotion. It is often said that *Headway* was successful because it was 'the right book at the right time'. In order to put some flesh on this rather vague platitude, we carried out our own small-scale research with 20 ELT specialists (authors, publishers, teachers). The question to put to these specialists was: 'How would you explain the success of *Headway*?' In Table 11.1 we summarize the results.

Table 11.1: The *Headway* Paradigm

Approach to language There was a strong grammar-based syllabus after the communicative focus on functions and notions. Vocabulary was treated on its own terms for the first time. *Methodology* Methodology was easy; not innovative, with lots of controlled exercises. It also allowed for student-student interaction. It was one of the first to integrate skills and language. *Content* It had interesting topics.The texts were popular with teachers and students. It had authentic-looking reading texts, but was still reassuringly traditional. *Market factors* The publishers are the biggest, have the longest reach, the most sales representatives, the most money, etc. Marketing is focused on branding (e.g. fostering brand looks, brand loyalty, new versions, classic versions, etc.). It has been adopted by prestigious native-speaker institutions (e.g. International House and the British Council). There was a wide range of support and supplementary material: i.e. a 'complete package'. *Design* It looked different from what had gone before. It was teacher-friendly – even an untrained or inexperienced teacher could have successful lessons if they followed the steps. It was bright and cheerful-looking. It had real pictures. It had a detailed Teacher's guide.

Other books which have tried to build on the success of *Headway*, either by adopting the paradigm itself or adapting it by adding new 'unique selling points' include: *New English File* (Oxenden and Latham-Koenig 2001), *Cutting Edge* (Cunningham and Moore 1999ff.) and *Inside Out* (2001 Jones and Bastow).

These materials all share a claim that they provide the student, wherever they may be around the globe, with 'real world texts' – 'real life skills' – 'real language' – 'real practice' and 'authentic tasks', all defined in terms of a 'native-speaker' model. The methodology is typically 'correct': inductive 'problem-solving' approach to grammar, with deductive summaries usually relegated to the back of the book, tasks which encourage students to engage in interaction, and so on.

In addition to the above 'mainstream' materials, more innovative publications have also appeared on the ELT scene: corpus-informed coursebooks such as *Touchstone*, drawing on an American corpus (McCarthy *et al.* 2004–06) and *Innovations* (Dellar *et al.* 2005), which uses a lexical approach.

The Current Scene and Methodological Correctness

There are a number of core concerns discernable in today's coursebooks and which can be said to represent what is 'methodologically correct' in today's textbook writing. The influences on MC that have in turn impacted on coursebook writing are quite diverse, ranging from research into affect and L2 acquisition to constructivism and problem-solving approaches.

Authenticity

One of the hallmarks of MC since the coming of the communicative revolution in language teaching has been the assumption that authenticity is a good thing. Its implementation has, however, met with obstacles and resistance, largely as a result of the ambiguity of the term authenticity: whose authenticity and by what criteria is authenticity established? Widdowson refers to the 'authenticity' of response and the difference between what is authentic and what is genuine. He uses 'genuine' to refer to the material itself, 'an absolute quality' (Widdowson 1978: 80), and 'authentic' to the response of the user to it, noting that such a response can occur without the material being genuine. Conversely, a 'genuine' text does not guarantee an authentic response, i.e. engagement.

Authenticity, in other words, has to have a sort of 'end-user' validation; it does not stem solely from the originator – it is, to coin a phrase, 'in the eye of the beholder'. Some textbooks that reflect a native or semi-native-centric view of authenticity in which 'real' language is real by native-speaker criteria are: *Natural English* (Gairns and Redman 2003), *Touchstone* (McCarthy *et al.* 2004–06) and *Cutting Edge* (Cunningham and Moore 1999ff.).

Many textbooks fail to take off with learners in EFL contexts because what is authentic to the L1 user immersed in UK/US culture is often obscure or trivial to the L2 user. Too much 'native-speaker' reality risks becoming unreal and irrelevant to the L2 user. The contexts in the textbook do not retain the pragmatic riches of the original interaction. When L1-L1 user authenticity is transplanted to the context of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), all that is left is the form and shadow of the original meaning.

Interest

If the above reasoning is true, native-centric materials will have limited motivational potential for learners in lingua franca contexts. Publishers are nevertheless caught in a bind here, for the concept of the lingua franca context is a shaky one to translate into a textbook. The ultimate extension of the lingua franca concept is a culture-free no-man's land, one that was prevalent in some of the business-orientated books of the mid-late 1990s (e.g. *International Express*, Taylor 1997) which are so busy being international – with units such as 'have a pleasant flight', 'Europe's high-speed future', 'a new luxury hotel'– that our feet scarcely touch the ground, leaving us literally in limbo, and thus with no cultural 'footholds'. The current solution is to look to L1-driven materials with globalized status (e.g. articles on internationally known sports people, popstars and show business in general), or else to rely on the sheer curiosity factor

inherent in the materials. Some coursebooks (e.g. *Inside Out*, *Text File*, *Cutting Edge*) invest a great deal in the curiosity factor (e.g. weird characters and events, strong personalization of activities).

Achievable activities

A serious problem for the non-native speaker (NNS) teacher (and, by extension, the learners) is that the communicative and task-based nature of many UK-inspired materials used in Europe may not always be achievable owing to the lack of linguistic guidance and an excessive open-endedness in the tasks, which creates a sense of insecurity in someone for whom English is not their L1. There is often not enough exemplification of what the students are supposed to say or write. The reluctance to help students too much for fear of provoking inauthentic language ends up leaving students tongue-tied.

Affective involvement of learners

The assumption that the 'correct' materials and methodology are those that invite students to 'talk about themselves' (their feelings, experiences and opinions) is influenced by Western European attitudes towards the self and the individual. Students in most European countries do like to talk about themselves on condition that classroom constraints do not get in the way. Many teachers teach large unmotivated classes or small unmotivated classes. Classroom rapport is essential if these materials are to come to life. Teacher confidence with the language is another factor in encouraging the use of meaningful, affective tasks, yet NNS teachers may lack this, as noted above. L2-user teachers will often avoid pairwork, group and open-ended affective tasks for fear of losing control of the language produced by the students.

Cognitive challenge

There are two kinds of cognitive challenge to be found in textbooks – one is the degree of problem-solving or working out for yourself activities (another hallmark of MC), the other is the distance between the content-matter of the material (the topics, the language and concepts used) and the learners. Invitations to work things out for themselves are often met with a blank look. Do-it-yourself and autonomy in general is a defining feature of Western societies and education. It is reflected in the popularity of IKEA. Learners are invited to assemble the language themselves. This sometimes assumes it is as simple as giving them a screwdriver and spanner. It is more complex and profoundly cultural. Authors often assume the learners have an intuition for the language, which is what makes problem-solving possible. It reflects the movement in pedagogy in the West towards learner autonomy and the 'teach a man to fish ...' paradigm. It can be argued, nevertheless, that 'autonomous learning' is not culture-dependent but is actually innate – 'we are born self-directed learners' (Benson 2001: 59) – we all learned our first language by working it out for ourselves. Students from all cultures can be encouraged to return to a more independent and critical approach to language learning, their (dependent) learning styles are often 'learned' and are not immutable. Fostering autonomy is admittedly a

slow process, though, and can only work with consistency – to pursue the metaphor, toss the learners a spanner occasionally and they will only gawp at it; do it repeatedly and they will eventually start to learn how to use it.

Cognitive challenge can also be built into the graphics (charts, diagrams). The most popular books (*Inside Out, Cutting Edge, Headway, Text File*) have a strong 'discovery' approach to learning. Bolitho and Tomlinson's *Discover English* (1995) has been highly influential in this respect. Since the 1990s, the concept of 'noticing' has given discovery procedures a specific form based on highly influential research (Schmidt e.g. 1990). Discovery is incorporated in 'analysis' sections (*Cutting Edge*) combined with controlled practice. So the approach is often eclectic, a compromise between MC and market pragmatism. A discovery approach is manifest in the number of questions the books contain – apart from the traditional comprehension question (which is often the opposite of discovery learning) we have problem-solving questions and personal questions.

Meaningful Use of English

Many books have communicative activities (information gaps, opinion gaps, experience gaps, jigsaw reading, functionally related tasks), which are light years away from audio-lingual materials in terms of putting the language to some kind of 'use' (e.g. making future plans and expressing intentions, seeking solutions to hypothetical personal problems and so on). They contain 'task' sections, often in the form of open-ended discussions of the topic in the reading or listening texts. Meaningfulness is often interpreted as 'personalized' tasks which put grammar into context.

The ELT coursebooks currently used in Europe can be seen, in sum, as incorporating the same core traits as characterize today's Anglo-Saxon as well as American society; the importance – not to say 'cult' – of the individual, an emotional frankness and the embracing of challenge, discovery and novelty. A part of MC in ELT materials is that they inevitably reflect these values. We now examine how far MC is acceptable and accepted in practice, in 'close-ups' on two contrasting European ELT contexts.

ELT Materials in Greece

The Greeks have always been aware of the importance of foreign languages. The word 'barbarian' derives from the Greeks' perception of foreigners as people who 'babbled'. As a sea-faring nation from ancient times to the present, the Greeks have always needed foreign languages for conducting trade and for contact with other cultures. Indeed, Greek itself was for a long time the regional lingua franca. Today, Greece needs English as a lingua franca as its main source of income is tourism, for which English is a necessary tool.

Greece's main allies in the postwar period have been Britain and the United States. Unlike most of its Balkan neighbours, Greece has, since the end of the

Second World War, been a member of NATO and the Western capitalist system. Greece's status as a developing economy has in recent years been replaced by a new economic dynamism, facilitated by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the break-up of Yugoslavia. These developments have opened up new markets to Greek products and services.

As a country with a language not widely used beyond its own borders, Greece today needs English to facilitate its contact with the outside world and its integration with the global economy. Greece's entry into the EC (1981) and the spread of a globalized market economy have accelerated this process.

The demand for English goes back at least to the postwar period, with the first private language institutes opening in the 1950s and growing at a phenomenal rate. It is estimated that there are now about 10,000 private language institutes throughout the country.

In order to see Greek ELT in context we need to take the following parameters into account:

1. The teaching of English as a business.
2. The role of examinations in Greek society.
3. The conflict between the textbooks and the teacher.
4. The role of local publishers.

ELT as a business

Most of the 10,000 or so private language institutes (PLIs or 'frontisteria') in Greece are run as businesses in stiff competition with other businesses, often in the same neighbourhood. For many clients, the choice of language institute will be based on the prospect of acquiring a recognized language qualification as quickly as possible.

The product of the PLIs is thus defined in terms of the certificate while the process is one of preparation for the certificate. The materials adopted by the school must serve this paramount purpose: producing a large quantity of exam passes in the shortest possible time. The efficiency and productivity of the PLI business is measured in terms of examination passes. It is on these principles that promotion of these businesses is based. This is confirmed by the custom of posting the names of successful candidates outside many schools, in order to encourage registration. How does this socio-economic context impact on materials production in Greece? Coursebooks, supplementary materials and testbooks are the machinery for producing examination results. Thus, publishers who produce textbooks designed according to the latest theories of effective teaching and learning and with high quality design will not necessarily sell well. The textbooks that sell best are often thin on communicative methodology and modern views of language and strong on easily teachable test-like material. Successful coursebooks (in commercial terms) have recently been those that foreground grammar and controlled practice and thereby make the material 'easy to teach' for teachers who have little interest in methodology and greater confidence in teaching grammar than teaching communication. Such teachers are more comfortable with 'testing' rather than 'teaching' procedures and,

insofar as this produces an adequate number of examination passes, is also consistent with the economic interests of the PLI as a business run on profit.

Examinations in Greek society

At about the same time as the first private language institutes were being set up in the 1950s, the Greek government granted official recognition to the Cambridge examinations; the Proficiency (both Cambridge and Michigan) is also recognized as a teaching qualification in the private sector. These qualifications are much sought-after as they provide work, better job prospects and remuneration; the right to open a language school is open to anyone who wishes to invest in this burgeoning industry. The Cambridge and Michigan examinations have been joined in recent years by a plethora of international examinations (TOEFL, IELTS, Edexel, Trinity, London *et al.*) as well as an official Greek State Certificate in foreign languages. The demand for paper qualifications in a highly competitive job market has led to a huge washback effect in Greek ELT in all its manifestations. Washback is the effect, direct or indirect, of examinations on teaching methods and materials. Washback may be positive or negative and its influence is greater the more important the examination is perceived to be: 'if a test is regarded as important, then preparation for it can come to dominate all teaching and learning activities' (Hughes 1989:1).

In Greece, washback amounts to teaching towards tests and thus textbooks have evolved to meet this need (Tsagaris 2007). It is against this background that we should examine the role of the textbook and other learning materials in the Greek market. Sadly, the expression 'the Greek market' is a more appropriate term than 'the Greek educational context'. The pressure of the market leads publishers to produce a large proportion of test materials but even when materials are designed as textbooks there is a tendency for teachers to treat them as testbooks; in other words, the techniques and attitudes we associate with testing procedures (Prodromou 1995; Stergiopoulou 2002).

The conflict between the textbooks and the teacher

Until recently, most textbooks used in Greece were produced by UK publishers and taught by Greek L2 users of the language (rather than 'native-speakers'). The fact that English is not the mother-tongue of most English teachers in Greece has implications for the suitability – or 'teachability' – of the materials they are expected to use. These materials have largely been designed until now, under the influence of MC, i.e. a broadly native-speaker centred communicative methodology.

The communicative demands of much UK-produced textbook material often places a strain on the Greek teacher's linguistic resources to a greater degree than materials driven by grammar or the structures of the language. The methodology that usually accompanies these materials, based as it is on group and pair work and the sharing and exchange of information in the classroom, generates classroom activity which often conflicts with the teachers' wish to exert control over the class. It also generates language which is 'incorrect' or unpredictable and presupposes that the teacher is capable of impromptu

correction techniques. Moreover, 'functional' approaches to syllabus design assume that teachers are able to explain the often subtle relationship between language forms, meanings and pragmatic use. It is, however, much easier for a teacher who has learned English from books and tapes to teach grammar than to teach the pragmatics of English. Until the rise of locally produced materials, UK publishers had little incentive to question the (Anglo-centric) assumptions on which their materials were produced.

The role of local publishers

The rise of the Greek publisher of ELT materials in the last 25 years has marked a shift in the publishing paradigm in Greece, which had been, as we have seen, dominated by UK publishers promoting the latest trends in methodology and syllabus design. Interestingly, the first entry of the Greek publishers into the ELT market was via the production of supplementary materials, namely, grammar practice and 'companions' (bilingual guides to the grammar and vocabulary of the main coursebook). Both of these products appealed to the non-native teachers' preference for form-focused teaching and at the same time compensated for the teachers' lack of confidence with 'authentic' English.

Supplementary grammar materials are largely explanations of the grammar in the students' mother-tongue followed by sentence-level controlled practice, focusing on accuracy. The companion, apart from mother-tongue explanations of the rules of grammar, supplies the teacher with ready-made translations of the new vocabulary in the coursebook and example sentences. Many of these words and their illustrative sentences are used to conduct dictations as a way of 'testing' the student's 'knowledge' of new vocabulary. Originally, grammar practice books and companions were produced to accompany UK coursebooks and to make them 'easier' to teach in the conditions prevailing in the PLIs. UK publishers at the time did not produce their own companions; but when companions became popular and commercially viable, UK publishers took to producing their own. A textbook without a companion has come to be thought of as flawed in the Greek ELT market.

This impact of locally devised materials on ELT publishing as a whole is an interesting example of the local determining the global, the periphery fighting back against the centre. The influence of the local Greek publishers soon extended into the production of main coursebooks. Having imposed the necessity of form-focused practice books and companions on the market, they extended their activities into the production of textbooks. These textbooks did not merely reproduce basic notions of MC (Anglo-centric content and methodology) but added their own form-focused perspective. The result was a hybrid constructed from the UK tradition of textbook design and the local penchant for lots of controlled practice. This hybrid has emerged as the new paradigm in Greek ELT materials production, whether it be marketed by UK, Greek or publishers in other countries (e.g. Israel, which has produced the most successful publisher in Greek ELT in recent years). The new paradigm has restored many old-fashioned or taboo issues to respectability (Cook 2002): the use of the mother-tongue; lengthy grammar explanations, controlled form-

focused practice, discrete-item testing procedures, word-level or sentence-level dictation, to name but a few.

A Study in Localization: the Case of ELT in Ireland

The ELT situation in Ireland is unique in that Ireland is a small, English-speaking country but with a quite different language variety and culture from its overpowering neighbour. New-found prosperity has attracted economic migrants in record numbers over a very short time period, tilting the balance of the profile of the typical learner of English from EFL to ESOL. In this brief 'snapshot' of the ELT materials situation in Ireland, we examine the materials in use and assess how well they serve their market, with the underlying aim of exposing some generalizable issues arising with the trend in localization of materials.

The newly prosperous and multicultural Ireland is a society that in many ways prefers to disassociate itself from its past colonial ruler, looking towards Europe and the United States rather than to Britain for its world view. This cultural distance is also reflected in the differences between the varieties of English spoken in the two countries, with Irish English retaining influences from Gaelic, in its syntax, lexis and phonology. The language variety and cultural basis underlying coursebooks generated out of Britain cannot be claimed to be representational of Ireland any more than they can of any English-speaking country other than Britain. And yet despite its relative longevity, Ireland's ELT industry has managed to produce only four Irish ELT coursebooks, enforcing continuing dependency on the British model. This is all the more unsatisfactory considering that EFL learners' presence in Ireland is often the result of a choice born of a positive attitude to the country (this accounted for about 50 per cent of learners polled in one survey, Hughes (2005: 34)) which would suggest a desire to learn about the culture.

ESOL

This need for culture-specific material is even more intense in the burgeoning ESOL sector. Learners of ESOL in Ireland, EU nationals, refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers in general, are often at present trained using existing FETAC (Further Education Training Award Council) materials which are principally functional-based. These train learners in survival language but without helping them to develop the communicative competence – including the crucial sociolinguistic aspects of appropriacy, politeness and register – that will enable them to integrate into Irish society (Harrington 2006). Without appropriate learning, new immigrants are often perceived as rude and over-forthright in a culture that values indirectness to the extent of practically eschewing the direct question (see Benson-Zewdu 2006). FETAC, the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) and Further Education (Department Education and Science) are being lobbied to create new modules and a new syllabus for ESOL learners, while, at the regional level, some of the Adult Basic Education Services are working on developing local models of communicative competence and assessment (Harrington 2006).

The Irish ELT coursebook

As we turn to examine the few Irish ELT coursebooks in existence, one question that occurs is why has it taken so long for them to emerge? The first, *Encounter Ireland* (Sweeney 1992) was published just 15 years ago, by which time ELT was already a growth sector. Economic factors would be the most obvious reason; yet ELT accounts for over 11 per cent of the tourism industry, attracts well over 200,000 visitors and generates 300m euros per year. Tourism is the largest internationally traded services sector in Ireland. Another factor could be the demands of the punters. Do Irish practitioners assume that learners are merely after an English-speaking locus in which to study more or less 'standard' forms of the language? In the survey cited above, nearly half the respondents did aspire to British English, and only 16 per cent, Irish English (Hughes 2005: 37). From the point of view of culture, however, the survey evidence cited from Hughes above (*ibid.*: 34) suggests that learners do *not* use Ireland as a surrogate Britain. Indeed, half the respondents showed a preference, given the choice, for Irish-produced coursebooks, and 80 per cent for teacher-produced materials (*ibid.*: 35–36), which included Irish-specific materials. If neither economic factors nor consumer demands can fully explain the absence of Irish ELT material until the last decade and a half, could it, perhaps, be explained as a reluctance, until then, to break away from the metaphorical apron strings of the British ELT matriarch?

An analysis of the two latest books to the Irish ELT market, *Learning English in Ireland* (Jordan 2005) and *Exploring Ireland* (Lennon 2005) suggests that Irish ELT is finally doing just that, but only by some extremely careful, and even, some might say, cynical, branding. For *Learning English in Ireland* turns out to be geared brazenly to the EFL tourist-learner; 'Welcome to Ireland' runs the introductory blurb, 'Thank you for choosing our beautiful green island as a country to study the English language and Irish culture'. Accordingly, it is almost as much a guide book as a language learning coursebook, with units on the 'Top Ten Attractions in Ireland', the ancient Book of Kells housed at Trinity College Dublin, 'Castles and Ghosts' and – most shameless of all – Waterford crystal, one of Ireland's most famous (and expensive!) exports, together with a unit on other typical products for the tourist market (knitwear, chocolate, etc.). In its favour, it is refreshing to come across a coursebook unfettered by the taboos of those headed for international markets, in that there is an entire unit dedicated to alcohol.[1] In this and a few of the units (such as the unit on Irish singers and bands, featuring U2, Boyzone, Enya, etc.), it represents contemporary Irish culture and society accurately, so it is all the more puzzling to have others that stoop to reinforcing (whose?) perceptions of outsiders' stereotypes of Ireland; in Unit 2, for example, we run the gamut of leprechauns, shamrocks and – yes – pots of gold at the end of the rainbow. In the language focus sections only lip service is paid to Irish English as a variety – indeed, the opportunity is missed, in a phonetics reference section in which Standard English pronunciation is notated throughout, with the exception of oddly tentative insertions of an /r/ where it is omitted in Standard English, e.g. /let@(r)/ [*sic*].

The only other recent book, *Exploring Ireland* (Lennon 2005) is designed for

the Far East Asian market, reflecting the growth potential of this region for the Irish EFL market. This – and the fact that it is aimed tightly at the youth market (age range is given as 13–15 years for the Intermediate material and 16+ for the Post-Intermediate) – go in part to explain the tameness of its content. Designed as a resource book rather than a coursebook, though less touristy than the first, it still tends to present an outsider's view of Ireland rather than giving us much real insight into the culture. Over a third of the units present traditional culture (Irish folk music, St. Patrick) and canonical Literature, Yeats, Joyce and Wilde). There is a good proportion of contemporary material – including units on Irish movie actors, the international hit show Riverdance and the Celtic Tiger phenomenon, but much of this is generic: holidays, food, tourism. Interestingly, given its destination for students overseas, this book makes a better job than *Learning English in Ireland* of engaging with the Irish language. After a somewhat misleading introduction; 'The English spoken in Ireland is the same as that spoken worldwide, except the accent is different to that in the US or UK' (Unit 9.1), the unit on 'Everyday speech' goes on to discuss the Irish language and its influence on English. The accompanying CD, however, is unremittingly scripted, the accent uniformly RTÉ (Radio Telefis Éireann, the national broadcasting company), the Irish equivalent of Standard English, so the recordings do not illustrate the variety and flavour of Irish English accents.

Older, yet probably the best of the bunch, in that it is not ostentatiously Irish, is *Breakthrough* (Cleasby and Gallagher 1995), which consists mainly of non-Irish specific themes that are nevertheless relevant to Ireland, including 'underbelly of society' topics such as joyriding, dangerous driving and blood sports. It draws on authentic texts from mainly Irish sources such as newspapers, advertisements and uses authentic recordings of people of all ages, mainly Irish and with a range of Irish accents, and including non-native speakers. Unfortunately, there appears to be no second edition so some of the authentic references are dated by now and it does not appear to have been broadly marketed; few teachers were aware of the existence of this Irish-based coursebook, according to the survey undertaken by Hughes (2005: 42).

Returning then to the Irish coursebooks most likely to be in use at present, i.e. those discussed above; as has been suggested, these tend to keep safely at a tourist's arm's distance from the culture, they are geared at offering mainly 'consumer-tourist' competency (Byram's term 1991: 19). As such, neither addresses the needs of Irish ESOL student-immigrants; they showcase the culture rather than getting under its skin and they give little guidance in the crucially important pragmatic features of IE, not to mention its phonology and grammar.

The 'consumer-tourist' slant of these two Irish books raises interesting general issues about localization and local culture. The first is that evaluation has in a sense to be *subjective*: 'local' materials have to be assessed from within the cultural context in which they operate (and not through the 'mirror' of a different one), taking, if you like, an 'if it works for them' attitude. The locally produced coursebook should reflect its culture from the inside out, as well as reveal what aspects of themselves this culture wants to project to others. Seen in this light, the slant of the Irish coursebooks makes perfect sense: the

Irish take pride in seeing themselves as a welcoming people ('Céad Míle Fáilte' – the land of 'a thousand welcomes'), and with its particular branding, tourism has grown to become Ireland's largest international industry. On the other hand, the *'Aulde Country'* image projected by the original Irish-American movie genre (*The Quiet Man*, etc.) seems to have somehow embedded itself into the Irish psyche like a sort of 'self-fulfilling prophecy'. It appears to be one the Irish are not altogether ready to shake off, and, this, together with the high value placed on heritage, shown in the continuing popularity of traditional music, dance and crafts, not to mention the Catholic Church, make the Irish culture of the dawn of the twenty-first century an intriguing juxtaposition of old and new.

The other generalizable issue raised in this case-study is that of language variety. Many British-based coursebooks (e.g. the *Headway* series) include phonology with, for instance, lists of phonetic symbols and sample words to illustrate their sounds; however, they rarely point out that these are drawn on Standard British English. This leaves the (deliberate?) impression that this represents some universal English language pronunciation standard – rather than 'a minority variety' (Crystal 2003: 110) – in terms of numbers of people speaking it, the least represented English language variety of all. Irish English, as mentioned above, is largely ignored in its own ELT coursebooks to date. In the case of Irish English, this is being counterbalanced by work on IE drawn on the Limerick Corpus of Irish-English (L-CIE) and notable by research compiled by the linguist Raymond Hickey into Irish English as a variety, available on his website (www.uni-essen.de/IERC) (see also Hickey 2004), all research which will, it is hoped, 'trickle down' into Irish ELT coursebooks in the near future. As the circle of World Englishes expands, scores of varieties of English throughout the world are at various stages of standardization and it is essential that writers of local coursebooks make informed and conscientious decisions as to the variety they wish to model, balancing consideration of the local EIL variety and the variety their audience aspires to.

This snapshot of the current EFL scene in Ireland has, in conclusion, raised some general issues about culture and language variety in the local EFL/EIL coursebook. The lessons are, perhaps, courage and insight, not necessarily the courage 'to see ourselves as others see us' – but the courage to reveal to others how we see ourselves.

Conclusions

These two case studies of the role and state of the ELT coursebook in two quite different English language teaching situations in Europe – EFL and ELF in Greece and EFL and ESOL in Ireland – have two essential features in common. In both countries, ELT constitutes a (direct or indirect) source of tourist revenue. And both case studies describe a shift towards local (national) publishing as the Anglo-centric model – for all its striving towards universality – crumbles under the diversity of its markets. The solution for the Greek coursebook has

been to defy MC and overlay a focus on form onto a communicative base. The solution in Ireland has been to accept the communicative approach but to 'colour it Irish'.

The history of materials development over the past 40-odd years can be seen as a – possibly ironic – overall movement from EFL with a relatively small and homogenous (if blinkered!) Anglo-centric focus, to having a global, over-ambitious reach, and now shrinking down again, this time towards smaller, local markets though this time ones representing the diversity of the English-speaking, and English-learning, world (see Figure 11.1).

1980s–1990s: Globalization 1990s → localization
1970s: Anglo-centric focus

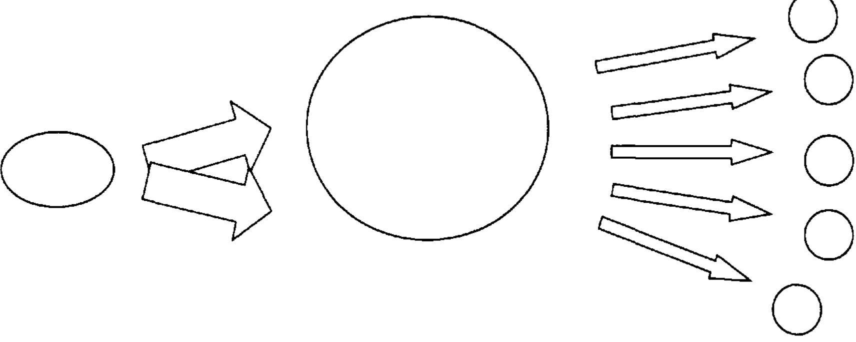

Figure 11.1

The market, like much else on the material and ideological level in the twenty-first century, has become much more fragmented – segmented, expensive and difficult to reach, a huge range of titles chasing the same market.

Into the Future

All of the identified problems in this chapter have pointed to the same conclusion: if international publishing is to survive on its existing scale – and we should not underestimate the growing competition from alternative media, notably online language learning resources – localization will have to supplant globalization to a large degree. Publishers will have to explore, segment and then target their markets more carefully. They will need to look at the cultural backgrounds of the learners (especially their pedagogical backgrounds, to consider suitable teaching methodologies, thus undercutting the enforcement of inappropriate MC), and at the English-speaking paradigms learners from this context look to. This will narrow down and focus the needs (in terms of variety of English, functional needs, etc.) and interests (including those shaped by cultural mores) of learners in particular learning contexts. And the trend is already beginning, with some international publishers producing 'local' versions or

market-specific books (examples include OUP's 'Dream team for Argentina', a local version of a global textbook (López Barrios and Vileneuva de Debat 2006). A Romanian coursebook project described in Popovici and Bolitho (2003), as well as compromise solutions such as adapting coursebooks in order to make them more locally relevant (Dat 2003) on a project in Vietnam)). The other alternative? Teachers dispense with the coursebook as a genre altogether and use authentic materials drawn from their own local contexts and which are thus far more likely to reflect their students' interests, pedagogical background and cultural ethos.

Endnote

[1] How unusual this is, can be summed up by one teacher's identifying the book as 'the one about booze'.

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Chapter 12

Materials Used in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union

Rod Bolitho

Background

Until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the ensuing period of reform and, in the Soviet Union, *perestroika*, not a great deal was known in the West about traditions of teaching and learning foreign languages in that region. The British Council had a strong presence in Poland in the 1980s and a history of short course provision in some other countries, notably Czechoslovakia, but there was nothing remotely near the intensive and widespread scale of activity in ELT that ensued in the 1990s. In that pre-reform period, too, textbooks were seen as a given, simply because they were officially commissioned, carefully vetted and centrally prescribed in all the countries in the region. In all the countries I am familiar with now, books were distributed free of charge to all students of school age and to teachers. State publishing houses had a monopoly over educational publishing, and textbooks, by Western standards, looked uniformly drab and uninspiring. The picture they gave of Britain and America was largely based on stereotypes and outdated texts, many of them drawn from old or ideologically 'sound' literary sources.

In most cases, too, the textbook, in the hands of the teacher, was effectively the syllabus. With no external points of reference, little or no access to modern authentic materials and, for most teachers and learners, no prospect of using English internationally or with native speakers, English was generally seen as just another school subject with no use beyond the limits of formal education. In some countries, too great an interest in English, or any public contact with native-speakers, was viewed with suspicion by the secret police. I remember, in 1991, a Romanian colleague telling me that she had always listened to BBC World Service under the bedclothes for fear of being denounced by a neighbour who already regarded her with some scepticism for being an English teacher. In 1991, too, I recall a middle-aged Slovakian teacher of English in Bratislava bursting into tears when, in my British way, I said something to her to pass the time of day in the lunch queue, and then when I asked what the matter was, saying to me that she had been teaching English for 24 years and I was the first native-speaker ever to have addressed her directly.

Approaches to teaching were, across the region, mainly handed down from

generation to generation, with a significant gap between the methodology taught in the Philological Faculties of the universities and the realities of classroom practice. Classroom rituals and practices were similar in many locations across the countries of Eastern Europe, with great emphasis placed on 'good' pronunciation, approximating as closely as possible to what passed for 'standard' English, and enormous importance attached to reading aloud. Grammar was graded carefully according to structural syllabus principles, and rules were taught and learned formally. Vocabulary was often simply committed to memory with no attempt to distinguish between the active and passive lexicons. The textbooks themselves were most often written by university-based academics with little or no direct experience of teaching at school level. They were the only ones considered to be 'expert' enough to be textbook authors. In the Soviet Union, for example, the series by Starkov *et al.* (1982ff.) and Klementieva and Monk (1994ff.) were prescribed for schools across the country, while Romanian secondary students were taught through a series known as *Manual de Engleza* written by Ministry appointed authors from universities and secondary schools.

This all sounds pretty critical, but most of these phenomena were wholly in tune with the times and all the more understandable given the legacy of the postwar division of Europe and the ensuing period of Cold War politics. The truth is that in a surprising number of contexts across Eastern Europe, in particular, standards of English were amazingly high. I remember being startled when a ninth grader in a normal school in Bratislava peppered me with perfectly formed questions about Liverpool Football Club, following up spontaneously on the ones that plainly interested him most, and being very moved by the quality of poems written in English on the theme of love by students in a tenth grade class in Bucharest in the wake of a very demanding and lively class discussion on the same topic. Pretty soon, in my travels in the region and in my engagement with fellow professionals, I began to realize that beneath the unpromising surface attitudes, some of which are described above, there was a thriving sub-culture of engagement with English, driven by talented and committed teachers and by curious youngsters spurred on by a desire for the 'forbidden fruits' of Western popular culture as well as the more respectable output of the 'classical canon' of the approved writers they were permitted to encounter in their English textbooks.

The Open Market and Reform Years

Such, then, was the state of English teaching and the textbook market when the first post-socialism reforms were set in motion in the early 1990s. It is well known now that the demand for English was immediate and immense in countries in Eastern Europe, and somewhat less immediate and immense, but still considerable, in the former Soviet Union. Textbook markets opened up pretty quickly to meet the demand, and British publishers were quick to see and seize new opportunities to promote their global products. Textbooks were suddenly seen as big business and newly established private publishers, where they were

allowed to exist, began to enter a market that had previously been closed. The old state monopolies in educational publishing were gradually challenged and eroded and production standards began to improve almost immediately. In Romania, for example, the *Pathway to English* series was taken out of the hands of the state publishing house at an early stage in the project, and publication was put out to tender, resulting in bids from both British and Romanian publishing houses.

However, there were problems and contradictions from the outset, and it is worth mentioning some of them here:

i. *'If it's British, it must be good.'* It was understandable that teachers and students were delighted to have access to ideas and materials from the West. Teachers were only too happy to be able to obtain and use global coursebooks from the UK to replace the drab state-produced tomes they had been obliged to work with for so long. But this was a 'honeymoon period' that could never last.

ii. *'What's a "good" textbook for my students?'* Teachers had never before been confronted with the need or the opportunity to *choose* a textbook for their students. They had always simply worked with the books that were prescribed. For this reason, they had never had a need for criteria to evaluate teaching materials. This meant that they were vulnerable to the sales pitch of publishers' representatives and to being impressed by some of the relatively superficial features of global textbooks: they simply lacked the tools to dig deeper. In some countries – Romania for example, where World Bank money was poured into textbook reform – the Ministry finally arrived at a decision to recommend three textbooks for each subject and for each school year. This led to intense competition and lobbying amongst publishers to ensure that their titles were included in the list of three. One resultant problem, since each school year was considered as a 'one-off', was a lack of continuity, as a series adopted for years five and six for example, might not necessarily be selected for year seven. The criteria for these official evaluation exercises were not always transparent. In the Russian Federation, the Federal Experts' Committee, which vets all the textbooks submitted for inclusion in a list of three for each school year, is constituted by the Ministry, usually includes academics, some of whom may actually have a direct or indirect stake in a particular series, and seems to have an open brief to comment on the basis of whatever insights and views they have developed and internalized over the years rather than come up with any explicit, agreed set of criteria. There is no real dialogue between authors and publishers on one side and experts on the other, and, with new publications, authors are simply told what they have to change or revise in order to have their book approved.

iii. *'We like the book but my learners can't afford it.'* British publishers soon became aware of the limited buying power, not only of individual teachers and learners, but also of Ministries and educational authorities across the region. This led initially to a certain amount of 'dumping' of discontinued

titles in countries in Eastern Europe (I remember seeing a cupboard full of copies of a well-known but rather ancient UK coursebook in the office of a Slovakian Ministry official), and only later, and with a great deal of prompting from the authorities and from some of the funding bodies active in the region, to more market-oriented pricing policies.

iv. *'There's not enough grammar in these books!'* One of the immediate impressions of British-produced global coursebooks that teachers in Eastern Europe reported was that they contained nothing like enough grammar, and that the approach to grammar (often inductive, embedded in context) was unfamiliar to them. One of my Romanian colleagues, typical of those holding this view, told me that she used a British book for speaking and listening, but fell back on a much older Romanian publication to give her students the 'grammar practice they needed'.

v. *'I like the book but I'm not sure how to use it.'* Publishers were very quick to realize that their 'global' products would not have a long-term future in these emerging and important markets if they didn't offer some inducements. Pretty soon, the major UK publishers were 'up and running' with training seminars showing teachers how to use the materials and 'dressing up' the invitations to seminars with free copies of books, tasty drinks and refreshments and the like. There is no doubt that some of the training carried out under publishers' banners was (and still is) effective and useful, but the agenda has always been to promote brand loyalty and not necessarily to address wider and more fundamental methodological issues.

vi. *'The texts in these books are too colloquial. My students need texts from the best English writers.'* In many countries in the region, 'capital C' Culture was (and in many cases still is) an integral part of English classes, especially in the higher secondary grades. Moving teachers towards a more general view of the culture of the English-speaking world and towards intercultural awareness was never going to be easy, and the process is still going on.

vii. *'My students need specific preparation for university entrance examinations.'* Examination reform traditionally lags behind curriculum and textbook reform, and this truism is all the more applicable in contexts such as Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union where universities have clung determinedly to their autonomous right to control over their own entrance procedures and requirements. This has led to the growth of a 'cottage industry' in private tutoring, often based on very traditional and long-established materials rather than on Western 'imports'. Interestingly, one of my informants in Uzbekistan tells me that one of the 'old favourites', Bonk *et al.* (7th edition, 1982) is still a standard study aid for learners preparing for university entry, a fact which another close colleague tells me still applies in Russia too.

This whole period, still at the time of writing not at an end in some countries in the region, has been characterized by uncertainty, by struggles to accommodate

new ideas within tried and trusted ways of thinking and doing, and, above all, by a continuing and increasingly sophisticated and differentiated demand for English. British interventions, mainly under the auspices of the British Council, have been grouped into three main fields: teacher education and INSETT, textbook authoring (see below), and examination reform. Most of this work was carried out within projects which have been timebound and constrained by limits on funding. While these efforts have been appreciated in many cases, there has been evidence, particularly in the Russian Federation and the former Soviet Republics, of a polarization of thinking and opposition, especially in academia, to Western ideas in textbooks and in methodology. I have had access to notes taken by a colleague at a conference held at Moscow State University in November 2002 at which leading ELT figures expressed their reservations about the impact and usefulness of Western methodology and Western textbooks in the Russian context. Their points may well have been valid, and we in the West would do well to take note, but the disappointing side of this development was that the issues seemed not to be raised in any spirit of exchange or dialogue, but rather simply *ex cathedra*, with no direct opportunity for response.

There have been major textbook projects in other school subjects as well as in ELT, in some cases co-sponsored and overseen by a variety of governmental and non-governmental agencies, together with the British Council in a number of countries across the region – Romania, Russia, Belarus and Uzbekistan, for example. Within these projects there has been an emphasis on:

- training classroom teachers as authors
- building authoring capacity
- bringing together British expertise with local know-how to get the best of both worlds through partnership
- publisher partnership and development
- the development of intercultural perspectives
- links with initiatives in INSETT, and in examination reform.

The series for primary and secondary levels which have been developed in these projects (*Pathway to English* in Romania, *Millie* and *New Millennium English* in the Russian Federation, *Magic Box* and *Magic Tour* in Belarus and *Fly High* in Uzbekistan) have all enjoyed a degree of popularity and have made their mark, but each of them has also encountered problems, thanks to some of the factors mentioned above. However, all of them have yielded cadres of trained authors able to work effectively on other writing projects and also to contribute to the training of teachers in the use of the materials they have had a hand in producing. In each of these cases, the writing was done exclusively by these carefully selected and trained local writers, with British consultancy input restricted to advising the writing teams and helping to shape their ideas. Significantly, too, textbook projects have provided a strong and focused platform for local authors and Western consultants like me to discuss and ultimately agree on methodological issues. In Russia, in particular, there has been a continuing and productive dialogue at this level which has been sadly missing in the higher reaches of

academia. For more on this kind of project, see Popovici and Bolitho (2003) and Bolitho (2003).

The Textbook Scene across the Region Today

Not surprisingly, given the tensions, interests and trends at work during this extended period of change, the current textbook scene is varied and still in flux across the whole of the wider region. In those countries in Eastern Europe where there were no large-scale local textbook projects in the 1990s (Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, for example), it is interesting to note that UK-published 'global' coursebooks continue to be widely used, and that there is less evidence of local author output. These countries were also amongst the first in the region to accede to the EU, and are mostly geographically closer to the UK. In Romania, a little further away and a little slower to meet EU accession criteria, locally authored books produced under project funding co-exist, not always comfortably, with 'global' products sold into the market by UK publishers. Further away, in Russia and Belarus, the market continues to be dominated by locally authored series, either products of textbook projects or of the established cadre of authors whose names are synonymous with the books they have written (the tradition amongst Russian teachers is to refer to these series by the authors' names – Starkov, Kuzovlev, Klementieva, etc. – rather than by the titles of the books, a sign of the respect with which they are viewed in the professional community as a whole). In Uzbekistan, learners at school now have a new locally produced series to work with at some levels (*Fly High*), but at university level, as in many other areas of the former Soviet Union, students majoring in English are put through the now very long-established course by Arakin (first published as long ago as 1961) which is traditional and based in views of language and language teaching which Western professionals would almost certainly regard as outmoded. This comment from a university English teacher in Ukraine, however, indicates clearly how times and attitudes are changing:

> The techniques used in EL classroom in my university vary from static grammar and vocabulary drills through pseudo-communication (for example, the so-called dramatization of take-home dialogues and text interpretation) to dynamic communicative activities – group and pair work, role playing, panel discussion or round-table talks on issues related to or suggested by the theme of the lesson. Some of us still use an updated version of the textbook by V. D. Arakin, others prefer one of the commercially produced series, like Streamline English, Gold, Headway, Masterclass CAE, etc. The choice of the textbook depends on the teacher's personal readiness and ability to take a social and professional challenge.
>
> As with any other syllabus presented in the form of its practical application, both Arakin's and advanced British or American materials have their strong points and weaknesses. The former is aimed at developing grammatical, the latter – communicative competence (the statement is, of course, an

> oversimplification). I appreciate both approaches, but at the moment, I am much more concerned about developing my students' knowledge/information seeking abilities. Higher quality of education cannot be achieved without changing the philosophy of the teacher and the learner – active partnership in seeking for knowledge vs. the philosophy of knowledge provider and passive receiver, encouraging individual choice and decision making vs. controlling and manipulating students, professional and student honesty vs. cheating and plagiarism. (Kulchytska 2005)

This kind of critical awareness is needed to inform decision-making about textbooks and methodology, and Kulchytska's views highlight the still-present need for materials development for the region and continuing professional development for English teachers to go hand in hand, so that teachers are in a position to make conscious and informed choices.

'Versioning' has been tried, with greater or lesser degrees of success, in a number of countries across the region. *Criss Cross* was conceived in the nineties as a trans-Central/Eastern Europe course with a 'common core' students' book and 'versioned' workbooks for Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. That it never really 'took off' was, according to series editor Susan Holden (personal communication), down to delays in getting the series into the market which made it difficult to compete with global series from bigger publishers rather than any problems with the concept or the quality of the material. More recently, and more successfully, some of the 'blockbuster' series such as the *New Cambridge English Course* have been produced in versions for specific markets, such as Russia. 'Versioning' can (and in practice does) mean anything from simply providing a bilingual word list to tuning language work and cultural content specifically to the target market. There is no doubt that this makes the series more marketable, particularly when the versioning is carried out with input from an experienced and well-known local author. Whether or not these 'versioned' books can ever fully meet the needs of teachers and learners in specific contexts remains open to question.

An Aside: Textbooks as Symbols

Textbooks, traditionally, have acquired almost iconic value both as the visible 'tools of the trade' and as symbols of what is assumed to go on behind classroom doors in the name of education. Teachers praise them or complain about them, learners love them or hate them and, in the wider community, inspectors and administrators have strong views about them, while parents often see them as the main means of helping their children at home with their studies. They are very public documents. When they change so rapidly after years and years of consistency, there are bound to be difficulties. In Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, as in countries in Europe and South America during and after the 'communicative revolution' in the 1970s and 1980s, swingeing changes in education were put in to place by the authorities

with considerable public support but often without any attempt to 'educate' the primary and secondary stakeholders in these reforms. The result, reported to me by good friends in Romania, for example, was that children were bringing home new English textbooks which looked nothing like the ones their parents had learned from, and as a result, parents felt unable to help in the ways that they might have expected, by checking lists of vocabulary or listening to passages learned by heart, for example. In education everywhere, we are not always as good at public relations as we ought to be, given our espousal of communication skills as a central plank in preparing young people for future challenges!

Lessons from 17 Years of Change

This has been a time of great change and opportunity for all involved in the writing and production of textbooks for and in this immense region. A number of lessons have emerged as being there for the learning, even if relatively few have been completely internalized at all levels of decision-making in education. I will mention and comment on a few of them here.

i. Textbooks, while potentially powerful as 'carriers' of innovation, cannot do the job alone. Educational change is most effective when textbook reform takes place in parallel with curriculum and examination reform (this has not always been the case in the region), and when it is backed up by targeted INSETT provision. The British Council in Russia went a long way towards achieving this coherence in its multi-project activity in the early years of the new century.
ii. Teachers across the entire region, but particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, are becoming far more discriminating in their approach to textbook choice and are now much better able to decide what best meets their and their learners' needs.
iii. Local authors are nearly always best placed to judge what should go into textbooks for their context, but they also benefit from dialogue with native speaker consultants and first-hand contact with the target culture.
iv. There is a long and firmly rooted tradition of language teaching in countries throughout the region. These traditions need to be respected and, where they are effective and productive, maintained.
v. As the comment by Kulchytska (*ibid.*) shows, some teachers are thinking less about pure content and approach issues when selecting teaching materials and are instead looking beyond their textbooks for 'learning to learn' opportunities and ways of developing their learners' autonomy.
vi. The issue of standards, once restricted to debate at national level has recently, thanks to the growing status of English as a global language, now become international, and textbook authors, curriculum designers and examiners are now increasingly having to calibrate their work against international yardsticks such as the Common European Framework of Reference.

vii. Learners, especially those in major population centres, are becoming increasingly sophisticated and demanding, and they expect far more of textbooks that they did just a few years ago. This trend is all the more marked in countries where learners have easy access to Western media via cable or satellite television.

viii. The relatively low salaries of most teachers in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union mean that few teachers can afford to buy extra resource books to supplement their textbooks; this in turn means that they need their textbooks to be comprehensive and reliable. In many classes, particularly in those outside the major urban centres, the textbook remains the sole source of English.

ix. The trend towards the use of English as a medium of instruction has had its impact on language textbooks in the region, with more and more material that reaches across the curriculum and a gradual, though somewhat reluctant, 'letting go' of literary texts as the only valid form of language input.

x. Partnerships between local and British publishers can be mutually beneficial if handled sensitively. Local publishers, for example, get access to authentic material, photo libraries, copyright clearance and native-speaker desk-editor expertise, while UK publishers can draw on in-country expertise in graphic design, market knowledge and distribution, and can benefit from lower printing costs. Where this kind of partnership has worked well as in Russia, for example, production standards have been raised, to the advantage of everyone concerned.

xi. Each country benefits from maintaining and building local authoring capacity. This has been illustrated most graphically in Romania, where all bar four of the original 14-strong *Pathway to English* authoring team have gone on to contribute to other writing projects. The downside of relying on imported products lies in the effective deskilling of a generation of textbook authors, a phenomenon that colleagues in Hungary and Poland have spoken to me about with some concern.

Conclusions

Much has been written about the impending demise of the textbook as a tool for teaching and learning in this post-modern age. There is little evidence of this possibility in the region I have surveyed, albeit selectively, in this chapter. All the signs are that textbooks will be needed in English classes for some time to come, whether as stand-alone tools or as part of a more sophisticated multi-media package. The time and effort spent on author development in some countries in the region is sure to continue to bear fruit, and the links between professional development and textbook initiatives, so important in the process of educational reform, will continue to need care and maintenance to ensure that the lessons of the last two decades are not lost as the next generation of administrators, teachers and writers emerges.

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Chapter 13

Materials Used in Africa

Masibo Lumala and Soufiane Trabelsi

Introduction

In this chapter we are going to consider ELT materials used in two very different parts of Africa, Tunisia in North Africa and Kenya in East Africa. Soufiane Trabelsi will focus mainly on the teaching of English at tertiary level in an ESP context in Tunisia while Masibo Lumala will highlight the teaching of English as a second language at secondary school level in Kenya. What the two sections of this chapter have in common is the fact that English is taught against the backdrop of other major first languages. It is also clear that English is taught for specific objectives and so the materials in use should reflect this reality.

The State of ESP Teaching Materials at the Tertiary Level: The Case of a Top North African Country, Tunisia

The linguistic situation in top North Africa

The linguistic situation in the top northern part of Africa is more or less the same. The similarities between Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco seem to be more than their differences, linguistically speaking. The three used to be colonized by France and thus inherited French as their second language. Berber, as a minority native language, is spoken in the three countries, because of a historical and cultural heritage. English is also the main foreign language in these countries. Their close location to Europe made them also tend to encourage the learning and teaching of, in particular, the main European languages, Italian, German and Spanish.

In the same respect, discussing the linguistic commonalities between the three countries, Khatibi (1993) proposes a strategy to decide what the priorities are in terms of language learning and language use in a North African situation. Such a strategy is based on three criteria: the home linguistic environment, the geo-strategic context and the international dimension of some languages. Taking these elements into account, Khatibi suggests that Arabic should remain the official language in North Africa; Amazighe (Berber) comes next as the vehicle of expressing one's national identity and heritage. Yet, English is seen as the first foreign language because of its global status. For Khatibi, North

Africans should be given an option to learn a second foreign language which could be one of these choices: French, Spanish, German, or Italian (Daoud 2001).

The linguistic scene in Tunisia

In Tunisia, Tunisian Arabic is the native language which is the language of everyday communication. There is also another minority native language, which is Berber, for some 45,000 to 50,000 speakers. These make up less than 0.5 per cent of the whole population (Battenberg 1999). However, the main language is Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is taught as a subject and used as the medium of instruction in elementary education and early secondary.

French, as a foreign language in the country, is introduced in the third year of basic education, but it enjoys (next to MSA) the status of an L2 used in secondary and higher education to teach science and technology and business subjects, as well as in the media and administration (Daoud 2001). As for English, which is considered a foreign language, it is taught starting from the seventh year in basic education and in almost all higher education institutions, either as a major in the faculties of letters and human sciences or a service language in a variety of academic and occupational settings (Hemissi 1985; Kennedy 1985; Seymour 1993).

Nevertheless, what characterizes the linguistic scene is the diglossic/bilingual continuum in which Tunisians partake to various degrees at home, school and work. The influence of the French language started with the French colonization in 1881, during the wake of the Italian-French colonialist rivalry over North Africa. Thus, French became the official language for administration and in the public schools. Thus, the current language situation in Tunisia may be considered as both diglossic and bilingual.

Diglossia is related to the use of Arabic along a written-spoken continuum, while bilingualism relates to ongoing interaction between Arabic and French. Thus, the linguistic situation of Tunisia can be described as that of dynamism and complexity, which is more enhanced by the appearance of several foreign languages, particularly English as an inevitably dominating international language of the internet, business, science and technology (Daoud 2001).

ELT and ESP in Tunisia

In higher education, French is generally the predominant language of instruction, while Arabic is used as a medium of instruction in all Arabic language departments and some disciplines or individual courses related to Islamic studies and law studies. As for foreign language and literature majors (English, Italian, Spanish, German, Russian and Chinese), each of them is taught in their own medium as target languages. These foreign languages are spreading, but much more slowly than English (Daoud 2001).

As far as English is concerned, it is taught in almost all tertiary level institutions and in all subjects related to business and economics as well as sciences such as engineering, technology and medicine. Many institutions outside tertiary education also teach English, including banking, the airline sectors and the

armed forces. However, the English taught in many of these institutions can hardly be called ESP because of their lack of professional standards (Seymour 1993). In other words, those ESP courses do not seem to conform to standards used in academic programmes, like needs analysis, course design, syllabus design and assessment. They are based on individual decision making and not on group or team work. Most of the materials used are either cut and pasted from published references in the field or photocopied as they are from original sources. This is because there are no standardized ESP programmes across the country and it is also because the staff members teaching those ESP courses have neither a formal training in teaching those courses nor the expertise to select and design materials (Trabelsi forthcoming).

Teaching English for Specific Purposes (TESP) was introduced into the Tunisian universities in 1958, but it has progressively developed since the 1980s through the Higher Education Ministry's decision of generalizing ESP to all higher education majors without exception in 1996–97. Since the beginning of the 1990s, there has been an exceptional demand for English in the business sector because of the structural economic reforms of 1989. This demand is manifested, for example, in the surge in ESP courses, the use of English to advertise for jobs in Tunisian newspapers and the fact that English is used more and more by various service providers in tourism to communicate with foreigners (Labassi in press; Daoud and Labassi 1996; Walters 1999: 38).

ESP teaching materials at the tertiary level

Introduction

Because it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss all the types of materials used at the tertiary level in Tunisia, only a sample will be studied, namely, ESP materials and more particularly those used in Business English. Findings based on a research project (Trabelsi forthcoming)[1] on materials taught to final year university students of business at the university of Sfax will be presented. The objective of this chapter is to highlight the state of teaching and learning materials in the country as a sample of a top North African case study. Teachers' impressions and assessment of the materials will be reviewed.

Materials in use

Types and sources of the materials

This chapter is taking the materials used in teaching Business English as a sample, but what applies to these materials is more or less likely to apply to other materials in other ESP courses, like engineering, science, arts, technology, computer, administration and laws that involve the study of English. All materials are selected and designed by the teachers themselves in each institution without exception.

In fact, what can be noticed in most of the tertiary level institutions is the use of worksheets covering the business syllabus that are distributed to students in parts. Every week or two, the students are given worksheets so that they are exposed to a new theme or area of interest corresponding to their field of study.

Those sub-business fields revolve round topics such as management, finance, accounting, application of computers to management, international trade, marketing, economics, fiscal sciences, information system, operational research, etc.

As for the sources of the materials, most teachers use the following: the internet, the institution's library books and mainly published ones, newspapers, magazines, the subject matter materials, and the encyclopaedia. The second major source used by many teachers is project works, i.e. the exposés or the research projects done by students as groupwork on, for example, topics such as case studies about companies, the management of a website construction, the management of a firm, etc.[2]

The content of the materials

Looking at the materials from inside would allow some deductions to be made. To start with, each worksheet or handout covers just one theme or topic which is related to the whole syllabus. Most of the teachers consider what the students, in a given discipline or major, are studying so that the English course will correspondingly cover more or less, but in a detailed way, the same items or terminology in English. So, seen in this way, there is no use of a textbook or coursebook in the above-mentioned ESP courses. Even the idea of having an official English curriculum or syllabus seems irrelevant. There are no centralized curricula for those ESP courses which are imposed by the Ministry, but freedom is given to each institution to develop its own curriculum; that is to say, the English course is developed on an in-house basis, with each specialty being responsible for its own programme, hence for its own materials content and form.

The cultural content in the materials is all about Western culture, mainly American and British. The teachers justify this by the shortage of local materials. For them, there is still a lack of local publication of both national and regional materials on business English which deal with the business reality in English.

Another characteristic of the materials, which is worth reporting, is the type of communication used in them. The majority of teachers point out that the materials deal with non-native varieties of English. This may be explained by the fact that the native variety of English is difficult for the students. They also add that there are 80 per cent of the world population who speak English and are not of a native origin while only 20 per cent are natives. Teachers also justify this focus by the fact that it is motivating for students, that is, it is easier for them to deal and speak with non-natives than with natives.

Do the materials draw more on oral or written English? The majority of teachers share the view that their materials tend to focus more on oral rather than written English. They justify that by the fact that they expect their students to need more spoken English at work, although they will be called on to do some written tasks.

One may wonder what the cons and pros of the state of the existing materials are. To start with, it seems that it is good to give each higher institution its freedom for the choice of the materials in terms of content and form. This is because each institution knows the needs and the background information of

its learning context and its requirements better than anyone else. Yet, what is missing is stating the objectives sought and the type of curriculum intended. This should be initiated by the Ministry. In other words, there should be an official syllabus designed by experts in the field at the ministerial level, but the details of its implementation should be left in the hands of the institutions and English departments.

The second disadvantage of the current state of materials is the absence of needs analysis as a means to inform materials selection and development. Even if it is occasionally done in some institutions, it is not carried out systematically and formally but via ad hoc measures and unprofessional procedures (Trabelsi forthcoming). Finally, it should be pointed out that there is a total lack of either formative or summative evaluation of materials done by any party like the Ministry, the institution's administrations or the teachers.

How the materials are typically used

The teachers' assessment of the materials

In the study previously referred to,[3] interviews of 15 teachers of Business English were relied upon to gather feedback on materials.

Teachers were asked about how satisfied they were with materials. Three different views amongst teachers were revealed: first, half of all teachers are partially satisfied with the existing BE materials, second, a quarter of the total number of teachers have explicitly expressed their dissatisfaction with the available materials; finally, the rest, which makes up another quarter, prefer to preserve their views.

The teachers who are partially satisfied with the materials gave the following reasons: first, they seem to have a variety of sources from which they derive the materials. They are also working freely because some of them appreciate pair work and others individual work. Their satisfaction can be also justified by their reliance on the classical procedure of surveying students' needs (personal experience and consultation with subject matter teachers) in informal ways. Added to that, the same group of teachers consider the materials to be sufficiently adapted to their students' level and profile. They always stick to their own criteria for appropriacy in materials which are: a) balance between simplicity and difficulty, b) balance between language in use and usage, c) more focus on oral than written English, d) encouraging communication with both natives and non-natives, and e) considering future potential employers' needs. Such kinds of materials, for them, can only be motivating for students, thus making them more operational and functional in terms of using English.

On the other hand, for the group of teachers who expressed their dissatisfaction with the existing materials, there may be certain reasons for their views. The following statements can be considered an explanation of their attitude and a justification for it:

- the materials' non-reflection of the local cultural and business context
- the unavailability of local materials and local writers of such
- the lack of having a clear, fully fledged and official syllabus

- the lack of consideration of students' needs and interests and their transfer to the materials
- the heavy reliance on published books
- the insufficiency and sometimes the absence of team work for the design of materials
- the lack of agreement amongst teachers on the rationale and the basis for material's selection
- the divergent views amongst teachers on the criteria of material's authenticity and appropriacy
- the different attitudes amongst teachers about materials' adaptation to students' level and profile as well as considering learners' profile while developing materials
- the different views amongst teachers on whether the materials are preparing students for future communication with natives or non-natives
- the different attitudes amongst teachers about the relation between materials and students' motivation.

Based on the differences cited in the areas below, the teachers' general impressions on and evaluation of the materials are different and it seems that there is more divergence than convergence amongst their views and feedback concerning the materials. This is mainly because there are three generations among the teaching staff: those who have about more than 30 years of experience, those who have between 10 and 30 years and those who are newly recruited. So, it seems that each generation has its convictions, thoughts and approaches to teaching, learning and developing materials.

Students' assessment and impressions

Based on a questionnaire administered to 372 final year university students of business,[4] students' assessment of materials was gathered as well (Trabelsi forthcoming). A summary of their feedback can be outlined as follows:

- With regard to the materials' content, most of the students (60%) seem to be convinced that the course materials are relevant to their specialty, which is itself relevant to business and to reality.
- Some students (30%) do not explicitly and directly agree that the course materials and the tasks prepare them for the future professional duties.
- Students seem to deduce a possible gap between what is studied in class and what is going on in reality. This is because what it is covered by materials does not simulate reality in an entire and perfect way. Simply put, the materials seem to be too theoretical because they include more language and structure activities than language use.
- Many extracts that are taken from published books are not relevant to the students' needs, and are thus not appreciated by them.
- The materials cover more written than oral English, thus contradicting the students' priority of learning.
- Most of students are satisfied with the degree of variety in the materials and their activities, but this is not sufficient for them.

- Most texts contain difficult vocabulary and complicated matters and sometimes lack enough practice.
- A lot of students (60%) report having problems with the materials, especially related to oral skills, pronunciation and grammar.
- Only a minority think that the grammar dealt with in the materials is irrelevant to their communicative needs.
- The majority of students (80%) do not see the relevance of the course materials to the local cultural context.
- Most of all the students seem to consider their course materials motivating, they ask for more.
- Not all of the students but an important number of them consider the course materials tailored to their needs and interests and also suitable to their learning styles.
- Some materials deal with business in general, thus they do not suit its subfields such as computers in business, economics, finance, marketing, etc.

Evaluation of the materials in use

Strengths

On the basis of the teachers' and students' impressions previously discussed, an objective overview of the main strengths of the materials is presented below:

- The materials' content relates to the learners' needs to some extent.
- The texts contained in the materials are likely to interest the learners to some extent.
- The materials seem to be suitable to most of the learners' learning styles.
- The materials provide comprehensible input to the learners.
- The materials provide contextualized instruction of vocabulary and grammar.
- There is some degree of variety in terms of activities and topics in the materials.
- The type of English used in the materials serves the learners' objectives of learning.
- The activities provide opportunities for meaningful use of English to some extent.
- The materials are likely to sustain positive impact for the students.

Weaknesses

Although the materials present some strong points, one may notice that there are some weaknesses that are deduced from the teachers' and students' feedback that are worth stating:

- The materials' content does not suit the learners' local cultural context.
- The materials do not provide enough exposure to English in authentic use in the local setting, hence not preparing the students for the future.
- There is more focus on language usage than use and more written English than spoken.

- Most of the materials are derived from published textbooks.
- The materials are not based on a formal needs analysis and an officially designed curriculum.
- The materials do not sufficiently prepare the students for professional life.
- The overdose of written grammar at the expense of communicative and task-based activities that foster spoken grammar instead is not appropriate for the students.
- Reading comprehension is given excessive priority over the other three skills of listening, writing and speaking.
- The materials' form, layout and colour seem to be unattractive and inappropriate for the students, thus reducing motivation and durability.
- The materials do not provide opportunities for the students' continuous evaluation.

Materials improvements: a personal view

The research has revealed that the materials used in teaching Business English should be improved both in terms of form and layout and in terms of content or make-up. For these reasons, and in an attempt to remedy the shortcomings diagnosed by the teachers and the students, some improvements are considered essential. Below is a summary of my main suggestions and recommendations for improvement:

- A clear syllabus is to be designed in order to be a basis on which materials are developed and it should go hand in hand with the subject matter courses. It needs to be studied, analysed and piloted before being delivered.
- The students should be consulted for their needs and preferences first and then these should be studied and analysed in relation to the curriculum.
- There should be specific materials for each specialty which are derived from many different relevant sources, especially from companies. There are many sub-business fields that students study. Each discipline should have its own materials.
- There should be more concern with variety and quality rather than quantity in the materials.
- Black and white worksheets are to be avoided and to be replaced by colourful pictures and graphs or tables.
- Global books are to be abandoned as they cannot be relevant to the students' needs and profiles.
- Teachers, as materials designers, are invited to look for the closest materials to the reality of the Tunisian context and to have real samples of business documents to be worked on in class.
- There should be more focus on spoken grammar practice and a regular recycling of grammar points.
- Students should be consulted for their views and feedback on the materials.

- The materials should be constantly reviewed and evaluated systematically.
- Students should be stimulated to like the courses and be motivated through projects and presentations that stick more to reality and real case studies.
- There should be more focus on listening, speaking and pronunciation instead of heavy reliance on reading passages and their comprehension.

Selecting Materials for Teaching English in East Africa: The Case for a Kenya Secondary Schools English Course

Background

The demand for English language usage and English language education has increased exponentially over the years, with the language being 'widely accepted as the major medium for international communication' (Willis 1981: 41). Nunan (2001: 605) points out that today English permeates every part of our livelihood. 'It is the language of business, technology, science, the internet, entertainment, and even sports.' Llurda (2004) on the other hand refers to the fact that language researchers and educators are increasingly embracing the notion that English is spoken by more people as an L2 than as a mother tongue. Because of the important role the language plays, English as a subject has changed and become more wide-ranging and exciting (Eaglestone 2000) to meet these changing demands.

In East Africa, English is mainly taught as a second language. The language is mainly used in Kenya and Uganda, both having been British colonies (Mbaabu 1996). Tanzania, having been a Germany colony, has predominantly used Kiswahili in her education system although there is growing evidence of policy shift towards embracing English. The case has been made more urgent given the current East African Community which seeks to unify the three East African states socially, economically, and in the long run, politically.

In this section I mainly focus on the factors surrounding the teaching of English in Kenya secondary schools. The English language is very important in Kenya's education system. As a medium of instruction in schools, English is an important subject both in the curriculum and as a service subject. In Kenya, English is taught not just as a core subject, but also the language is the medium of instruction across the curriculum, right from primary school level through to the university (Kioko and Muthwii 2001: 201). Apart from other modern languages, such as German and French, the rest of the subjects are in fact taught and examined in the English language.

While Kiswahili is the national language, English is the official language in the country (Eshiwani 1993) and is spoken by the majority of Kenyans. It is imperative therefore that the school leaver acquires a good mastery of the English language in a variety of professional, commercial, academic and day-to-day transactions in the Kenyan and indeed the international environment.

Although students of English in ESL contexts may hardly leave their own countries (quite rare in the modern world), they still need English for busi-

ness purposes, for higher education and for interaction with foreign visitors in their own backyard (Ali 1995). In this sense the language is not only useful to the learners while at school but also, and most importantly, once outside school. It is critical thus, that English is taught in a way that learners are able to master and internalize practical linguistic skills for their day-to-day communication upon completing school. This is one of the major objectives of English Language Teaching in Kenya, especially at the secondary school level, as clearly stated in the Integrated English Curriculum (IEC) secondary syllabus:

> The school leaver will require good English in a large variety of professional, commercial and day to day transaction in the Kenyan and international environment. In the teaching of English therefore, emphasis should be on the acquisition of communicative competence and not simply on the passing of examinations. In fact, becoming proficient in the language is a life-long goal. (Kenya Institute of Education 2005: 3)

In developing and selecting materials to achieve these ends, key questions need be asked. Is this language being taught for effective communicative competence or mere passing of examinations? What skills are to be emphasized – listening, speaking, reading or writing? How prepared and capable are the teachers to use the materials? (Cf. Lazar 1993; 1996.)

The need to consider materials selection and the inherent implementation challenges in Kenya is hinged on the fact that 20 years ago, the country embraced the current IEC syllabus, which sought to combine both language and literature in the classroom. The final decision to change the school curriculum was arrived at in 1984 and by 1985 the new system was already being implemented. As Kioko (2003) observes the syllabus and books were quickly published and distributed to schools for mandatory implementation the same year.

The aims of language teaching in Kenya, as is characteristic with many other ESL countries, are generally defined in terms of four basic skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The syllabus generally emphasizes that language work should be contextualized so that vocabulary and grammar should as far as possible arise from a text and be developed by writing exercises (Ministry of Education 1992). According to the IEC curriculum, there should be no such thing as a stand-alone vocabulary teaching lesson. Vocabulary is 'best acquired in context through listening, speaking, reading and writing activities' (Ministry of Education 1992: 46).

The Ministry's advice to the teachers implicitly signals the need for material writers to embed learner-based interactive activities both in coursebooks and in selecting imaginative texts at the secondary school level. Only then can the key skills outlined below be successfully taught and learned.

Listening and speaking

Listening and speaking skills both play an important part in the social and academic life of a student. The Integrated English (IE) syllabus recognizes this

view with its assertion that an individual 'who listens and speaks effectively is able to receive and respond to information appropriately' (Kenya Institute of Education 2002: 5). The two skills are also seen to contribute significantly to the development of reading and writing skills. It is thus expected of teachers to make every effort to help the learners to acquire and continually refine their use of these two skills so that they can interact with others effectively and confidently.

The syllabus explicitly states that oral work should be used to help learners develop confidence in their ability to express themselves in English, provide them with an opportunity for self-assessment of mistakes they make in spoken English and lay a basic foundation for their studying of literature. Teachers are constantly advised not to concentrate on small errors of pronunciation that may affect confidence and interest in the language but instead to emphasize overall fluency in connected speech (Kenya Institute of Education 1987).

The 'Speech work' section appears at the beginning of every Unit in the Kenya Institute of Education published class text, *Integrated English: A Course for Secondary Schools,* running from Form 1 to Form 4. During the first two years, listening and speaking lessons mostly focus on major problem areas of pronouncing English words arising from the various ethnic languages. There are at least 42 recognized languages spoken in Kenya. It is thus considered important for teachers to set aside time each week for oral practice with a view to encouraging pupils to have confidence in expressing themselves in English. It is expected that different sounds are practised through speech drills, debates, dramatization and discussions. In *Integrated English: A Course for Secondary Schools, Pupils' Book 1,* for example, teachers are informed and invited to make use of materials on problematic sounds resulting from Mother Tongue Interference (MTI) available from the Educational Media Service at the Kenya Institute of Education. These materials include audio and video cassettes on debates, dialogues, impromptu speeches and interviews.

At Forms 3 and 4, it is envisaged that the learners will have demonstrated some improvement in their pronunciation so that more emphasis is laid on general speech work rather than individual sounds. Learners at this level are expected to use a wider range of vocabulary in their speech and to show more confidence in expressing themselves intelligibly in English. In particular, the syllabus states that the learner needs to be 'prepared for practical situations such as interviews, talks, discussions and speeches in general' (Kenya Institute of Education 1992: 57).

Grammar

According to the Kenya Institute of Education (2005: 5), the chief objective of teaching grammar is to help students 'understand how language works and to use it correctly and appropriately in different contexts'. It is emphasized that whereas learning how grammar rules operate is useful, it is even more important to know how to use the language in real-life situations. In other words, a learner who has mastered grammar is able to apply the rules to communicate in acceptable language forms with ease at all times.

According to the syllabus, the grammar component of the language course should help the students to understand syntactical and structural elements such as 'words, phrases, clauses, tenses, and parts of speech' (Kenya Institute of Education 2005: 50). The expectation is that the study of grammar would help the learner to express him or herself clearly and vividly in the English language. Knowledge of grammar is seen to enable the learner to 'accurately and completely understand what s/he hears and reads' (Ministry of Education 1987: 14).

It is assumed that most of the grammar work in Forms 1 and 2 will have been dealt with in the primary school but at a lower level. In Forms 3 and 4, focus shifts to more advanced structures building on work covered in the junior forms. However, at this senior level, more emphasis is placed on using grammar arising from context. The teaching of IE course grammatical structures in every chapter is linked to the comprehension passage in the same chapter. This is shown in the example below:

> Read the following passage and note all the underlined verbs, which are in the simple past tense.
>
> The next day, they *left* for the leopard's home. They *had* to leave early. Leopard *had* a big basket, neatly covered up ready for the journey. Goat *took* the basket, *raised* it and *put* it on the head. Leopard *led* the way and Goat came behind her carrying the basket on the head. They *met* a group of travellers.
>
> Verbs ending in a consonant preceded by a single stressed vowel double the consonant in the past tense to preserve the pronunciation.

Wrap	wrapped
Fit	fitted
Plan	planned
Rob	robbed
Stop	stopped

Unfortunately, such tasks are only confined to the English language coursebook therefore going against the very tenets behind the IEC. Kioko and Muthwii (2001) have argued for the need for teaching materials to be overhauled to reflect this reality. Lumala (2007) reports working with materials in the classroom that demonstrate that imaginative texts could be used effectively in contextualizing grammar teaching without compromising either component.

Reading skills

Reading has been the skill most emphasized in the traditional ESL teaching, and even today is the mainstay of ESL and EFL instruction in many countries (Susser and Robi 1990). The ability to read fluently is considered vital both in school and for life. In Kenya reading is considered a very important component of language learning at all levels of secondary education. This is because reading, as aptly pointed out by Widdowson (1978) and Smith (1985), helps in

information gathering and effective learning of concepts. It is Kenya Institute of Education's contention that through reading, the learner is exposed to new vocabulary, new sentence structures and different registers. According to the syllabus, reading also acquaints the learner with varying models of language use.

Teachers are called upon to devise strategies that will make available reading materials interesting and fulfilling (Carter and Nash 1990). It is strongly recommended that reading skills be developed through the study of literature. At the secondary school level, reading is divided into two sections: intensive and extensive. The former aims at enhancing the learners' ability to skim, scan, comprehend extracts and remember the important facts of a prose passage, poem or dramatic extracts. Extensive reading on the other hand enhances the gradual development of both linguistic and literary skills and takes the form of studying class readers in Forms 1 and 2 and literature set books in Forms 3 and 4. Above all, the reading should be learner-centred with students being allowed greater interaction with the texts, as ably demonstrated in the works of Tomlinson (1994), Tsui (1995), McRae and Carter (1996) and Brown (2001).

Writing skills

Writing, according to the Kenya Institute of Education (2002), encourages learners to be organized, logical and creative in the way they think. Learners should thus be helped to develop writing skills that will enable them to express their ideas clearly and creatively. The syllabus places a premium on encouraging the learners to achieve competence in writing using the vocabulary and grammar structures they have learned. It is the teacher's job to use the tasks in the coursebook in ways that will lead to steady and systematic development of the learner's writing ability.

The coursebooks

In Kenya, just as in many other countries, English language teaching is inextricably tied to a single coursebook (McGrath 2002: 7). It is common practice that almost every five years, the Ministry of Education reviews and recommends set books that teachers should use in teaching both language and literature. Indeed, it would be difficult for us to conceive of teaching either of these without a coursebook.

Hutchinson and Torres's (1994) earlier views about the subject are also significant. The two see coursebooks as playing a significant role in curriculum change. According to them, textbooks survive and prosper because they are the most convenient means of providing the structure that the teaching-learning system requires.

The Integrated English coursebook for secondary schools in Kenya is some kind of a holy book. No teacher ever uses another book (because no other books are available?) to teach the language component other than those written by the Kenya Institute of Education. For some teachers, the coursebook is like a survival kit (McGrath 2002). This perception gains meaning in situations where a teacher has no time to plan and is overwhelmed by the workload

(Lumala 2007: 135). Learners can use the books as a guide while studying on their own. The book has the capacity to systematize their learning, whether inside or outside the classroom. In addition, teachers see the coursebook as being central to effective management of lessons. The chapters in a coursebook are organized in a way that saves time planning for lessons, gives direction to lesson objectives and offers connection between the various language skills that need teaching. For many teachers in Kenya, it is impracticable to go to an English lesson without a copy of the *Integrated English* coursebook.

But important as they may be, coursebooks should not be seen to be the alpha and the omega of teaching the language in an ESL context such as Kenya. It is the opinion of Tice (1991) that unless we utilize the textbook more creatively, we may end up with an unexciting book-centred class in which little interaction takes place. Continued use of the same textbook as is the case in Kenya may lead to stagnation in content, and hence the lack of variety and up-to-date materials.

There are a number of other limitations to using coursebooks though. Many coursebooks are not up-dated on a regular basis. Moreover, coursebooks adopt a very similar format for each unit with a limited range of exercises. Hence teachers who have been teaching over a long period of time find the content repetitive, monotonous and non-stimulating.

In order to overcome such shortcomings, there is need for adaptation and supplementation. These two are encouraged as a means of making the materials more suitable in the circumstances in which they are being used. To adapt any material, teachers need to think of the needs and interests of their learners, their own teaching capabilities and constraints such as time. The aim of any adaptation or supplementation should be to maximize effective learning within the given time and context and to make both teaching and learning much more interesting.

Literature set books and guidebooks

The place of literature in the IEC syllabus in Kenya is explicitly stated: 'It is important to note that literature is part and parcel of language learning. Reading can help the learner to develop vocabulary use and sentence structure. Literature teaching also helps learners to appreciate their cultural values, as well as those of others' (Ministry of Education 1992: 45).

It is also pointed out that the integration of English language and literature is for the mutual benefit of both components (Kenya Institute of Education 2002). From my own experience, the teaching of language structures in isolation is not only boring, but also tends to produce learners who lack communicative competence. Unfortunately, the two components continue to be taught separately in many schools and to make use of different resources (Ng'ong'a 2002; Lumala 2007).

It is a common procedure in Kenya that the Ministry of Education recommends required set books for literature teaching at Forms 3 and 4. Due to a number of factors surrounding the teaching of literary works in secondary schools, many learners rely heavily on guidebooks (Mwangi 2002; Mboya 2002).

Guidebooks refer to commentaries or booklets written by literary critics on selected texts with a view to supplementing the teacher's notes. They provide summaries and notes on key issues expected of candidates in the KCSE English Literature paper. The issues covered by guidebooks are always the same: plot, themes, characters and characterization, and stylistic devices found in the set books.

Every time the Ministry of Education has prescribed a new set of examinable texts, writers have hurried to come up with guidebooks. As a result teachers and learners alike have in some way or other relied on such books as they prepare for KCSE examination in the selected literary texts. Indeed, very few students ever sit for the KCSE English Paper 3 (Literature in English) before reading a guidebook of one kind or another (Ng'ong'a 2002). The reality of this fact is best captured in the words of Professor Helen Mwanzi in her justification for writing a guidebook for one of the KCSE examinable anthologies as presented by Kabaji (2003):

> I know teachers are doing a good job out there but I also know that students need a guidebook they can refer to on their own. I thought that we have students who do not have teachers for one reason or another. Such students need a real useful guidebook, which can help them ... come the exams, they should be at home. (*East African Standard*, 30 March 2003)

From this assertion, it is unmistakable that guidebooks are necessary not just as a reference resource but most importantly to 'help' as many candidates as possible to pass the examination. A writer of a guidebook sees the teacher in terms of giving students notes about the set books and in the teacher's absence, the guidebook can play that role. The irony of this is that writers of guidebooks make no mention of the importance of the literary materials being studied except for isolated quotations as would be needed in examinations. Because of their very examination-oriented nature, guidebooks have ended up enslaving students instead of allowing them the opportunity to interact with the actual texts.

There is such an overwhelming sense of 'correctness' and 'finality in the guidebooks that not even teachers are prepared to go against the views held by the authors of such guidebooks. If they help learners pass examinations, then why not? After all, according to Kenya National Examination Council (2000), 'good teaching' is measured by the number of students passing the national examinations in a given subject.

What has encouraged the over-reliance on guidebooks is the fact that in many secondary schools, there are not enough set texts. Students are required to buy their own books yet the majority of them cannot afford to do so. The schools that can afford the books may have three to four pupils sharing a book. Thus, many students in Kenya end up sitting for their KCSE Examinations without ever having read the texts.

Guidebooks are likely to encourage rote learning. This entails memorizing something 'by heart, exactly as it appears in a textbook or in teacher's notes'

(World Book International 1992: 89). Teachers test the students' learning by asking them to reproduce the given notes exactly as presented to them in class. Such a teaching strategy hardly leaves room for learners' creativity and originality in their response to literary works and hence goes against the spirit of the integrated curriculum.

Factors influencing text selection

In Kenya, as is the case in many other countries, the choice of which texts to use in language and literature lessons is rarely made by the teachers (cf. the views of Alam 2002 and Rubdy 2003). The Ministry of Education, through the Kenya Institute of Education, decides on which books should be used in schools as set- books for examination. This is particularly so at Form 3 and Form 4 levels where students are preparing for their KCSE examinations. At the junior level (Forms 1 and 2), the Kenya Institute of Education has published the required language textbook, advised teachers on what sort of books can be used as class readers but left the final decision on which texts to use for teachers to make. No guidance is given on text selection, although the Ministry of Education says, 'Past prescribed texts for Form 3 and 4 should not be indiscriminately issued to Forms 1 and 2' (Kenya Institute of Education 1992: 55).

The texts prescribed by the Ministry of Education may not necessarily be appropriate with certain groups of learners, given their age, interests and social background. Such texts may require to be manipulated in order to generate the required interest in the learners and stimulate learning. In some research I carried out, Lumala (2007), teachers felt that they should be involved in proposing and selecting the required set books meant for their learners. This they felt would enable them to design classroom activities that would allow learners to read the texts more productively and creatively. Thomas (1998) and Llurda (2004: 314) emphasize the need for teachers in ESL contexts to participate in selecting as this would enable them to incorporate instructional materials and activities that are rooted in local contexts and their learners' lives.

The idea of the Ministry being responsible for deciding on which books to teach is anchored in the curriculum developers' need to teach English language and literature mainly for content and examinations. Students have to sit the same examination at the end of their four-year course and as such, uniformity in the syllabus is considered essential. Preparing students early enough for examination saves time and avoids last-minute pressure for the teacher. However, this traditional, examination-based approach to teaching literature appears to me to go against the grain of integrating language and literature teaching as set out in the 8-4-4 English Curriculum. As already pointed out, the aim of the secondary school English syllabus is to increase learners' overall fluency in listening, speaking, reading and writing the language. The available materials determine whether this goal is achieved or not.

McRae (1991) and Carter and Long (1991) fear that unsuitable texts would lead to learners' disinterest in language and literature at an early stage. Careful selection would result in appropriate texts that may motivate learners to come back to the subject later in life (Hall 2005). They also point out that general

availability of the printed text, how representative the text is and the level of learners' familiarity are some of the factors that should determine whether or not a text is selected. Carter and Long (1991: 144) further advise on the length of the texts thus:

> Though a complete work is often set for study, it must be very rare indeed for it to be completely 'taught'. Typically, the teacher selects pivotal points of the text, and comments on or asks questions about these. The more the extracts the better as this offers the students the much needed skills to handle literary texts on their own.

The importance of students' interests in text selection is underscored by Lazar (1993: 48), McRae and Vethamani (1996), Tomlinson (1998) and Kioko and Muthwii (2001), who all argue that it is best to select materials which are in line with the major interests of the students. To these writers, a reasonable amount of time spent on a regular basis with a class should allow the teacher to assess the students' interests with ease.

Over the years the Kenya Institute of Education has not disclosed the guidelines it considers important when selecting texts for schools. Neither have teachers been involved in the selection process. One can only presume that relevance to syllabus has been the key to any choices made (Lumala 2003). At the individual level, teachers are implicitly expected to link the chosen texts with the language part of the syllabus yet there are no materials to support this linking.

Text and learner factors?

In general, there are various factors that teachers worldwide, and specifically in ESL contexts, may consider when selecting any text to use in the classroom (Peer 1989; Pope 1995). Below I outline some factors I consider pertinent to the Kenyan context. Based on research I carried out in Kenya (Lumala 2007), I have split these into two major categories: *text factors* and *learner factors*. By text factors I mean questions we must ask about the text itself while learner factors focus more specifically on who the learner is. This duality is, however, not an explicit separation considering that answers about the nature of the text are dependent on the nature of our learners and vice versa.

Text factors:

a. Openness: How accessible is the text? Can the text be easily exploited?
b. Level of difficulty: Are learners able to examine the language used in the text using their existing linguistic repertoire?
c. Comparability: Can the selected text be compared to another text on the same subject?
d. Ability to create interest in the learner: the text chosen need not just be in line with the learners' interests; instead, it should also be one which can create and sustain interest in itself.
e. Availability of the text: What kinds of texts are available? Are they easily accessible by learners? How cheap or expensive are they?

f. How long is the text? Does the length fit with the available time?
g. How relevant is the text to the syllabus? Is the text contextualized and relevant to the subject under discussion?

Learner factors

a. What is the learners' language proficiency? Can they take part in a discussion about the texts?
b. Their age: different texts will appeal to learners of different ages ranging from the junior classes to the senior classes. An overly simplified text – both in terms of language and content – will not interest senior students unless the tasks are complex. The opposite is true of complex texts with junior learners.
c. Emotional and intellectual maturity: this is closely linked with the age factor. Creative texts capture certain emotions.
d. Hobbies, interests and sensitivity: our interests and sensitivity account for our reactions to the content of the text.
e. Socio-cultural background and political expectations of the learner: a text that portrays anti-cultural and politically insensitive content in relation to the learner's context is likely to be inaccessible.

Given the important role played by the English language in Kenya and the recent radical changes introduced by the Kenya National Examination Council in the KCSE English examination (Aduda 2006), any written materials meant to teach the subject must be those that will bring about not just the attainment of syllabus objectives and good grades in the KCSE Examinations but those that contribute to the learners' acquisition and mastery of communicative competency (Widdowson 1978; Lillis 2006). The goal of teaching English in ESL contexts such as Kenya should be to enhance learners' criticality, creativity and language awareness (Pearce 2006; McRae 1996). This calls on teachers to be prepared to use their own creativity (Nunan 1989; Markee and Kasper 2004) to adapt and supplement available materials to suit their immediate contexts. Only then can the IEC in Kenya secondary schools achieve the intended long-term goals.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the present state of teaching materials in two parts of the African continent, namely, North and East Africa. Two case studies from two different countries, Tunisia and Kenya, are reviewed. In both countries teachers and students do not seem to be completely satisfied with the materials they are using. For Tunisia the major recommendations relate to bringing real samples of business texts to the class to be worked upon and considering students' present and deferred needs in order to make them the basis of both the syllabus and the materials. For Kenya there are similar recommendations relating to satisfying the real educational and communicative needs of the students and to

giving the teachers more say in the selection and development of appropriate materials.

Endnotes

[1] This refers to a research project undertaken on determining the authenticity of business English materials.
[2] The term refers to the French name of a project work. This is borrowed from other subject matter courses. Students in other subjects are asked to undertake projects in groups which they have to present in class. The idea is now also used in English courses.
[3] This is an interview administered on the staff members of the English Departments in two higher education institutions in the University of Sfax, Tunisia, in order to gather the teachers' assessment of the course materials for the academic year 2005–2006.
[4] This is a questionnaire which is used for two targets: first, to survey the students' needs, and second, to gather the students' assessment of the course materials. A sample of 372 students was drawn out of a population of 1,066 4th year business students at the University of Sfax.

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Chapter 14

Materials in Japan: Coexisting Traditions

Jim Smiley and Michiyo Masui

Introduction

ELT materials in Japan are available through three sources: those written overseas for global markets and distributed by international publishing houses; those written by native speakers of English (NS) working in Japan, whose texts are published for the global, Pan-Asian or Japanese markets; and those written for indigenous publishing houses. The number of textbooks produced for global markets, which are readily available, roughly matches the combined totals of those written by NS for the Pan-Asian and Japanese markets. This combined total is, however, far outnumbered by textbooks written for Japanese publishing houses. Sales figures (i.e. actual number in use) of each category are not known exactly, but a conservative estimate is that NS-produced texts (NSP) for non-Japanese companies achieve around 35 per cent of the total sales (Glick 2006). In other words, the local publishing (LP) industry produces more texts that are used more. This fact is supported by a count of the numbers of legally admitted foreign teachers in Japan, which closely matches the estimated sales of NSP texts based on the average number of classes per week and the average number of students per class (figures from Wadden and McGovern 1993). On the whole, NS teachers use NSP texts and Japanese teachers use LP texts.

There are seven basic markets. Table 14.1 shows the typical roles of Non-NS (NNS) and NS in each.

Table 14.1: NNS and NS Role by Market Category

	NNS	NS
Education level taught	Role and type of ELT	Role and type of ELT
Primary: institutional	Basic introduction, simple structures and lexis, focus on basic communication strategies, 'English for fun'	Supporting role to NNS syllabus, focus on basic communication strategies

Primary: private	Preparation for middle school, middle school purposes	Basic introduction, simple structures and lexis, focus on basic communication strategies, 'English for fun'
Secondary: institutional (to include middle and high schools)	Grammar and lexis based, focus on advanced reading through translation	Supporting role to NNS syllabus, focus on basic communication strategies, prescribed oral communication texts' educational aims
Cram school	Grammar and lexis based, focus on test preparation	Virtually N/A, but some offer minimal eikaiwa (conversation) classes
Tertiary: university	An eclectic mix of primary and secondary methods weighted towards secondary methods	An eclectic mix of primary and secondary methods weighted towards primary and eikaiwa methods
Tertiary: eikaiwa	Support role for NS, provide Japanese language support for lower-level business classes using secondary methods	Various types: 'Only English' rule dominant, 'communicative methodology' dominant
Private tutor (all ages)	Primarily primary methods	Primarily eikaiwa methods

As the total number of textbooks currently available is in the thousands, we will analyse only those available for the tertiary (university) market.

Materials in Use

Japanese-produced textbooks are quantifiably different from those produced by NS for the wider Asian or global market – even though they might be written by NS. A survey of materials in use in Japan must, therefore, account for both types separately. Furthermore, as many writers have questioned the validity of applying Western theoretical models to Asian contexts (Robb 2002; Kubota 1999) on both practical and ideological grounds, the context in which ELT materials are used must be understood within their socio-politically governed educational agenda. What this means is that the categories of NS-produced (NSP) and locally produced (LP) create textbooks that require different handling in order to avoid culturally insensitive treatment of their underlying principles.

At a glance, the single most noticeable difference between NSP and LP textbooks is the number of activities per unit. A sample of 14 speaking and listening textbooks from each category was taken and the number of activities in each

unit was counted. An activity was defined by either the existence of a rubric asking learners to do something or of a text with or without any instructions. The numbers of activities for each were investigated to see if there was a statistically significant difference in the totals for NSP and LP textbooks. Using statistical tools to place subjective knowledge within a broader framework of objective fact becomes a necessary task in a survey such as this where individual author's impressions underpin a great many of the statements. In this present case, this was done by inputting the number of activities in each sample and then testing the overall averages using the Mann-Whitney test of medians (see Table 14.2). The Mann-Whitney test is useful for making inferences about the difference between two population medians where the sample sizes are small and do not have enough data to produce a standard bell-curve. If the final output figure is less than 0.05, we may assume that the two samples under question represent two different wider populations. In other words, they are different.

Table 14.2: NPS and LP Average Number of Activities per Unit

Mann-Whitney test on NPS and LP medians		
	N	Median
NPS textbook activity numbers	14	15.50
LP textbook activity numbers	14	11.00
The test is significant at 0.0253 (adjusted for ties)		

At 0.0253, textbook activity totals in LP texts are significantly lower than those in NSP textbooks. This discrepancy may be based in the expectation Japanese students and teachers have that once a textbook is selected for a course, every activity in the unit is completed (Shearon 2007), whereas activity selection is the norm for teachers using NSP texts. Timings for each activity can only be estimated, but both types have short and long activities in terms of rubric length and expected learner response.

A common conception of LP textbooks is that they focus on grammar-translation activities. Chosen because pair-work is seen as a fundamental element of communicative language teaching (cf. Harmer 1982; Kumaravadivelu 1993; Nunan 1987) the ratio of discussions to activity numbers was checked. As the total number of activities in NSP texts is far higher than LP texts, the figure taken for measurement was the *pair-work: total ratio* per unit. (See Table 14.3.)

Table 14.3: Comparison of Pair-work Activity Numbers in NSP and LP Textbooks

NSP and LP pair-work activities to total					
	N	Mean	Min	Median	Max
NSP	14	0.3149	0.1053	0.3095	0.5000
LP	14	0.2033	0.0000	0.1667	0.4375

The means for LP are lower, and the minimum is zero. No listening or speaking NSP textbook contains a unit that does not have some kind of pair activity, whereas some LP books do. The mean scores (averages) differ by just over 0.11, but the median scores are wider. Medians tell us about where the majority of individual scores lie and are not simple arithmetical averages. The lower medians indicate that the preference for learner-to-book activities is stronger in LP textbooks.

However, as Table 14.2 showed, the overall number of activities per unit is lower in LP textbooks. As both overall activity numbers and pair-work activities are lower, we need to ask the question: Would a teacher working with any book type notice a clear difference in the availability of pair-work activities or not as they impacted on the overall structure of each unit?

To test the medians in our limited survey, a One-way ANOVA was performed. A final p-value of less than 0.05 would point to a difference in how NSP and LP textbooks valued pair-work activities (Table 14.4).

Table 14.4: Comparison of the Number of Pair-work Activities in Each Textbook Type as Expressed as a Ratio

One-way ANOVA: Medians of number of pair-work activities in LP against NSP textbooks					
Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
LP ratio	9	0.1460	0.0162	0.85	0.615
Error	4	0.0760	0.0190		
Total	13	0.2219			

The resulting p-value is 0.615, which provides evidence that the number of pair-work activities in LP textbooks is not significantly lower as expressed as a ratio of the total number of activities in units. However, the real number is lower, and a teacher who wishes to focus on pair-work will find more opportunities in NSP textbooks.

There are a few other differences between LP and NSP conversation textbooks. LP texts assume a far higher level of prior ability than NSP texts. The target vocabulary of combined Middle School and High School English programmes tallies up to around 1,700 headwords, which are indicated by dictionary publishers who mark these words with a system of stars or in coloured typefaces. Textbooks for university students assume familiarity with these. A useful comparison may be seen in two unit 1s, one each from an NSP and LP text, both entitled 'How are you?' (Akagi *et al.* 2002; Helgesen *et al.* 2007). Every item in Helgesen's unit 1 is either readily identifiable from the context, has a graphic gloss or is easily demonstrable. Only five vocabulary items fall outside the marked list for Middle School English communication target list: favourite /exercise/interview/business/movies. All of these are in the High School list and, anyway, may be looked up without much interference to the lesson. In contrast, Akagi *et al.*, in a much longer text, has over 20 items beyond Middle School level, including: depressing/setback/

fancy (as in 'expensive')/test period/rather tough. Grammatical complexity, likewise, is strictly controlled in Helgesen, but Akagi uses the present perfect, present perfect continuous, simple future, simple past, 'going to' future, simple present and colloquial sentence contractions in the very first sample dialogue.

Where lexis and structure difficulties threaten to impede comprehension, glosses and translations may be provided in LP texts. The inclusion of language-specific aids is, of course, possible only because of the limited market and is not available to Pan-Asian textbooks. Teacher aids should also not be overlooked. Indeed, Japanese language ability is presumed in a number of LP textbooks. The unit structure of Bullsmith *et al.*'s *Let's Enjoy Conversation* (2002) is based around a dialogue printed in Japanese on the left-hand page and blank lines on the right. Learners are expected to translate the dialogue. No English support is offered. The same idea is found in Droukis and Yukitoki's *Experience an English Program!* (2006). English through Japanese finds a voice in another typical pattern of printing the translation below the English dialogue (e.g. Koga 2001), but this type of material can be used by NS who do not understand Japanese simply by ignoring the Japanese.

NSP and LP texts vary in their attitude towards the degree of representation of authentic language and authentic language experience. Despite Richards' lengthy defence of the 'pedagogical artefacts' of produced language examples in textbooks, in which he argues against the use of actual NS spoken dialogues or mimics in pedagogic material on the grounds that they 'have little classroom value' (2006: 19), many NSP textbooks and some LP ones attempt to present 'realistic models' (e.g. Helgesen *et al.* 2007).

'Authenticity' is a notoriously difficult term to define. In this chapter, the yardstick used to judge a text's authenticity is derived from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). At its most basic level, SFL sees language as a system of meaning-based utterances and those meanings are created by precise forms and interactions of syntax and lexis. The native speaker of English's (NS) expected range of verbal actions are used as a base against which textbook samples may be analysed.

Textbook-ese

Typical language in NSP textbooks is innocuous. It displays no instances of usage that seem out of place or jar due to any perceived style or era mismatch. When Richards and Sandy's *Passages* (1998) demonstrates target language by saying that:

1. 'Most people in my country live at home until they get married. I'm 26, single, and live with my parents, so in that sense I'm average'

and the related reply:

2. 'I don't think I'm average because my ideas are less conservative than everyone else's' (Unit 5: 38)

nothing seems that unusual. The sentences are accurate if viewed through the lens of writing grammaticalness. A characteristic of this 'textbook-ese' language is its plausibility in a vague sense, yet there are three aspects of spoken discourse that would indicate implausibility. Spoken language is characterized by interlocutor interaction. This interaction may take many forms, including backchannelling of 'ums and yeahs'. Richards argues effectively against peppering printed materials with these devices (2006), but a far more critical aspect is missing from Richards and Sandy's examples; an aspect of language presentation that undermines learners' exposure (and therefore their construction of their L2 representation) to essential features of extended discourse. Interlocutor feedback typically comments on an immediately previous conversation rheme. The topic in 1 is 'I' and the final comment, or rheme, is that the 'I' is 'average'. The response to that rheme would most likely begin with an adverbial indicator of the interlocutor's position or opinion of the rheme. It is unlikely that the second speaker would simply begin a long 14-word utterance without any rheme-comment preparation. Furthermore, sentence 2 continues beyond the point of commenting on sentence 1's rheme and on to a fully developed and unprepared new topic. A more realistic conversational realization of 2 might be, 'Well, ah, I don't think I'm average. [Yeah, how so?] Um, that's because my ideas are less conservative'. (Or in written form: 'Well, I don't think I'm average. That's because my ideas are less conservative'.) The insertion of 'that's' creates a theme out of the previous rheme and allows for a more naturalistic continuation. Ellipsis of the obvious is also a feature of typical conversation. Combined, these two points bring us to the third aspect of implausibility. We fail when we try to imagine when we might use such language in real situations outside the classroom. The language is innocuous, but it is slightly unreal.

However, much pedagogic language is made up, it needs to be realistic. Nunan's *Expressions* (2001: 8), which was piloted mainly in Asia, begins by inviting learners to have the following conversation:

Ron: Are you Pat?
Mary: No, I'm not. I'm Mary.
Ron: Nice to meet you, Mary. I'm Ron.

No context is provided, leaving learners to judge for themselves the level of appropriateness of both the register of the introduction and the omission of any apology at Ron mistaking the name. The first stated goal of the unit is to introduce oneself. Yet, at the heart of this sample dialogue there lies a serious confusion. The interlocutory force of 'Are you Pat?' is to clarify an identity. The expectancy of either a 'yes' or a 'no' answer is high. Following this exchange, an intermediary expectancy is set up: Ron would comment on the accuracy of the expectancy result. In other words, if the answer was a 'yes', Ron would most likely comment with something like 'glad to hear it' or 'great'. If 'no', an apology is required. As it stands, Nunan's dialogue teaches learners the validity of omitting adverbial mood indicators and a questionable conversational pattern. Furthermore, Nunan provides no indication of the introduction's tenor. The

affective involvement between NSs who could speak to each other as in the dialogue needs to be high. Ron and Mary need to be equals, and the situation in which Ron could ask Mary the question needs to be a highly informal one. Again like the *Passages* case, it is hard to imagine a genuine use of the language in the manner of Nunan's example.

Although no NSP textbook is entirely free from 'textbook-ese' (i.e. language that is unreal but acceptable at face-value), some authors make the relationship between context and realistic language use transparent. Helgesen *et al.*'s *Firsthand Access* (2007) prefaces each conversation with a description of the context. The resultant language is plausible, and every sample dialogue features realistic adverbial mood indicators. Unit 6 displays a typical example: after the initial rubric 'listen' (56), there is a description of the scene, 'Two friends are shopping in a department store'. This short 36-word dialogue has an 'aw', and 'um' and a 'but' (of disappointment). Throughout the textbook, there are many others: aw/hardly ever/um/well/huh/oh/5 really/oh no/oh/so.

Materials for LP conversation practice are typically co-authored by one or more NSs and at least one Japanese. Conversation texts tend to have the same kinds of non-authentic textual features as NSP texts, i.e. they are grammatical, usually presented in full sentences, lack back-channelling and other interlocutor feedback and tend to show longer exchanges. In Akagi *et al.*'s *Basic English Communication for International Understanding* (2002), the individual turns in dialogues in the latter half of the 22-unit textbook get progressively longer. The dialogue in Unit 16 has 13 exchanges between two people. The average number of clauses per turn is 2.3 and the average number of words per turn is 23.8. These dialogues resemble mini-speeches more than actual conversation. A closer look at the lexico-grammatical make up of the turns reveals patterns of discourse that are unlikely in realistic conversation. Take for example, page 44:

> Takuya: 1 Spring is especially beautiful because of the cherry blossoms. 2 They start to bloom from the end of March to around mid April. 3 Autumn is also a good time. 4 It is cool 5 and the color of the autumn leaves such as the Japanese maple is wonderful.

The topic field is weather in Japan in a general sense, but there is an abrupt topic switch from spring to autumn in the middle. Organizing topics by temporality is a teaching point found in many writing textbooks (cf. Shoemaker and Polycarpou 1994; Singleton 1998; Blanchard and Root 2003; Zemach and Islam 2005), but is not a common feature of organizing textbooks that teach conversation. There is a semantic relationship between the months in 2 and the seasonal lexis in 3, which is sufficient to ensure a smooth transition in written material. However, in conversation, a number of devices may be placed between 2 and 3 before the new topic is established. These may be interlocutor feedback, a temporal focusing phrase such as 'after that', a mood indicator that links the comment in 1 'beautiful' with the setting up of another 'good time' in 3. The lack of conversational phrases such as 'you know', false starts and hesitations, repetitions and its sheer length makes this passage less conversationally authentic.

Yahagi and Phalon's *Natural English in Action* (1995) does try to show more authentic spoken texts. The page layout presents many individual turns of over 50 words throughout the textbook, but back-channelling does occur and is shown in a much smaller typeface size in-line. However, theirs is primarily a reading textbook. Learner discussions are strictly controlled to providing translations of given Japanese texts and to choosing responses from a short list of options.

Due to the combined factors of the strength of the NSP texts, both within and from outside Japan, and the Japanese perception of the role of the NS which puts them in charge of conversation classes, the number of reading and LP writing textbooks far outweighs those for conversation. It is when we look at reading and writing textbooks, we see many more examples of 'textbook-ese'.

Alison's Reports on Japan (Sawazaki and Shibayama 2005) purports to inform the reader about her experiences as an exchange student from the USA in Japan. Replete with True/False comprehension tasks, grammar questions, sentence matchings, short writing activities and fuller ones, this textbook follows the format of many reading skill books. The main texts are constructed carefully, keeping sentence lengths, grammar structures and lexis tightly controlled throughout, and there is not an obvious difference between each unit in those terms. However, the ratio of declarative sentence forms is high.

> (Unit 1 p.10)
> '1 Japanese people love cherry blossoms. 2 The flowers are only in bloom for a few days in spring, 3 but this flower controls the schedule of the whole country!'

Declarative forms in expository texts are common, but when the reader is considered, Japanese university students, the purpose of the text becomes less clear. All three clauses are in the present simple and express what the author believes to be a fact. As these facts will be shared by the readership, a question needs to be raised about the interpersonal relationship between author and intended readers. At the experiential level, i.e. how the author relates her experiences to the reader, maintaining textual authenticity would require a very different realization at the lexio-grammatical level. If the text were truly to be an authentic interaction between writer and perceived audience, we would suggest the following:

from

1	Japanese people	love	cherry blossoms
	Senser	mental process	compliment
	Theme	Rheme	

to

1	I	know	how much	Japanese people love cherry blossoms
	Senser	mental process	manner	phenomenon: mental
	Theme	Rheme		

Notice that the theme changes from 'Japanese people' to 'I'. Replacing the senser with 'I' and making the rheme statement to be about something 'I know' makes the experience more likely to be authentic if read as a diary. However, a very typical feature of LP reading textbooks is their lack of sensitivity to context, or, more accurately, their lack of need for a context. Yokoyama *et al.*'s *Life and Creation* (2002) mixes first-person singular texts (even though there are seven co-authors) with scientific-type writing in the third person with newspaper-style articles containing quotations, all without any context given.

'Textbook-ese' may be better defined as 'English without a context'. The language which learners are exposed to through reading materials is genre and register free; its tone and lexis used are presumed neutral; anyone from any age could use it. The downside to this is that learners never get exposed to other styles of texts, and with that, other ways in which meaning is created through the printed page. More subtly, particular relationships of lexico-grammar to situation are avoided, leaving what is arguably an 'authenticity' gap in Japanese students' English knowledge. This feature applies far more to LP than to NSP textbooks.

Taking Canale and Swain's famous four competencies: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic (Canale and Swain 1980; Canale 1983), we may categorize university level, elementary textbooks' abilities in presenting language information authentically, as shown in Table 14.5.

Table 14.5: Areas of Competencies Supported by Text Types

	NSP	**LP**
Grammatical	‡	‡
Sociolinguistic	†	x
Strategic	†	x
Discourse	x	x

‡=yes, †=questionably, x=no

From this chart, it may be thought that Japanese people's use of English will be inappropriate. However, before such a judgement can be reached, data from longitudinal studies of learners' language use in various situations must be available, that these long-time learners' exposure to language is only through one source type. Such data is impossible to collect. Introspective data from successful users of English who studied primarily in the grammar-translation tradition suggest that some Japanese feel that the grammatical training they received acted as a valuable springboard to other kinds of training later on (Smiley *et al.* 2006). One is reminded of Swan's description of four imaginary burglars from non-English-speaking countries who tried to rob a house in England. The two that had received communicatively oriented training understood the utterance 'The policeman is crossing the road', but the other two did not and were subsequently arrested (Swan 1985b).

How the Materials Are Typically Used

Studying English for a minimum of three (usually six) years 'merely to prepare one for the possibility of a ... one-week sightseeing trip abroad' may not be worth the effort (Guest 2006). Study is continued at university where the conversation teacher will typically be an NS. Reading skills may be taught to non-English majors if their course has more than one contact period a week. However, the emphasis for NS teachers is firmly on communication skills, which usually means speaking. The result is a 'general dumbing-down of English education' (Rebuck 2006). The question of meaningfulness to the average Japanese learner of NSP textbooks is debatable in this internet age where a higher degree of reading skill practice, that is meaningful reading materials supported by materials that help develop strategy and metacognition skills, is, arguably, more necessary.

One area in which NSP textbooks do excel is in their international content. Butler's study of primary school teachers' goals for English shows that in both 'to stimulate interest in English-speaking cultures' and 'to stimulate interest in world affairs', Japan's perceived needs were higher than those for Korea and Taiwan (Butler 2004). Learners' interest is supported by having Asian protagonists in textbooks, the underlying acculturationist assumption that learners will relate positively to the characters and attempt to mimic their use of language. *Impact Issues* (Day and Yamanaka 1996) has Asian protagonists in over half of the 30 units, and even has same-language people speaking to each other in English in a family setting. *Passport* (Buckingham and Whitney 1995) follows young Asians around the globe on their travels. This trend is not universal. *Synergy 1* (Tennant *et al.*), for example, only uses direct references to Asians a handful of times, but it shows its bias in the graphics. Twenty-one of the 63 photographs feature Asians, and in Unit 2 'Famous Faces', the actor Watanabe Ken is displayed prominently without any need to reference his name. A complimentary argument for the policy of using Asians in critical roles in the textbooks is to overcome what Kubota sees as a 'cultural dichotomy between the East and the West' (1999: 9). Although Kubota offers two options in treating this dichotomy pedagogically, one through aiming at acculturation by 'explicit teaching of the discourse conventions' and the other of 'respecting the cultures that students bring with them and to aim at creating rhetorical pluralism' (10), NSP textbooks typically focus on techniques that develop the former. *Passport* follows a few university-aged Japanese on their travels around the world. Apart from their names and one activity that asks learners to respond to typical questions about Japan by the American host family, there is no culturally based language that would identify the speakers as Japanese. Another of Buckingham's textbooks (*Get Real: Starter* with Craven 2002) uses learners' identities (names, home countries and nationalities) to complete the first three units before completely abandoning any reference to learners' cultures subsequently. Although cultural references are relatively rare, authors have shown sympathy to learners' culture. In *Expressions Book 1* Unit 5, Nunan provides three country-specific examples about what makes a good guest in those countries, and an activity

asks learners to discuss their own culture-specific attitudes to house guests. Helgesen *et al.*'s *Firsthand Access English* (2007) uses different countries' examples, but any language output by learners is neutral. ('Neutral' in Japan means 'American English and conservative American ideals'.) *J-Talk*, an OUP textbook for university-aged Japanese (Lee, Yoshida and Ziolkowski 2000), is designed to address this apparent cultural-less neutrality. Its units ask learners to use their own terms, ('I'm called Yumi-chan'), talk in their own money ('it costs about 80,000 yen') and provides ample space for learners to write in their own responses that become the basis for following activities.

LP textbooks, on the other hand, take the Japanese learner as the starting point for many topic choices. *Basic English Communication for International Understanding* (Akagi *et al.* 2002) devotes the entire second half to topics about Japan. The title of Sawazaki and Shibayama's book, *Alison's Reports on Japan* (2005), is indicative of its contents. Real experience informs the dialogue when Hiromi talks with Jose about her broken expectations of speaking with more native speakers during her study abroad in the USA (Sawasaki and Shibayama 2005). Just under half of the units in *Life and Creation* (Yokoyama *et al.* 2002) use Japan, or Asia, specific topics. Although the sample here is limited in size, the assertion that general LP textbooks utilize topics that are closer and more meaningful to Japanese learners is perhaps accurate. This could be because of the notion that the closer the topic the more comprehensible the input or just because these topics are most available to the authors.

'Hamburger English': a Critical View of NSP Materials

As we stated earlier, NSP conversation textbooks' language begins at a lower level than LP ones, featuring shorter sentence lengths, lexis that is deemed easy or supplied with graphic glosses and unchallenging themes. A typical example is seen in *Synergy 1* (Tennant *et al.* 2006) which was piloted in Japan, Korea and Taiwan. In Unit 6, learners are required to utter 38 clauses whose length ranges between 3 and 15 words (see Table 14.6).

Table 14.6: Bite-sized English: *Synergy*, Unit 6

Clause length by word count								
	Phrases	Mean	Minimum	1st quartile	Median	3rd quartile	Maximum	Range
Synergy, Unit 6	38	6.105	3	4	5	7	15	12

The median word length is 5 and the 3rd quartile is 7. This means that 75 per cent of clauses are 7 words and under, and the majority of clauses are around the five-word length. Other units from this textbook and other textbooks have similar output expectations from learners.

Moteki is critical of what he sees as a continuing trend in English education in Japan, labelling this type of content, 'superficial, conversation-oriented "hamburger English"' (Rebuck 2006). This view, however, does not reflect the official governmental policy. Their plan to cultivate 'Japanese with English abilities' focuses primarily on conversational abilities. Classroom teachers in primary schools place a far greater emphasis on learners' ability to produce greetings and expressions and to understand greetings than do Taiwanese and Korean teachers (Butler 2004). Even at the university level, many students cannot produce a simple greeting, and this bias is found in the textbooks chosen by NS teachers.

Japanese teachers of English (JTE) who tend to use NSP textbooks often have had overseas experience (e.g. study at the Masters level) and, consequently, higher communicative competence in English. This higher ability permits more freedom in the language classroom than purely-Japan trained educators. Some teachers are aware of the role choice of facilitator or controller in the teaching/learning process. The wide range of activities in NSP textbooks allow teachers to choose a role more easily than the controller aspect more common in LP texts. Teachers with overseas experience are often familiar with the use of interaction as a vehicle of language development and utilize pair-work and other activities that promote interaction and cultural understanding. For example, an activity may appear mundane (such as how to give and receive directions), but having perhaps failed in understanding directions once while overseas provides teacher motivation to teach the utility of the activity. Such energy is more likely to be perceived positively by learners than simply working through the activity without any teacher personalization. However, the success of NSP textbooks as used by JTEs is predicated on the overseas experience of JTEs. Conversely, students and teachers with low motivation to acculturate into Inner Circle cultures may feel differently. Many JTEs criticize NSP textbooks because of the sheer volume of activities. Students often expect to start at the beginning and work to the end not skipping any part. This pressure may be a contributing factor that forces JTEs away from using NSP textbooks.

JTEs often parrot from a textbook from beginning to end, giving explanations in L1. Such teacher activities fit better with LP textbooks as they tend to be shorter and contain fewer activities. The textbook holds the paramount place in the language classroom. It is the main focus of language education and is expected to provide a path that enables learners to become competent English users. Learner to textbook or teacher to class are the dominant models of instruction. Even when textbooks give learners an opportunity of working with a partner or as a group, the learners are usually expected to repeat a dialogue given or to apply a rule to given language and to transform it accordingly, in which there is a lack of human to human communication. Teachers' manuals for LP textbooks are more or less the same as 'answer keys' with simple explanations, not a guideline that aids teachers in developing their classroom methodology.

Japanese learners typically follow textbooks according to their teacher's instructions for both NSP and LP textbooks. LP textbooks rarely offer any

opportunities for learner development, strategy training or even recycling of structure or lexis. Reviews are not built in, and although proficiency increases may be assessed in terms of global test scores, LP textbooks rarely offer chances for learners to reflect on their own development. NSP textbooks often attempt to recycle language, build upon previous exchanges and ask learners to consider how they learn, yet how they are used is a teacher matter. One notable exception to this exists; learners might retain their books as reference books outside and after the course for when they travel abroad, have guests from overseas, write e-mails, etc.

Our Evaluation of Materials

If, as Brown and other curriculum theorists suggest, materials development is the second to last stage in a seven-step process, i.e. before the actual teaching, but after needs analysis (Brown 1995), an accurate assessment of educational materials must include a description not only of their immediate pedagogical goals but also of the societal setting in which they appear. An oft-expressed sentiment in Japan is the lack of English ability in the country (Guest 2006). Even the new governmental guidelines explicitly state that the aim of English education in Japan is to 'develop Japanese with communicative abilities'. Yet others have noticed that many Japanese do not actually need English (Aspinall and Cullen 2002). The population of 127 million is amply served by the available English resources: no one is crying out for better and more language experts on the basis of need. Japan produces sufficient numbers of able English users to satisfy the country's needs. Demands for change come from the West and from those Japanese who feel that six years of their lives have been wasted. These points have to be taken into consideration when arguing for change through the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in materials. Materials do not suddenly evolve to fit with the ideas of another set of societies.

Published criteria for analysing textbook materials and learner actions exist. Three have been chosen as their differences demonstrate a changing view of the nature and purpose of pedagogic materials over time. Williams (1983) and Littlejohn (1998) present checklists to evaluate existing materials, and Tomlinson's (2000a) list is designed to promote future learning activities that are based on current models of learner engagement.

Ellis's framework of views on second language acquisition (1994) has two broad categories: cognitive views where language learning is seen as the build up of skills in a similar way to any other learning, and mentalist views that focus on the separate 'black box' language module in the brain. Cognitive-based pedagogic systems dissect language elements and teach, for example, four separate skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, discrete grammar points, specific strategies. Mentalist-based ones assert that language principles (i.e. rules) do not require direct teaching and that language development occurs after appropriate exposure. Subsequently, materials checklists that cover discrete points and separate skills, such as Williams's, who sees language development

appearing after conscious attention to discrete forms, may be characterized as cognitive, those that discuss the environment for learning and downplay language code, as mentalist, such as Tomlinson's: 'The more [neural] connections we achieve, the more we are likely to understand the experience and the more likely we are to retain and gain from the experience' (Tomlinson 2000b). Littlejohn's checklist stands between these two both temporally and theoretically. These three represent a historical movement away from cognitive-based to mentalist-based positions over the past 20 years in the West. Williams clearly separates reading, writing, speaking and grammar whereas Littlejohn unites most of these under the heading 'language system'. His 'mental operation' includes learning and cognitive strategies, indicating a cognitive view of SLA, making it unclear how this checklist is value-free, a 'separation [of the] assumptions about what is desirable from an analysis of the materials' (192)?

NSP texts available in Japan display characteristics of both cognitive and mentalist approaches. The sheer range of colours, photographs and graphics, typeface sizes, fonts and other design and physical aspects (e.g. background page colour, paper thickness) make NSP textbooks visually very entertaining. It is presumed that this entertainment is translated into learner engagement, for visual learners, at least. Their content being internationally centred supports Kubota's acculturation argument. *Get Real: Starter* and *Passport* downplay the role of grammar structures. If structure is mentioned, it is often displayed in a 'help' box. Language item knowledge is developed incidentally during other focus activities. These mentalist texts are in the minority, and cognitive-influenced methods are found in activities more commonly than not. *English Firsthand* takes the unprecedented step of offering 'Think Time' (i.e. individual thinking preparation time before activities) as a deliberate technique to promote cognitive strategy development in learners.

LP textbooks, on the other hand, would 'fail' the latter checklist tests. There has been little movement away from a cognitive view. Educational objectives are virtually always what would seem traditional to many now. Vocabulary memorization, grammar structure completion, translation, listening for gist and so on are the mainstay of most LP textbooks. Williams's criteria may still be applied readily and usefully. Swan made the claim in relation to changing fads and methods in ELT that whatever method is in use 'students, as a rule, learn about as much as before' (1985a: 86). In surveying both NSP and LP texts, we cannot help but agree.

Our Suggestions for Improvements

Since the introduction of the 'Yutori Kyoiku' system (pressure-free education), educational standards are seen to be declining (Rebuck 2006). Yet at the same time a significant number of students are maintaining the high level. This means that internal class levels are expanding, seeing more lower-ability students alongside higher level ones. Even if teachers wish it, streaming learners into appropriately levelled classes is not always possible. With this in mind, we

would like to see more textbooks that cater for more diverse levels within a single contact period. Currently, some textbooks offer a 'bonus' activity for those who finish first. What is needed now are activities that offer an easier route through the existing material. English is a compulsory subject for most university students in Japan irrespective of what they major in. Those less capable learners at tertiary level have often had unsuccessful experiences in learning English in the past and have difficulty in finding a way of dealing with situations on their own and need help. In reality, however, it is difficult to conduct a class, simultaneously giving generous assistance to those learners. At least, it would be helpful if a textbook showed students what to do or gave students advice when learners had difficulty in understanding a particular activity.

The discussion about the pressures resulting in choices in NSP textbooks suggests that streamlined versions that pull out those activities that have definite and immediate learning outcomes would result in more NSP textbooks being adopted by JTEs. Most LP textbooks contain unambiguous follow-up activities to main reading and listening passages and target dialogues. These often come in the form of 'True/False' questions, fill in the missing word listening tasks, vocabulary matching tasks and correct the sentence word order activities. Such follow-ups have precise objectives which are immediately testable by both teacher and student. We call for the production of an NSP work that echoes these but still has the range of international topics, excellent visuals and production quality and a higher degree of authentic textbook-ese. This would create a work that combines the excellence of NSP textbooks with the usability of LP ones (as seen by JTEs). A final item on our wish-list is for pre- and post-tests for NSP textbooks. Many teachers pre-test with a standardized test such as the TOEIC or STEP and end their course with a similar test. Score increases of only a few points may demotivate learners, and norm-referenced testing runs the risk of reducing the value of course-internal properties that depart from the course-end test.

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Chapter 15

ELT Materials Used in Southeast Asia

Bao Dat

This chapter is built upon nearly two decades of personal experience of a scholar who enjoys visiting and working with a number of educational institutes connected with language education in Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Laos, Malaysia and the Philippines. To take account of other countries in the region in my discussion, I also give attention to the less mainstream literature written by local researchers on materials issues in their own contexts, as well as interviews with 42 English teachers, policy makers and administrators in Southeast Asian countries. I hope to be able to provide a revealing synopsis of which English textbooks are currently in use, how productively they have worked, how teachers and learners live with them, as well as what needs to be modified to enhance their learning value and impact.

Overview

In their discussions of recent ELT developments in Asia, researchers such as Yin Mee (1996), Kam (2004) and Soon Fen (2005) document a number of sterling efforts in the region towards upgrading the quality of English material, based on the belief that growth in English literacy plays an essential role in every country's economic orientation to the global community. In Brunei Darussalam, large-scale English language projects begun since 1989 have led to a series of modifications in English textbooks. In Cambodia since 1990, new textbooks have been developed in combination with intensive re-training of English teachers. In Laos, since 1997 there have been suggestions to make English the official second language (Kam 2004). In Indonesia, the Ministry of National Education has put more emphasis on competency-based English since 2003 (Novita and Putri 2005). In Myanmar, where English has been a compulsory subject since 1981, the 2001–2002 state policy gives English greater weighting in its 30-year education plan. In Singapore, the new English language curriculum created in 2001 puts more emphasis on the multiple effects of language use. In Thailand, the National Education Act in 1997 appeals for language education to advance towards a more learner-centred mode. In Vietnam, the Ministry of Education and Training obtained finance from US companies to produce a programme known as *English for Vietnam.* It was completed in March 2006 with educational animated TV series being broadcast nationwide.

Such developments, however, do not mean that language education in Southeast Asia is advancing towards the Western communicative approach but rather that decisions on how to teach and learn are made in consideration of each country's educational, economic and social factors (Komin 1998). For example, Singaporean teachers have recently taken on more overt grammar instruction than was indicated in the 1991 Curriculum as a result of the text-type approach in which the increase of text types being taught leads to the increase of relevant rhetoric structures. Filipino teachers have opted for an eclectic approach blending Western communicative principles with more long-established techniques of conversation modelling, form-focused grammar instruction and the lecturing mode. Thai universities' research projects continue to deal with comparative linguistic matters as a way of seeking further implications in grammar instruction. Such efforts rest on the understanding that English materials and methods are a sub-society which reflects the values, beliefs and economic realities of the country to which they belong (Baker 2003; Buripakdi and Mahakhan 1980). This view of English coincides with findings from Katrin's survey in 2003 on what the English language means in today's Southeast Asian context. When 240 respondents in the Philippines were asked what culture English belongs to, 93.8 per cent felt that English was an international language, 7.5 per cent assumed that it was an Asian language, 12 per cent said that it was owned by the Philippines and, surprisingly, no one indicated that it belonged to Britain or the USA. These findings raise the question of cultural ownership of English and bear implications for a more culturally sensitive curriculum. Saravanan (1995) believes that if children are taught to behave in ways that are consistent with the goals, aspirations and cultural mores of their communities, not only will they make meaningful contributions to society but they are also able to consolidate their self-esteem and cultural identity.

It is out of the above ideology that local coursebooks have been created to help each country trail its own path of effective learning. Many states find it imperative to finance the development of national materials to assist their population in learning English while maintaining the national identity. In the meantime, global courses continue to be imported and distributed widely throughout the region, which makes it difficult for the local textbooks to compete and survive. In this atmosphere of competition, the choice of which material to use is governed by such factors as state ideologies, parents' choice and learners' and teachers' preferences, as well as the affordability and availability of the materials themselves. All of these elements characterize the nature of English language materials in Southeast Asia and create a relationship between domestic and foreign texts in which one type of materials displays its strengths and weaknesses in comparison with the others.

Characteristics of Materials in Use in Southeast Asia

English materials currently in use in the ASEAN member countries are seen to fall into three main categories:

- imported coursebooks
- in-country coursebooks
- regional coursebooks.

In this discussion I shall provide a picture of the salient features of these material types by stating which publishers produce each of them, what kinds of institutes use them, as well the advantageous and disadvantageous nature of these books in relation to their particular contexts of use.

Imported coursebooks

'Imported coursebooks' and 'foreign coursebooks' are common terms used among millions of teachers and learners in Southeast Asia to refer to what elsewhere is known as 'global coursebooks'. They are introduced and distributed in Southeast Asia even if they are not written for this particularly market. When a free-size shirt is designed for everyone, it has the potential to suit some and is likely to be rejected by others. This is exactly how imported coursebooks operate in the region: they contain both helpful and unhelpful instructional ingredients. Being produced in English-speaking countries by publishers such as Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, Longman, Heinemann, Heinle & Heinle and Thomas Nelson & Sons, these texts flood the materials markets to an incredible extent. My collective interviews with a number of teachers in Vietnam show that they could spontaneously list 37 titles from Oxford and Cambridge publishers alone. This incident makes a strong statement about the dominant role of imported materials in many local teachers' lives. Findings from a recent study by Zachzrias (2005) on teacher beliefs also indicate that a large number of tertiary teachers in Indonesia prefer international materials to locally published materials for reasons related to trust in the accuracy of English use. By and large, teachers in Southeast Asia believe that imported materials possess strengths that local courses cannot provide:

- Their abundant visuals stimulate students' curiosity to learn – although some of my teacher interviewees also remark that an excessive amount of flashy illustrations also distracts learning as they make students spend time amusing themselves with the pictures rather than trying to learn English.
- Many teachers I interviewed feel that imported courses seems more systematic than domestic textbooks in that form-focused tasks are often connected with communicative activities and workbook exercises are related to language taught in students' books.
- They are good at promoting independent learning, thanks to the support given by workbooks with answer keys and tests with answer sheets.
- They assist teachers with resource banks and teacher manuals with pedagogical tips on how to conduct activities, what to emphasize and how to answer many questions.
- Linguistic accuracy is almost always guaranteed, compared to local textbooks that occasionally contain basic errors in grammar and spelling.
- Texts are interesting, vary in genres and cover a wide range of topics. They

also contain humour to entertain learners, reduce their stress and make the learning experience memorable.

Despite the above qualities, imported courses have certain weaknesses:

- Instructions on how to carry out classroom activities are not always easy for learners at a variety of English proficiency levels to understand. Many teachers want to see rubrics written in their students' mother tongue as they should not be part of the learning challenge.
- The courses are occasionally inaccurate in presenting cultural information and images about many cultures beyond the Anglo-Saxon and European world. Sometimes pictures of Chinese weddings are fake and do not reflect Chinese customs (*Opportunities Pre-intermediate*, p. 37). Besides, the introduction of other cultures only serves as a pretext for Europeans to view the rest of world as exotic and talk about it from a Western perspective. For example, *Wavelength Elementary* (pp. 47 and 82) presents a series of postcards from Peru, Kenya and Mexico and asks learners to make statements about what Westerners tourists would do during their holiday – rather than discussing the life and culture in the postcards.
- Learners have little opportunity to be themselves and express their identity as the content is rarely related to their life in meaningful, understandable ways. Verbal interactions often take place in English-speaking country settings, as if English only served communication in the countries of native speakers.
- Imported textbooks are priced above what many parents can afford to purchase for their children.
- While putting emphasis on communicative use of English, such publications tend to stay disconnected with the local examination system and this has generated anxiety among parents who want their children to cope successfully with the national education requirements.

In-country coursebooks

'In-country coursebooks' or 'domestic coursebooks' are expressions used among numerous teachers and students in the region to refer to what is known elsewhere as 'local coursebooks'. They cater for the educational objectives of individual schools or alternatively they follow the national curriculum. To meet the educational guideline requirements, each ASEAN country has its own publishers, such as Preston and Pelangi in Malaysia; Armico and Penerbit Erlangga in Indonesia; Kurusart Lardprow in Thailand; Giao Duc Publishing House in Vietnam; Phoenix, Vibal, IEMI and the Department of Education in the Philippines. In most of these countries the Ministry of Education lists the content to be covered and the related institutes or local publishers then create the books in accordance with these instructions. Developers of domestic textbooks range from local to foreign writers and, less frequently, a collaboration between the two. Generally speaking, the materials produced in Southeast Asia demonstrate the following strengths:

- They have a voice that promotes the national identities, religions and political viewpoints. Their texts cover a wide range of local cultural elements, such as traditional games, cultural celebrations and everyday scenes of night markets or hawker stalls.
- The characters in the books are recognizable to the learners in terms of who they are and what they do. In Malaysian textbooks, they take on local occupations such as hawkers, rubber-tappers and padi-farmers. In Vietnamese textbooks, they take part in the economic normalization with their former enemy the United States. In Philippine textbooks, they exist as heroes to demonstrate folklores about the country's civilization. In Singapore, they speak English with vocabulary from the local dialects. In Indonesian textbooks, they have their own proper names, use local products, reside in customary housing and visit their neighboring landmarks.
- Many texts reflect the learners' sociocultural behaviour, values, beliefs and familiar experiences. A tired boy would take some sleep under a tree on the way home to his village, a girl going to the wet market to buy food for her mother would swing by at a fortune teller's to consult him about her future concerns, school children before their teacher arrives would have fun by climbing out of the classroom window. Such familiarity enables the learners to discuss problems and events in their life, whereas they could not discuss with equal ease foreign subject matters such as skateboarding, horse-riding, baseball games, gender debate and child–parent disagreement, which are often seen in imported textbooks.
- Their sensible practicality also lies in the convenient connection between the materials and the local educational network – by following the local didactic ideology and examination system, by giving instructions in the learner's mother tongue to ensure understanding in how to perform tasks and exercises and by offering friendly prices even for low-income students in remote areas.

Despite all this, in-country coursebooks have the following weaknesses:

- Suffering from limited financial support and poor market sales, these courses lack the attractive design that imported books enjoy and thus do not look appealing to the learners.
- As many texts are translated from the mother tongue to English to make the content accord with the Ministry of Education's requirements, the translation is not always properly handled and occasionally results in linguistic inaccuracy, unintended effect and vague content. These oversights bother many teachers and take away their confidence in the value of the materials.
- Containing many relevant cultural topics, the materials may be useful for content-based courses but are less ideal for skill-based courses as they often lack scaffolding towards the verbal skills development one would expect of many communicative activities. Many of my teacher interviewees admit that textbooks in their countries tend to put excessive emphasis on reading comprehension while neglecting appropriateness and fluency of

language in use. In Vietnam, innovation towards striking a better balance between content-based and skill-based modes has caused materials developers to mess up the system. With financial aid from the USA, the writers have created a new course known as BAVE. However, the communicative components of the course not only exceed the time allocation regulated by the Ministry but also make life difficult for students who wish to pass national exams where they are not tested on verbal abilities. The project puts the teachers and their students under the three sources of pressures which are not easy to compromise: the need for an enhanced communicative learning mode, the need to follow the national examination structure and the need to conform with the time allocation in the state curriculum.
- Some courses introduce an excessive amount of new vocabulary and syntactic structures which demand intense memorization. They are coupled with many uninteresting, tedious exercises which entail cognitive processing without affective engagement. Such components put a burden on the learner and take away the energy that could be invested in more meaningful communication.
- An overdose of local-culture ingredients can easily damage learner curiosity and the novelty effect of many subject matters. In many cases the cultural content seems too familiar and predictable to be interesting to the learners and thus offers little challenge to their creative mind. Some writers pay attention to common cultural practice, settings and occupations in local contexts while ignoring less usual but more fascinating features about the local life.

Regional coursebooks

These courses form a unique category of materials, which are written by nonnative speakers in one country but are exported to and become accepted in several other countries. For example, many textbooks from Singapore have been popularized among schools in Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. Regional coursebooks are developed by a small number of affluent publishers based in several Southeast Asian countries such as System Publishing, Casco, Learners Publishing, Educational Publishing House, Singapore Asian Publications and Hillview Publications. These texts share a number of strengths with in-country courses but also have two additional advantages:

- They have an efficient distribution network that understands how to enhance product affordability and work effectively with local distributors.
- Thanks to good market sales in different countries they enjoy better financial investment and design their books to be attractive and sellable.

Regional courses, apart from sharing similar weaknesses with in-country texts also suffer two main disadvantages:

- They reflect the reality that the English proficiency levels of students in the countries are not the same. One Thai scholar I interviewed feels that

Thai students who use textbooks from Singapore would find it hard to cope with the challenges in them and would not get the most out of what the learning objectives should be. Teachers and scholars in Malaysia also complain that the decision to supply the same textbook to different localities results in serious disregard of the learners' linguistic backgrounds and levels of attainment, which leads to frustration and de-motivation in learning.

- The question of what culture to include in the texts also poses a problem. Sometimes because a textbook has become successful in one school, it is considered for use in other schools without considering their community culture. For instance, Thai students who use books imported from Malaysia sometimes find it confusing to have to discuss rural lifestyles in Malaysia which are dissimilar to those in Thailand.

Compared to primary, secondary and high schools, tertiary institutes and vocational schools seem to have more autonomy in text selection. In many universities, the use of global texts is preferred over locally written texts due to wide options of choices, comparative perspectives, supplementary manuals, appealing topics and the mental challenge found in imported materials. Some university programmes even compile and self-publish their own course by pulling out chapters and portions from various imported textbooks. Although this is done out of good intentions to save time and smooth out the progress of students' multiple reading needs, such practice often takes place without much awareness of copyright. Generally speaking, it is not uncommon for many learners to use a domestic or regional textbook at school or college during the day and an imported textbook at a private school in the evening.

There remains a major divide in the region in terms of what proportion of in-country and imported textbooks is found in each country. According to estimations made by my teacher interviewees, in countries such as Singapore and the Philippines where English is the official language of communication, locally produced textbooks take up 60 to 80 per cent of all English materials; whereas in other countries where the everyday exposure to communicative English is less common, a significant 70 to 90 per cent of the teaching material consists of textbooks imported from overseas. The popularity of imported textbooks over local textbooks can be explained by the fact that in some countries, foreign coursebooks have been reprinted and distributed by a locally based publisher in order to put the book within the financial reach of the learners.

How Materials are Typically Used

Teachers' perception and application of textbooks

Regional studies related to teacher perception of ELT materials show the overall tendency to welcome textbooks which are flexible enough for painless adaptation and which include pedagogical support. In a study of 100 Javanese teachers' beliefs about materials in use, Zacharias (2003) learns that 67 per cent of

the respondents prefer materials published in English-speaking countries, 7 per cent welcome locally produced materials, 17 per cent go for a combination of both sources and 9 per cent express no particular preferences. In explaining their support for imported texts, the respondents mention teacher manuals, a component absent from many Indonesian textbooks, which makes the teachers increase their workload if they wish to make an adaptation.

Most teachers refuse to adopt but tend to adapt the materials to suit their own inclination and their adapting skills vary a great deal depending on individual experiences, training backgrounds and L2 competences. A large number of teachers in Southeast Asia suffer the notorious reputation of being incompetent language users and pedagogically unskilled teachers. Tickoo (1991) reports a series of studies conducted in rural schools of a third-world country where it was found that teachers often provide poor models of English to their students. As a result, many Southeast Asian students proceed to college with poor communication skills in English and fail to cope with the demanding level of English used in universities.

Despite this, many teachers prove to be highly innovative and resourceful course developers. In a study on 180 teachers in Thailand, Kajanaphoomin (2004) learns that most teachers do bring supplementary materials into their classrooms, especially local magazines, so as to raise their students' awareness of up-to-date local events and idiomatic use of language within their daily needs. In some classrooms at Assumption University, Bangkok the teachers not only invite learner response to creative texts such as short stories, poems, local magazines and personal diaries, but also arrange for their students to write novels, publish fiction, construct drama scripts, make feature films and recite poetry in public events – some of these activities would be hard to find even in some of the best global textbooks. Without much training in the communicative tradition, these innovators have stimulated their students' desire to learn. They are valuable resources that materials publishers should seek out, provide further academic training for and turn into materials writers or consultants for their own countries.

Learners' perception and application of textbooks

A number of research studies in the region point to learner preferences for flexible materials which leave room for the learners to discuss issues which are related to their immediate concerns and are compatible with their cultural values. In an investigation into learner beliefs conducted by Klipbua (2002) at Assumption University in Bangkok, 100 Thai students are asked to identify the most important factor between the teacher, the learner, parents and the material in their English learning success. Sixty-four per cent of the respondents choose 'the learner' as the most influential factor of all, while 26 per cent mention 'the teacher'. Only 8 per cent say 'the material' and less than 2 per cent say 'parents'. Klipbua takes the striking difference in learner preference of teachers over materials to suggest that it is the teacher who should be in control of the material and not the other way round; and that materials should be flexible enough for teachers to adapt them in ways that would suit their students. Unfortunately, many global materials leave little room for such flexibility.

Research on teacher beliefs conducted by Zacharias (2003) underlines the difficult relationship between teachers and coursebooks when many Indonesian teachers confess that they have difficulty understanding the cultural content of imported materials.

In another study of the favourite learning styles among 100 Thai students of non-major English at Assumption University in Bangkok, Choengsaksri (2003) discovers that the most desired activity type (among 75 respondents) for verbal skills is free-styled discussion in small groups in which students feel liberated from the strain of a heavily controlled classroom. Twenty-two students in this study state that the task type they like the least is 'debates' in which they are asked to articulate their own view and publicly confront the views of their classmates, something not encouraged in Thai culture where an agreeable, harmonious exchange of ideas is the key to building trust and interpersonal relationships. This is a culture-specific learning behavior that it is hard to imagine how global textbook writers would deal with in order to propose a more appropriate style of communicative tasks.

Evaluation of Nine Textbooks from Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam

This section highlights some of the most revealing features of nine textbook titles currently in use throughout Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam. What these materials have in common is that they are all written by local writers in each country, are produced by local publishers and are commonly used textbooks in their own contexts. Despite being low-budget productions they make every effort to cater for local students' needs while having to compete with the abundance and the attraction of imported texts. By selecting to look at courses of such shared features, I hope that the strengths and weaknesses discovered in the books are likely to exhibit typical tendencies of materials across many other educational settings around Southeast Asia. The books which I have examined include four titles from Indonesia (*Improve Yourself, Communicative and Interactive English, Headlight* and *New Concept English*); four titles from Thailand (*English, Exploring Reading and Writing, Concentrate of Critical Reading* and *Focus on One Word*); and one title from Vietnam (*English 7, English 11* and *English 12*).

Positive features

Cultural knowledge and national identity

The vigour of the courses lies in their topic content connected with the learner's knowledge and cultural background, such as getting around in Indonesia and Thailand (*English 1, Exploring Reading and Writing, New Concept English*). The question of national identity is promoted through accounts of daily values, such as the willingness to obey senior family members (*New Concept English*), traditional music (*Communicative and Interactive English*) and local celebrities (*Exploring Reading and Writing*). These tendencies, however, are not extreme but many courses also pay attention to the cultures of the English-speaking

world such as the UK and the USA (*Improve Yourself, Interactive English, Focus on One Word*), travel around Europe (*Focus on One Word*) and life in other countries such as Korea, Brazil and Saudi Arabia (*Communicative and Interactive English*), as well as cultural icons and events around the world (*Exploring Reading and Writing, Headlight*).

Awareness of regional events

Many writers are attentive to current social phenomena and problems in the region which provoke thoughts and reflect what Harrison (1990: 1) considers as the 'variety and essence' of the peoples. Such subject matters include poverty-related issues (*Concentrate of Critical Reading*), the changing roles of men and women (*Concentrate of Critical Reading, Communicative and Interactive English*), Western vs. Asian educational values (*Communicative and Interactive English*), harmony and economic achievements (*Improve Yourself, English 12*), the controversial relationship between race and intelligence (*Concentrate of Critical Reading*). Two courses, *English 7* and *Concentrate of Critical Reading*, show special interest in building unity among the ASEAN nations by learning about the culture and lifestyle of others.

Awareness of the need for global integration

Krasnick (1995) anticipates that by the year 2020 English will take on a greater role in bridging the separation of language and culture in Southeast Asia. Along these lines, most courses also articulate the ideology that English will serve as an instrument for technological exchange and integration into the global expertise and economy. Many texts discuss the ways in which the creative use of technology can assist medical science, communication and social advancement (*Improve Yourself, Exploring Reading and Writing*), as well as helping to resolve such problems as heavy population and social violence and thus contribute to world peace. Besides, such desire for globalization is also evident in ways in which the front cover is designed to attract coursebook users. With the exception of *Concentrate of Critical Reading* which shows its title only on a plain background, the external designs of most other textbooks use visual metaphors. Some of them represent the modern looks of urban advancement or symbols of information technology. Other covers show a collage of multiple images blending local icons, such as Indonesian ethnic groups and landscapes, with more international constructions such as the harbour view of Sydney and the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Such visual representations seem to exhibit the concepts of 'modernity', 'complexity' and 'interaction'.

The mother tongue as a pedagogical tool

The use of the mother tongue plays an essential part in guiding the learners through tasks and promoting the development of translation skills, an indispensable ability in the real world. It aids the teachers and learners in translation practice (*English 11*), grammar instruction (*Focus on One Word*) and pedagogical guidance (*Concentrate of Critical Reading*). It also enters texts in the form of local concepts, such as the livelihood 'saleng' in Thai (*Concentrate of Critical Reading*) or the

Indonesian transport 'patas' (*New Concept English*) which do not exist in Western societies. Generally, the intelligent use of L1 not only supports learners of English in a pedagogical sense but also empowers them in a political way. The monolingual approach has long represented power relations since the colonial period as it denotes the British neo-colonial control (Philipson 1992) and the American political influence (Baron 1990). Together with other outdated concepts such as 'standard English', 'ESL' and 'EFL', the notion 'monolingualism' needs to be questioned because, in Philipson's view (1992: 189), excluding a child's mother tongue in language learning is to reject her 'most intense existential experience'. In a study by Manara (2004) on the perception of 50 university teachers and 300 students on the use of Bahasa Indonesia in the English classroom, the majority of the respondents express interest in the use of the mother tongue as a way to examine the social distance between L1 and L2, check comprehension, provide feedback, direct complex activities, explain abstract concepts and clarify problematic grammatical structures. These findings allow Manara to judge the controlled use of the mother tongue as a bridging tool towards linguistic attainment. One caution against the applicability of L1, however, is that soaking instruction in the mother tongue could deprive the learners of valuable opportunities for language to be recycled and become salient enough to facilitate L2 acquisition.

Opportunities of analytical thinking

A number of texts take on many unconventional, thought-provoking topics such as inviting the learners to leave the classroom and join a boat on the river to make full use of their multi-sensory system (*Exploring Reading and Writing*), putting Western icons into traditional temples to expand the concept of worship (*English 11*), discussing the most effective farming method (*Improve Yourself*), questioning the number of political parties in the country (again, *Improve Yourself*). Such critical discussion, however, is fairly uncommon in most courses except the three titles mentioned here.

Drawbacks

Uncommunicative use of English

The most noticeable drawback of most courses has to do with their heavily form-focused nature. Many controversial readings which could inspire divergent thinking are, sadly, followed by tasks eliciting universal knowledge rather than inviting critical judgement. Most of the time, the learners are not provided with sufficient opportunities to make discoveries about how English is used. Courses such as *Focus on One Word* and *Exploring Reading and Writing* put too much emphasis on the teaching of syntax and lexis without putting them in any communicative context. In *Improve Yourself*, although there is an introductory task which begins every lesson to encourage a verbal discussion, the learners are not provided with the relevant vocabulary to take part in it.

Inauthentic use of English

The exposure to English in use is far from authentic as many tasks for developing speaking skills often lack a real communicative purpose. Occasionally people

from the same country who speak the same mother tongue find themselves communicating with one another in English without any clear reason to do so. For example, in *Communicative and Interactive English*, Unit 5, Indonesian university students use English to get directions on campus to obtain library cards and rent hotel rooms in their home country – all of which is normally seen to take place in Bahasa Indonesia in most real-life contexts. Besides, the courses occasionally contain inaccurate expressions. One character in *Headlight Book 2*, Unit 5 says to someone: 'I don't think you should *make your room in mess*' to mean 'I don't think you should *make a mess in your room*'.

Poor development of writing skills
In many courses the learners are often asked to construct sentences or short paragraphs and there is no scaffolding to guide them through completing the task on their own. Even within paragraph construction, the learners only need to answer a set of questions to automatically form a paragraph. Besides, many writing activities (such as in *Improve Yourself*) have no clear social function as the learners do not know why they are writing or who they are writing for.

Lack of consistency in appearance, content and method
Typical of many textbooks produced in the region is the poor uniformity in lesson design, learning opportunities and levels of challenge to the learners. Some units in the same course are much better written than others; questions in one chapter may be much more interesting than those in other chapters. Some activities guide the learners through reflecting on their own experiences, while such inspiration is missing from many other units. One volume in *Focus on One Word* deals mostly with the local culture while another volume discusses only foreign cultures. Even the appearance of some courses can be quite random and unpredictable. For example, in *Headlight Book 1*, the first quarter of the book is printed in attractive colours; then all of a sudden the rest of it turns into a dull scheme of black and white for no apparent reason. In addition, inconsistency also occurs in state policy and the reality of authentic language use. Pillay and North (1997) point out the conflict between the topic-based syllabus and the grammar-based examination, which leaves teachers in a dilemma over what to teach. Sometimes there remains contradiction within the state policy itself. For example, the curriculum guideline of the Malaysian Ministry of Education (1987: 8) advocates that grammar should be instructed 'in context and in a meaningful way' and not 'in isolation or as discrete items'. However, the revised guideline by the Ministry of Education 1989: 4) states that 'grammar items can also be taught in isolation if teachers feel it necessary to do so'. A third version by the Ministry of Education (1990: 5) then advises teachers to 'stimulate students to think and question through the use of challenging and thought provoking stimuli and meaningful activities'.

Little opportunity for recycling of language
Feedback on effective use of English is fairly restricted. Although a fair amount of exercises are provided for the learners to practise the new language within

every lesson, they often overlook the need for recycling the language being taught.

Poor affective engagement
While the reading texts are generally written in good English, many of them tend to discuss universal knowledge about the topic rather than unique information or debatable ideas to provoke the learners' affective responses. In fact, a large proportion of texts are rather boring to read and the activities accompanying them do not seem to engage the learners affectively. One typical example can be found in *English 1*, Unit 6, which provides the learners with a reading about Thai geography without any new ideas to generate an interesting discussion.

Recommendations for Improvements in Future Materials

Most of the 42 teacher interviewees express the common concern that the majority of textbooks in Southeast Asia leave a lot to be desired. The respondents unanimously voice the opinion that the development of local materials has been impulsive rather than professional, as many writers have not invested sufficient preparation, time, effort, training, research and resources; neither have they obtained adequate funding and expert collaboration. In particular, the following suggestions are made towards the upgrading of future materials:

- Reasonable finance should be generated so that the textbooks could enjoy more attractive design and better durability.
- To increase pedagogical flexibility, there should be more support for local adaptation in the form of teacher manuals, especially for teachers with limited background in pedagogical training. There should also be built-in tips for teachers on how to maximize the potential and options of various task types.
- A professional network should be established among local materials developers, publishers and policy makers in the region to promote scholarly interaction in materials development and avoid academic isolation. Such a network might operate in the form of seminars, conferences, joint-workshops, academic journals, web sites, guest speakers, joint-research and materials development organizations – all of which need to have a regional focus.
- To gain trust among material users, writers should ensure linguistic accuracy throughout the course and expose the learners to the most natural and appropriate language possible.
- There should be more consistency in the quality of appearance, texts, activities, authentic use of language, levels of challenge and learning opportunities.
- Materials need to guide the learners through the development of communicative skills in context rather than dwelling expansively on grammatical forms, reading comprehension and factual knowledge, as many courses

presently do. In a word, writers should consider striking a better balance between content-based and skill-based instruction unless the course has a clear purpose for promoting only one of these syllabus types.

- Both the text and the activity accompanying it should be interesting enough to arouse learner curiosity to study and engage the learners in affective rather than merely cognitive ways.
- Writers should be more aware of opportunities for language items to be recycled sufficiently throughout the course to facilitate L2 acquisition.
- The amount of new language in every unit should be manageable to the learner's mind rather than exhausting it. Instead of listing too many words and structures, each unit should select a smaller number of them but show the learners how those language items are used in some meaningful context.
- Writers should achieve a more balanced view of the world. Some course-books dwell excessively on the local culture and overlook the reality that the learners' knowledge of the world is partially shaped by the constant exposure to the international media. Since they, in Suppiah's (1993: 51) words, spontaneously 'carve out certain aspects of the English culture and fit them into their cultural framework', the learners need the opportunity to discuss foreign values as much as they need to discuss traditional values. Unfortunately, some local writers tend to view their culture from an insider perspective and fail to make the external connection in order to achieve more comparative perspectives. In many cases, the writer's view of the world can play a role in deciding whether the learners are exposed to superficial engagement or in-depth discussion (Yin Mee 1996). Ideally, course materials should allow the learners to see both the world they recognize and the world beyond their regular experiences. The former should not be too familiar but contain some new information to challenge their thinking ability; the latter should not be too deviating but contain activities to assist the learners in making their own sense.

Concluding Remarks

In this discussion, by highlighting some advantages and disadvantages of materials in use in Southeast Asia, I would like to appeal for more interaction and investment among course developers in the region. The teachers who express their opinions for this research study feel that their countries seriously lack professional course developers and that there has not been adequate training in materials development. Some point out that the present curriculum requires too much to be accomplished within a unit and that their students want a more manageable and realistic learning goal. They also believe that local texts need tremendous improvement in which grammar is not taught in isolation from real world use but is closely linked to it; and that students need to see evidence of how the knowledge and skills they learn can operate in the real world.

Many teachers in this study dream about a more democratic world of materials ownership in which the curriculum becomes decentralized enough to allow

for the diversity of levels, contextually relevant content, teachers' choice of what materials to use, as well as direct connection between language functions and the communicative needs of local communities. At the present moment this 'free market' ideology seems hard to translate into reality since most states continue to exercise control over a standardized examination system. Despite all this, the teachers in this study disagree markedly over of the need to cater for the learners' various attainment levels. Some believe that textbooks need standardization so that students in various localities in the country could benefit from the same standard of education. For example, the requirement for English in public schools should not be different from private schools. Other educators, in contrast, suggest that there should be multiple versions of texts to serve differing levels and needs. Putting these views together, I believe that there should be a forum for SEA scholars and policy makers to sit down and discuss future options and possibilities in terms of who really needs what.

Materials writers who have experience with the mainstream contexts of Western classrooms might want to consider the challenge of developing textbooks for Southeast Asia, taking such opportunities to add a new dimension to their academic expertise. Coming from a US educational background, Gorsuch (2005) describes how his participation in designing a course with local Vietnamese teachers has opened in him the willingness to step outside of his Western-based ELT training in linguistics in order to rethink his assumptions about learning and applying his array of methodologies to the local setting. Such experiences raise the awareness that mainstream knowledge needs to be linked with the understanding of local contexts in which they are to apply this knowledge (Adamson 2005; Ferguson and Donno 2003). Eventually, materials in Asia need to expose learners to language in use in many different types of interactions and with different types of speakers (Tomlinson 2005). In a discussion on the mismatch between instructional and learning strategies, Biggs (1994) warns the world of the wholesale import of Western methodologies and assumptions about learner beliefs and attitudes into Asian settings. Razali (1992) emphasizes that in prescribing a method or a textbook, one must first consider all the constraints of the classroom setting for which the prescription is intended. Kachru (1994: 241) further suggests that 'approaches to the teaching of English developed in the Western contexts cannot be accepted without question for the non-Western context'.

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Chapter 16

The Textbook, the Teacher and the Learner: A Middle East Perspective

Nahla Bacha, Irma-Kaarina Ghosn and Neil McBeath

Introduction

In the Middle East, English language teaching is widespread, with English being taught at all levels of schooling, as well as in technical schools, universities and language centres. The demand for Western-style education has been steadily increasing in the region during the past decade or so, and private schools that teach British or American curricula, or their equivalents, are very popular. In Lebanon, traditionally a francophone bastion, English now serves as the vehicular language in over 40 per cent of the schools and the Ministry of Education Annual Statistics of 2004 show that the others teach it as a subject. Over a dozen universities, several of which have been established in the past ten years, are English-medium institutions. In Kuwait, the number of non-Arabic K-12 schools has increased from 15 to over 40 within the past ten years ('Education in Kuwait'), the majority of them being English-medium schools. In Egypt, government Experimental Language schools teach the official government-set curriculum in English, as do numerous private schools (IES 2006). Technical institutes and language centres offer general language courses as well as special purpose courses ranging from business and banking English to English needed by pilots, air traffic controllers and military personnel. A rich array of course materials are in use in all these programmes. In this chapter, we discuss the prevailing primary school materials and locally developed secondary school materials, and we compare two highly specialized ESP courses for military purposes.

Materials Used in Primary Schools

In many Arab countries, two distinct school curricula exist; the curriculum followed by government (public) schools and the curricula followed by private schools. While in Syria, Oman and Lebanon, government schools introduce English in Grade 1 and in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia in Grade 4, private schools usually begin English instruction in the kindergarten. An increasing number of private schools teach at least part of the general curriculum subjects in English. (See Table 16.1 on following page.)

Table 16.1: Primary School English Language Materials in Select Arab Countries

Country	Onset of ELT	Textbooks
Dubai (UAE)	KG (private schools)	American basal readers
	4 (public schools)	Global ESL courses
Bahrain	Grade 4 (public schools) (earlier in experimental schools)	Global ELT courses
Saudi Arabia	Grade 4 (public schools)	?
Lebanon	KG (private schools)*	Global ESL courses
		American basal readers
	KG – 1 (public schools)*	Locally developed national textbooks
Syria	Grade 1	Global ESL courses
Kuwait	KG (private schools)	American basal readers
	4 (public schools)	Specially tailored courses by an international publisher

* English as a first foreign language

A variety of locally developed and imported language teaching courses are on the market. Typical global coursebooks include Pearson Education's *New Parade* (Herrera *et al.* 2000), *Backpack* (Herrera *et al.* 2005) and *Hip, Hip Hooray!* (Eisele *et al.* 2004). While some of these courses incorporate simplified stories and integrate academic subject matter, they follow the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach, with plenty of oral language practice through dialogues, role play and other similar activities. There is generally little emphasis on development of specific reading or writing skills.

Private schools using English in the general curriculum generally adopt American reading anthologies (hereafter 'native speaker readers – NSR'). Although these books are not intended for second language teaching, examples of this practice is spreading in Kuwait, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates, amongst others. Yet, the great majority (in some cases all) of the learners in these countries are native speakers of Arabic learning English as a foreign language. The main goal is language learning for academic purposes.

NSRs are, obviously, focused on development of literacy and reading strategies rather than on aural/oral communicative skills or vocabulary learning; upon entering school children already know how to communicate in their mother tongue and have vocabularies of several thousand words. Today's NSRs are almost entirely literature-based anthologies (Hiebert 1999), adopting an integrated approach to teaching all the language arts, with many also

incorporating support for second language learners and other at-risk readers. Scholastic's *The Literacy Place*, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill's *Spotlight on Literacy* and Harcourt School Publishers' *Harcourt Trophies* are some of the popular series. The main goal is language learning for academic purposes. (See Figure 16.1.)

Locally developed materials are characterized by inclusion of local content and familiar settings. Lessons often feature children with Arabic names, dressed in the prevailing local style, and going about activities familiar in the given country. Most follow CLT methodology. Exceptions to the CLT trend are the English as the First Foreign Language National Textbooks in Lebanon, *Let's Learn Together* for Grades 1–3 (Ghaleb *et al.* 1998; Ghannaj Khoury *et al.* 1999; 2000) and *English in Progress* for Grades 4–6 (Van Loan *et al.* 1998; Ghosn *et al.* 1999, 2000), which adopt a text-heavy, reading-focused approach. (See Figure 16.1.)

Textbook in control

The hierarchical culture of the region exerts its influence on the classroom, with the teacher generally perceived as an 'authoritarian figure with the right

The Family

WARM UP

1. Which of your two parents do you feel is closer to you: your father or your mother? Why do you feel so?
2. Suppose you were about to start your own family. Would you conduct your family affairs the way your parents do? Why or why not?
3. What do you think it is that keeps a family from falling apart? Explain.

PRE-READING

Lewis caser, the writer of the following selection, classifies families into a number of categories. Can you figure out what family types he is going the bring to light? What does each mean to you?

READING

The Family

1 Following the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, we can define the family as a group manifesting these characteristics: it finds its origin in marriage; it consists of husband, wife, and children born in their *wedlock* - though other relatives may find their place close to that *nuclear group*; and the members of the group are united by moral, legal, economic, religious, and social rights and obligations. These include a network of sexual rights and prohibitions and a variety of socially *patterned* feelings such as love, attraction, *piety*, awe, and so on.

2 The family is among the few universal *institutions* of mankind. No known society lacks small *kinship* groups of parents and children related through the process of reproduction. But *recognition* of the universality of this institution must immediately be followed by the acknowledgement that its forms are exceedingly varied. The fact that many family organizations are not monogamic, as in the West, led many nineteenth-century observers to the erroneous conclusion that in "early" stages of evolution there existed no families, and that "group marriage," *institutionalized promiscuity*, prevailed. This is emphatically not the case; even though patterned wife-

READING

lending shocked the *sensibilities* of Victorian anthropologists, such an institution is evidently *predicated* on the fact that men have wives in the first place. No matter what their specific forms, families in all known societies have performed major social functions — reproduction, maintenance, *socialization*, and *social placement* of the young.

3 Families may be monogamous or polygamous — there are systems where one man is entitled to several wives and others where several husbands share one wife. A society may recognize primarily the small nuclear *conjugal unit* of husband and wife with their immediate descendants or it may institutionalize the large extended family linking several generations and emphasizing consanguinity more than the conjugal bond. Residence after marriage may be *matrilocal*, *patrilocal* or *neolocal*; exchanges of goods and services between families at the time of marriage may be based on bride price, groom price or an equal exchange; endogamous or exogamous regulations may indicate who is and who is not *eligible* for marriage; the choice of a mate may be controlled by parents or it may be left in large measure to the young persons concerned. These are but a few of the many differences which characterize family in variant societies.

LEWIS COSER

DISCUSSION

1. Give examples of "moral, legal, economic, religious, and social rights and obligations" that unite members of a family.
2. In the light of Coser's essay, how would you compare your family with one in a different socio-economic and cultural context?
3. Coser mentions "bride price" and groom price" in his essay. Does this in any way correspond to a current practice in your community? Explain how and by what standards.

FOCUS ON LANGUAGE

Essay Writing

The Comparison-Contrast Essay

You can develop a comparison by pointing out similar features. You could compare Lebanon and Monaco in terms of size, climate, political constitution, economic power. You can develop a contrast by pointing out differences between things somewhat similar. You would contrast the whale and the dolphin, but certainly not a goldfish and a flower pot. Both comparison and contrast might be used in the same theme.

In general there are two methods of developing a comparison or contrast. The first is to describe one side of the comparison or contrast as fully as you intend and then deal entirely with the other side (block). When you practise this method, be sure to follow the same order for each side. The second method compares or contrasts the two sides point by point (point).

Figure 16.1

answers' (IES 2006). This comment, although made in the Egyptian context, applies equally well to other Arab countries, particularly in schools that employ local teachers. (Many of the private schools in the Gulf region, however, employ native-English-speaking teachers from overseas.) While the textbook plays a central role in the teaching and learning process, the activities are not necessarily always realized in the classroom in the ways the authors intended. Language practice dialogues can often turn into drill and memorized recital, particularly in the case of tasks involving cultural concepts or activities unfamiliar to children (e.g. Ghosn 2004).

Interviews with primary school teachers have revealed that whether teachers use international ELT courses or NSRs, they often omit some material. Teachers using ELT courses frequently skip activities involving food preparation and science and craft projects, most often because of time constraints or unavailability of resources. With the exception of some total immersion programmes, teachers using NSRs typically select a number of reading lessons to cover, with a view on grammar or likely interest-level of content, as it will be impossible for them to cover the whole book. (In some cases, one book is covered over a two-year period.)

Although teachers using ELT materials reported employing the communicative approach in their teaching, classroom observations reveal that recitation and drill is still the norm in many classrooms. The following extract from a Fifth Grade lesson quoted from Ghosn (2001) is typical:

S1: (reads) 'What do you do in your free time?'
T: Now, you answer him (points to S2).
S2: (reads from phrase bank) 'I watch TV.'
T: Next, now you tell us about her activities.
S1: She watch
T: She?
S1: She watches TV.
T: Now you (points to S3)
S3: (reads) 'What do you do in your free time?'
S4: (reads) 'I play videogames.' (p. 294)

NSR teachers generally follow the pre-reading, reading and post-reading approach, pre-teaching key vocabulary they perceive children need to know in order to comprehend the text. The following extract is from a Third Grade class:

T: Today grade three on the board is a title of a story, 'Rosie a visiting dog's story'. (Typed vocabulary words are pasted next to the title.)
So, can anyone predict something about the story? (All students raise hands and several students offer predictions.) [...]
S: Someone needs help and Rosie is going to help them.
T: We all agree that Rosie is going to help someone.
Fine, let's look at our vocabulary words for this week for this story [...]

we need to do those first so we can get a better idea about the story. The words are 'approach', 'equipment', 'firm', 'confident', 'comfortable', and 'appointment'. Approach? Can anyone tell me what 'approach' means?
[...] Yes, Elie?

S: You get closer to that person.
T: You approach someone you get closer to that person, yes. Hagop?
S: You arrive somewhere. (Akkaoui, unpublished observation notes)

The same procedure is repeated with the other words. Students then copy the vocabulary words into their copybooks and use them in a sentence of their own. Next, they open their practice books and do sentence completion exercises using other words that will appear in the story. The sentences are read aloud and the teacher links the words to students' experiences.

Classroom observations have shown that when students are interested in the topic and engage with the lesson, teachers may lose focus of the original language learning objectives, getting carried away by their students' enthusiasm (Ghosn 2001). This is particularly true about NSR classes, where teachers often focus primarily on content, rather than specific language goals. While Cameron (2001) argues that language learning goals are not only necessary, but must also be selected and sequenced carefully, evidence from many NSR classes in Lebanon contradicts these arguments, with many children achieving grade equivalences comparable to their US age peers (Ghosn 2001; 2006; 2007).

By far the most commonly observed and reported approach to lesson texts, both in ELT and BR classes, is 'round-robin' reading; children take turns reading, with the teacher posing comprehension questions after every few sentences. During reading, teachers may also draw student attention to grammar. The CLT dialogues often follow the same routine. Reading is followed by vocabulary and comprehension exercises in a workbook.

Evaluation of the materials

The English that children are learning in their coursebooks is, by and large, fairly authentic, insofar as any textbook language can be truly authentic. (If a language course presented the kind of English native-English-speaking children actually use, it would most likely be frowned upon by teachers. Moreover, it would not prepare students for the kind of English they are expected to use later on.) How meaningful the language is to the learners is somewhat more difficult to determine, as this will depend, first, on the meaningfulness of the language learning activities, and second, on whether the classroom language meets their needs outside the language classroom. 'Look at all those monkeys! Which one is the biggest?' although meaningful during a zoo visit, is not very useful in online chatting, for instance.

Overall, the content examined in three ELT courses, three NSR series and six locally developed coursebooks is likely to interest young learners, but one must wonder how motivating some of the typical ELT activities are. The 'listen and say' or 'ask and answer' activities, where children select words from a

vocabulary/phrase bank to construct sentences, appear level after level. While achievable, such activities do not challenge the learners to negotiate meaning or engage them affectively or cognitively. The content-integrated activities are perhaps more challenging and engaging, but to what extent they promote language learning will depend on teachers maintaining their focus on the language learning goals. While exposure to the rich language characterizing NSRs may help children develop fluency, in the absence of clear language learning goals they may fail to develop accuracy, a problem that has plagued meaning-focused immersion classes. See Table 16.2 for a summary.

Table 16.2: Summary Rating of Primary ELT Materials and Basal Readers

Criteria	ELT	BR	Comments
1. Extent of exposure to English in authentic use	Varies	5	ELT: very little language is used for actual *communication*
2. Meaningfulness of English in use to learners	3	5	BR: particularly where students study subject matter in English
3. Likely interest level	varies	varies	ELT/BR: Wide variety of content; something for everyone
4. Extent of achievable challenges	5	3	BR: very demanding for average/below average learner
5. Likelihood of affective engagement	3	3	ELT/BR: Affective engagement observed to vary depending on lesson topics and tasks
6. Likelihood of cognitive engagement	3	4	ELT: observed low cognitive engagement BR: observed cognitive engagement high, but below average learners often 'tune out'
7. Opportunities for discovery learning	1	4	ELT: very limited
8. Opportunities for meaningful use of English	3	5	ELT: varies based on the familiarity of topic BR: Focus is on making meaning
9. Opportunities for feedback to learners on effectiveness of their English use	1	1	With the exception of teacher evaluation, there is little opportunity for feedback to learners on their use of English

10. Likelihood of sustainable positive impact	3	3	Overall interesting content and potentially motivating activities can be undermined by ineffective use of material

NSRs provide plenty of opportunities for meaningful uses of English, as many of their activities are 'tasks', as defined by Willis (1996) in that the focus is on meaning, rather than form, and learners often work together to produce a joint outcome. While the current ELT materials also feature such tasks, they are, unfortunately, often among the activities teachers choose to omit, or they turn to read-recite practice. Some of the language practice set in target language cultural context can also remain a meaningless drill for young learners who must situate themselves in an unfamiliar context and practise the new language (Ghosn 2004). In this regard, the locally developed materials fare better, insofar as the context and content of these activities is familiar.

Because of the positive results from story-based experiments (e.g. Elley 2000) and superior outcomes from some NSR programmes (e.g. Ghosn 2006), but keeping in mind the lessons from immersion programmes, we would like to see the best elements from ELT and NSR books combined in global coursebooks for young learners. Lessons can feature more *authentic*, unsimplified children's literature, which would provide samples of language in meaningful context. Captivating storylines can be realized even with relatively simple, yet not contrived language. Language practice activities could then be derived from stories rather than presented in contrived interpersonal dialogues. Ghosn (2007) shows how this can be accomplished, both with familiar content and with content aiming at culture learning.

Local Secondary School Texts: A Lebanese Model

As part of the Lebanese educational reform after the civil war (1975–1989), the national English language curriculum was totally revised. The new Lebanese English curriculum mandates that two foreign languages be taught in the schools, one of them serving also as the vehicular language in the general curriculum.

The Lebanese national textbooks, authored by select academicians from various institutions, must be adopted by all public schools; private schools have free choice from among those published in North America and Britain (e.g. *World Masterpieces* 2007, Kinsella *et al.* Prentice Hall for English as a first foreign language). This section will focus on locally produced texts for the public schools for English as a first language at the secondary level, Grades 10–12.

In Lebanon, each level consists of a Student's Book, Workbook and a Teacher's Book: Grade 10 *Themes*, Samra *et al.* (1998); Grade 11 *Themes*, Bacha *et al.* (1999); Humanities Section, *Themes*, Khoury *et al.* (1999); Science Section, Grade 12 *Themes*, Bacha *et al.* (2000); Literature and Humanities Sections,

Themes, Darwich and Samra (2000); General Sciences and Life Sciences Sections and *Themes* Khoury *et al.* (2000), Business or Technical students.

Layout

The student's text is divided into two to three parts focusing on broad themes, units and lessons or chapters covering various topics, as well as project work, pre-assessment and/or assessment. A glossary is included in margins near passages, and an additional glossary of terms is appended with further readings and sample assessment forms except for Grade 10. Grade 10 book includes the phonetic transcriptions based on the International Phonetic Alphabet, but since this may be confusing, it was omitted in the Grade 11 and 12 texts.

Colorful pictures, graphics, tables, charts and so forth are found on almost every page. Material is included for approximately 150 class periods, one academic year's work, although certain parts may be omitted depending on class performance. Workbooks offer further activities for reinforcement and consolidating the material covered in class. The text is best covered in sequence as skills build on previous material; however, units can be done in any order depending upon the needs and interests of the students.

Goals

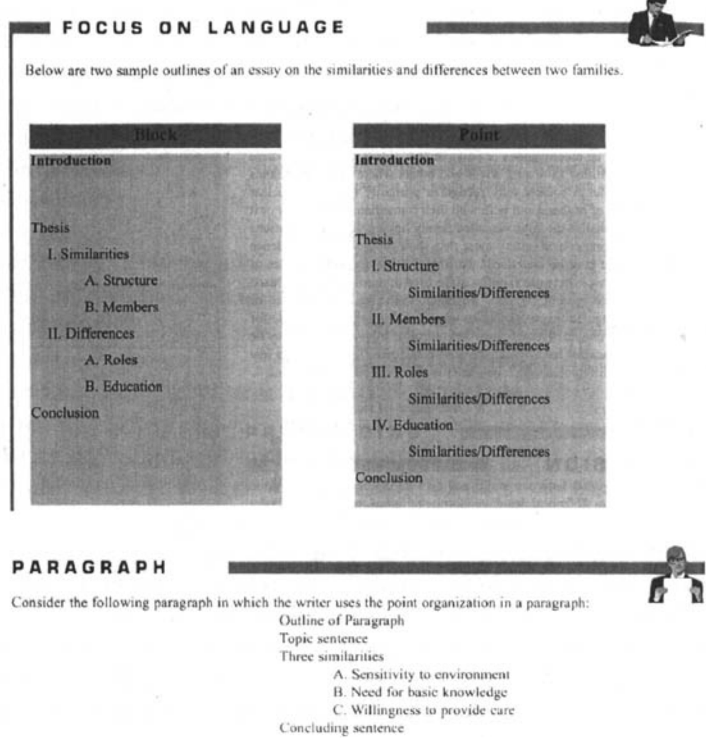
The major aims are the use of English for communication and as the medium of instruction in academic settings. For each level and in each unit, from the 'simpler' to the more 'complex' instructional and performance tasks are identified (explicitly listed in the Teacher's Book) for listening, speaking, reading and writing in addition to critical thinking, study skills and cultural awareness. Emphasis is on the higher order of cognitive skills of application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Focus is on an integrated content task based approach with grammar and vocabulary study integrated. For example, a writing skill instructional objective in Grade 10 is to 'Paraphrase written and spoken discourse' with a performance task of 'Look up the italicized non-standard expressions in the selection and work in pairs to re-write them in standard English based on [your] understanding of the text.' In Grade 12, a 'higher' level objective requires students to 'Relate text to personal experience' specifically in a performance task of writing an essay on 'How would you solve the poverty problem in Lebanon?'

In Grade 12, Unit 5, Chapter 2, students discuss and read passages on a global issue: poverty, after which discussion focuses on a variety of questions and assignments involving application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. One particular excerpt from *Bleak House* by Charles Dickens involves an illiterate boy called Jo who lives in a poor London neighborhood 'Tom-all-Alone's'. One pre-reading question is 'Ask the students to define poverty in terms of the experiences they would expect a "poor" family to have.' Students discuss a question: 'What would you do if were to encounter a "Jo" in your own country?' and apply their knowledge and experiences on topics such as 'How would you solve the poverty problem in Lebanon?' or 'How would you plan a city?'

Content

The authors have attempted to give a broad cultural exposure to the student while also introducing local content relating to Lebanon and the region. In the Grade 11 Text, there are passages on people such as Bill Gates, Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, William Wordsworth and Lebanese writers such as Gibran Khalil Gibran and Younis El-Ibn (early twentieth century) and places such as Egypt, Troy, the Antarctic, Tyre and Baalbeck in Lebanon. In Part II, the theme *Unity and Diversity* includes the units: 'Problems and Expectations' dealing with youth issues, 'Family Relations', 'The Arts' and 'Cultural Interaction' each with lessons on related topics. (See Figure 16.2 for a sample.)

Included are intensive and extensive fiction and non-fiction reading passages from various genres, with warm-up, pre-reading, discussion, language and writing activities. Higher order skills on skimming, scanning, main ideas, implied information, organizational and literary strategies are emphasized. In the Grade 12



FOCUS ON LANGUAGE

Below are two sample outlines of an essay on the similarities and differences between two families.

Block	Point
Introduction Thesis I. Similarities A. Structure B. Members II. Differences A. Roles B. Education Conclusion	Introduction Thesis I. Structure Similarities/Differences II. Members Similarities/Differences III. Roles Similarities/Differences IV. Education Similarities/Differences Conclusion

PARAGRAPH

Consider the following paragraph in which the writer uses the point organization in a paragraph:

Outline of Paragraph
Topic sentence
Three similarities
A. Sensitivity to environment
B. Need for basic knowledge
C. Willingness to provide care
Concluding sentence

Raising houseplants involves nearly as much care and knowledge as raising children. Both plants and children are sensitive to their environments. For example, a plant will grow faster and be much healthier if it is raised in an environment of tender, loving care. The same is true for a child, who will be happier and healthier if his parents love and nurture him. Similarly, proper care of houseplants requires a basic knowledge of plants on the part of the owner. He must know, for example, which of his plants need direct sunlight and which need to be kept in shady places, and how much water each plant requires for the best growth and appearance. Parents, too, must have a basic knowledge of their children's needs in order to provide what is necessary for the best physical and mental development. Finally, the owner of houseplants must be willing to provide the best possible care for his plants. A child needs time and energy from his parents, too, to play with him, to talk to him, and to care for him. Generally speaking, happy, healthy plants and children are the result of extra time, knowledge, and energy.

Figure 16.2

text, more literary selections are incorporated such as short stories, parts of plays (e.g. *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde) selections from novels (e.g. *Animal Farm* by George Orwell) in which the students have the opportunity to study character, plot, literary language, setting, symbols, tone and so forth.

Methodology

Before 1994, teaching/learning practices had been heavily modelled on the traditional methods of the grammar translation approach with explicit teaching of grammar and vocabulary out of context. Although certain literary selections were identified to be studied and examined, there was no one text; schools chose from what was available on the market to cover the expected selections. Reliance on teacher lectures, rote learning, pattern drilling and filling in blank exercises were common, although emphasis was on English literature. There was very little or no student participation, and examinations required reproduction of class notes (Mikati 2002: 41). This is similar to the situation in other Arab countries which use texts modelled on the grammar translation approach.

Modifications, however, are being introduced. Mukattash (2003: 225), for example, notes that in some Jordanian schools 'explicit' grammar in the secondary level (Grades 11 and 12) is taught alongside some communicative activities. For example, the learning of modal auxiliaries where instead of students learning lists, the concepts are first introduced, such as expression of possibility, and then the linguistic terms are exposed in communicative activities.

Another important concern is students' heavy reliance on dictionaries to make sense of the vocabulary in the reading passages. Many students look up almost every word and write the Arabic translation above it. But, as Abu Ssaydeh (2006: 118) points out, 'Breaking with traditions is always difficult.'

With the above concerns in mind, in the new Lebanese texts, vocabulary is learned in context. For example, in Grade 12, in 'Scepticism about ESP', the word 'awestruck' in the passage is pre-taught. A word to the student is given: 'Note the word awestruck. It is constructed from the phrase 'struck with awe'. What other words do you know that are structured in the same way?' A synonym '*amazement*' is also given to the student in the margin.

A content-integrated, task-based and thematic approach was adopted based on various curricula that were examined for relevance to the Lebanese situation. As Shaaban and Ghaith (1997) note, these included the *English National Curriculum in England and Wales* (Carter 1991 in Shaaban and Ghaith 1997), *The Threshold Level for Modern Language Learning in Schools* (Van Ek 1991 in Shaaban and Ghaith 1997) and the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines.

Furthermore, in order to enable learners of different abilities to acquire the target language, a cooperative learning framework was adopted for classroom interaction. This allows students to work together to achieve common tasks in pairs, groups and teams, which is effective in developing students' positive attitudes, independence, accountability and team reward. The approach was basically adopted from the Cooperative Learning Schools *Learning Together* (such as *Students Teams Achievements Divisions – STAD* and *Teams Games Tournaments TGT*,

Jigsaw variations, *Think-Pair Share* and the *Structural School* such as *Find Someone Who, Inside-Outside Circle, Round Robin* and *Three Way Interview.* This allows for more effective classroom interaction in language and fosters cognitive and social development (Kagan 1992 in Shaaban and Ghaith 1997).

Assessment

Assessment – an important part of the teaching and learning process – is integrated throughout the books and is based on the instructional objectives of each level 'mirroring' closely the skill, activities and material that are included in the text (Weir 1993: 65 in Shaaban and Ghaith 1997). Question formats for the different skills include cloze procedure, circling, matching, inferring, identifying, describing, arguing and synthesizing, amongst others. Students receive formative feedback from their peers and teachers. Other testing formats include portfolios and journal writing. Criteria and performance standards are developed for the different skill assessments. A final comprehensive evaluation (summative) is given at the end of the academic year. Attempts are made to ensure test clarity, reliability and validity. Some sample assessment frameworks are included in the Teacher's Book.

Use of texts by teachers and students

Teachers, being restricted to one textbook, are, just as in the primary school, very much textbook bound and try to finish the whole book with students, which is often difficult. Although there is room for adaptation and teacher creativity, and many training sessions have been organized in both methodology and assessment/evaluation, teachers use the textbook rigidly with a view to covering all the material. Because classes are often large, teachers typically lecture as they are either not familiar with the new methodology or do not find it effective. This is the same with the students. They adhere very closely to the text and almost memorize it, a legacy of the past.

Evaluation and room for improvement

We all know that a 'good' book may not be successful in the hands of an inexperienced teacher and vice versa. The evaluation in Table 16.3 views the texts optimistically, but at the same time sees room for improvement. The resistance of the teachers to change and thus resorting to traditional methods must be addressed. Furthermore, there is a need to continuously follow up on the concerns in teaching English to Arabic speakers learning English for academic purposes, and perhaps adopt a methodology combining TEFL and TESOL (Mikati 2002; Mukattash 2003). Although many native speakers of Arabic are instrumentally motivated to learn English, the proficiency of the majority of students is often not up to the level required at the university (see Mukattash 2003 for a comprehensive review of Teaching English as an Academic Language (TEAL)). Culturally, students may not be able to adapt to the new methodology, resorting rather to traditional methods used in the teaching of Arabic. Mikati (2002: 41–42) quotes Chambers' (1997) article on 'Cyclical Innovation: Implications for Implementation', which is very true in the Lebanese context; 'Whilst the concept of innovation is relatively

simple and a subject of broad agreement amongst most writers concerning its definition ... the practice of innovation is difficult.'

Table 16.3: Rating of Lebanese Local Texts

Criteria	Grades	Comments
1. Authentic use	2	Opportunities for real live communication limited
2. Meaningful content	3	Some too challenging, over ambitious and difficult reading selections
3. Learner interest	3	Student loses interest as material difficult/irrelevant and concept that all must be covered
4. Achievable challenges	2	Not all students complete the work
5. Affective engagement	3	Culture specific parts difficult
6. Cognitive engagement	4	Challenging, applying, analysing, evaluating, critiquing, interpreting
7. Discovery engagement	4	Challenging
8. Meaningful language use	3	Wide range in the target language/ very little in student's own context or for career needs
9. Feedback to learners	4	Individual, team, peer and teacher
10. Sustaining impact	3	Weaker students need motivation

Small-scale improvements may be better strategies at this point as Mikati (2002) pinpoints. Definitely, an understanding of the methodology, implementing the programme, and finding the resources are important prerequisites. Teachers also should be involved in developing and adapting materials to meet the needs of their students as this gives them insight into the learning strategies of their students (Bahous and Bacha 2004).

English for Military Purposes

This section will compare and contrast two courses in English for Military Purposes.

(a) *RSAF English Language Course* – from the Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF).

(b) *SAF Target* – from the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO)

Background

'The world has changed over the past decade, and the marked shift ... in favour of ELT for security reflects this' (Woods 2006: 208). Both Saudi Arabia and Oman are close allies of the USA and NATO. Both states equip their armed forces with material purchased from Anglo-American suppliers, and the technical orders regarding the maintenance and operation of this equipment is published in English. Their forces both fought in the war to liberate Kuwait and, since then, Oman has hosted Anglo-Omani training exercises and offered logistic support during American operations in Afghanistan.

The courses described here are designed for serving military personnel; predominantly young, male Muslims from the Arab Gulf. They will have studied English as a school subject, it is likely to be their second language and the majority of them will have completed secondary education.

Materials in use

RSAF English Language Course

This course was written to replace the culturally inappropriate *American Language Course* (Al Ghamdi 1989). It was written by a large team of writers, following the practices outlined by Viney (2006). The materials development personnel have all worked as class teachers, and classroom teachers are sometimes drafted into the Development Section for specific projects.

Being printed in-house, the course can be modified quickly and cheaply. It currently consists of five levels. Book 6 is under construction. This chapter will be concerned with Books 1 to 3, which cover approximately 40 weeks' instruction. Each book consists of four independently printed modules. These are printed in colour and have a simple layout with white space being used to focus learner attention.

The books are written to satisfy the learning needs of RSAF personnel in one institution (the Technical Studies Institute, King Abdulaziz Air Base, Dhahran). The course is designed for future aircraft engineering technicians; young men at the very start of their service life. It therefore carries a considerable load of technical vocabulary. In Book 1 alone there are tools, procedures, numbers and pie charts.

The course revises the language covered in civilian schools within military contexts tailored to the interests of young Saudi men – clothes (uniform), colours (Saudi league football strips), maps of the Kingdom indicating the principal cities and RSAF bases, maps of the TSI and aircraft types. In general, the materials also reflect the lifestyles of young servicemen. A section on travel includes material on flying within the Kingdom and staying at a hotel in Jeddah, but this is an entirely credible scenario. The distances in Saudi Arabia are vast and many RSAF personnel come from the South West. They travel, on airline servicemen's discounts, via other cities to Dammam. Other credible scenarios are the buying of second-hand cars and the renting of flats for weekend use off-base.

Specifically written language laboratory and computer laboratory exercises supplement the coursebook modules.

SAF Target

This course replaces a previous in-house course (*SAF English*) but it is also designed as a 'general English course with some military content'. The course claims to run parallel with the demands of the Common European Framework (CEF), although that framework is itself 'suspect in terms of its practical use' (Morrow 2004: 10). *SAF Target* was produced by a trio of writers who followed the procedure outlined in McBeath (2006). One writer had no experience of teaching SAF personnel and only one member had any experience of teaching personnel from the Royal Army of Oman, whose personnel will be the major users of *SAF Target.*

The course is printed by a commercial publisher. This makes alterations impossible unless RAFO are prepared to pay for a new print run.

The course currently consists of two levels, although a third is being trialled. This chapter will deal with Books 1 and 2, which cover some 26 weeks' instruction.

Books 1 and 2 consist of a coloured Student's Book and a separate, monochrome Workbook. The Students' Books are lavishly illustrated and printed on heavy art paper. Some exercises are superimposed on maps or illustrations. The books are officially designed for 'the servicemen and women of the Sultan's Armed Forces, but also ... various members of the Royal Guard of Oman, the Sultan's Special Forces, Internal Security Services, the Royal Yacht Squadron, the Royal Oman Police, the Royal Stables and the Diwan of the Royal Court.' In fact, most of these units are ignored in the text. The books are used in seven different (principally RAO) centres, where the students will mostly be experienced NCOs – married men with young families.

Book 1 has an accompanying audio CD but there are no other supplementary materials.

How the materials are typically used

RSAF English Language Course

By teachers

Each module of each book begins with a list of final objectives. The Teacher's Guide outlines, page by page, teaching objectives, structures, new target lexis and 'things to notice'. Hence, in Book 2, Module 4, it is pointed out that while passive constructions are inevitable in technical texts, phrases like 'covered by' – the cockpit is covered by a canopy – are to be treated as adjectival.

Teachers are encouraged to pre-teach vocabulary; ask questions to elicit specific information or to practise structures; nominate students to model dialogues and monitor pair practice as those dialogues are expanded.

Homework is to be set and, like the written work in coursebooks, it is to be regularly marked.

By learners

In reading, cadets are given stimulus passages followed by written comprehension questions, True/False/Don't Know or matching exercises. There are also texts where paragraphs are placed in order, and then exploited, and semi-authentic materials (maps, departure boards, airline tickets) are used as a basis for comprehension or matching exercises.

In writing, the cadets move from gap-fill exercises, through cloze passages to full sentences and descriptive paragraphs. By the end of Book 3, cadets should be capable of looking at an illustration and producing a paragraph like:

> This is a hacksaw. It is a workshop tool. It consists of a handle, a frame, a blade, a screw and a nut. The blade is made of metal, usually steel, and has teeth. A hacksaw is used for cutting metal.

Similarly, diagrams, graphs, maps, charts and semi-authentic materials are presented as stimulus for extended writing.

Most stimulus reading passages are short. They provide practice in reading aloud, but speaking is mostly practised through question-answer, dialogues (both modelled and expanded) and asking for genuine information. Language lab and computer lab sessions give extensive listening practice, but in class RSAF cadets primarily listen for discrete items, and then integrate that information with other classroom tasks.

SAF Target

By teachers

The Students' Books begin with a table of contents and a list of 'Target Icons', indicating the activities designed for pair-work, group-work or one specific skill area. None of these icons appears in the Workbook.

Teachers are enjoined to use a communicative approach, based on 'a relaxed, inclusive and friendly atmosphere', but in some activities instructions like 'Talk about the pictures with your partner' give little indication of lesson aims.

There is no indication that the Students' Books are to be regularly marked, but the books' weight would militate against this. The Workbooks, by contrast, are far lighter and manageable.

By learners

Some materials in *SAF Target* were described by their writer as being 'aspirational', designed to 'get them away from the daily grind'. This statement appears to contradict the concept of English for Military Purposes.

Students are not required to read above the sentence level until well into this course. Even then, the first full paragraphs refer to Egyptian civilians and the European seasons. Both passages are introduced with pre-reading questions, and this format (pre-reading, reading and post-reading exercises) becomes standard. The longest passage of continuous prose is a double spread page of tourist information about Salalah in Book 2.

Writing exercises favour the insertion of one letter, one word or making a binary choice. Initially, students are merely required to copy, and there are also 'scrabble' activities, where students search for words on grids or reorganize scrambled spelling.

Many of the listening exercises require the students to both listen and do something else, e.g. complete airline boarding passes, tick boxes or give written answers.

The 'Can you?' checklists at the end of each unit also require students to check boxes.

Evaluation

Exposure to English in authentic use

RSAF – The materials reflect the use of technical English for military purposes.

RAFO – In some cases, the materials actually model incorrect or inauthentic English: In Book 1 students are told that a storeman 'looks after' the stores but ordnance personnel have their own terminology. They demand, hasten demand, receive, maintain, check, record, ensure the condition and issue stores. In Book 2, we are told of a Canadian Colonel 'He was in Glasgow twice before'. The present perfect would be preferred here.

Meaningful content

RSAF – The course materials are of direct relevance to the learners' interests and careers.

RAFO – The learners will be able to understand the text, but many of the 'aspirational' activities have little relevance to either Oman or to Omani military personnel. No SAF personnel shop at ASDA, none engage in boxing or archery and no enlisted men would send postcards from holidays in Spain.

Learner interest

RSAF – The materials give the learners a comprehensive orientation to both RSAF and their role within RSAF.

RAFO – At an ephemeral level, some of the materials are not without interest, but they have little relevance to military personnel.

Achievable challenges

RSAF – The materials offer step-by-step learning which builds learner confidence. The more advanced materials both reinforce and extend earlier work.

RAFO – Book 1 offers so little grammar that most SAF personnel cope quite easily. Book 2, by contrast, suffers from overload.

Affective learning

RSAF – The materials are culturally appropriate and workplace specific.

RAFO – By and large the materials are culturally inoffensive, but for many SAF units they are also irrelevant.

Cognitive learning

RSAF – Throughout the text, 'Study this' boxes directly emphasize grammatical points.

RAFO – Revision units and 'I can' checklists are provided, but some grammar is simplified.

Discovery learning

RSAF – Structures are frequently introduced and modelled before the 'Study this' box is presented.

RAFO – Several exercises are positively misleading. Comparisons of adjectives include the expectation that students will discover the irregular forms 'better' and 'worse'.

Meaningful use of English.
RSAF – The learners are given considerable scope within the context of technical military English.

RAFO – Within the communicative rubric of the Common European Framework, 'meaningful' exchanges are possible. The question remains, however, whether the CEF itself provides a meaningful rubric for servicemen in the Arab Gulf.

Feedback to learners
RSAF – The RSAF books are examined in a cumulative fashion. Book 1 counts for 20 per cent of the final mark, Book 2 for 30 per cent and Book 3 for 50 per cent. This allows cadets to take some responsibility for their own learning.

RAFO – The checklists and revision exercises allow SAF personnel to monitor their progress. The examination format, however, only allows for a pass/fail at Level 1 or Level 2. The examinations are graded, but long periods of time may elapse between courses.

Is positive impact sustained?
RSAF – The material provides positive reinforcement for good students and allows weaker students to focus on the areas where they achieve success.

RAFO – Anecdotal feedback suggests that some SAF personnel collude, asking very basic questions when in the 'communicative' section of the oral examination. The examiners can only give credit for grammatically correct interaction, so risk takers are penalized and bland correctness is rewarded.

Our suggestions for improvements

RSAF English course
Language laboratory and computer laboratory periods are scheduled, but this course requires recorded material for use in class. The introduction of interactive whiteboards may partly redress the lack of listening practice in uncontrolled conditions.

SAF Target
A 'general English course with some military content', in line with the communicative needs of the Common European Framework yet simultaneously appropriate for the armed forces of an Arab state was always a hopelessly ambitious project. *SAF Target* requires far more military material; material relevant to the army, navy and air force, with supplementary materials for each of the separate branches, major units, minor units, support units and paramilitary formations.

Conclusion

We have attempted to give a view of primary, secondary and ESP materials in the Middle East and to highlight their advantages and drawbacks for the learner. Teaching English to Arab learners has taken on a different dimen-

sion in recent years as English for academic and professional life becomes increasingly significant at both national and international levels. If we are to compete and make a difference, our materials must effectively further this. This implies materials that combine the best elements of global coursebooks with local needs and expectations, with a clear view on the function of the English language for learners in the real world outside the classroom. It also implies the need to equip teachers with a variety of instructional approaches that will enable them to make optimal use of the materials in the classroom. Finally, the use of technology, such as interactive computer software, language laboratories and other interactive technologies would provide a means for learners of all ages to receive feedback on the effectiveness of their English use.

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Chapter 17

Materials in Use in Argentina and the Southern Cone

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Introduction

This review of materials widely used in Argentina and some of the Southern Cone nations (Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile and Brazil) has been organized according to the educational settings where they are implemented. Because of our professional background we have chosen to focus on primary and secondary schools (more specifically addressing the situation in Argentina) and the initial courses for teenage students taught at language schools (popularly called *academias* or *institutos*, the *Culturas*[1] and Binational Centers[2]).

The majority of secondary schools devote thrice-weekly 40-minute class periods to English and most of them start off at beginner level. Many private secondary schools start at elementary level, a few at pre-intermediate level when English is taught in primary school. Some state primary schools offer English up to elementary level. Private language schools have a complementary function and are very popular, as there is a widespread belief that children will not develop a solid communicative competence in English at school.

A fundamental distinction between international, localized and local coursebooks must be drawn at this point. International coursebooks are designed for use in different parts of the world. When international coursebooks are adapted to specific situations (for example, an edition for Spanish-speaking learners) we refer to these as localized coursebooks. These are based on a pre-existing coursebook that is modified to suit a specific need, such as a particular curriculum, cross-linguistic comparison, or to contextualize the coursebook. Local coursebooks are those specifically produced for a country or region and draw on a national curriculum and on the learners' experiences by including references to local personalities, places, etc. (López Barrios & Villanueva de Debat 2006a). The coursebooks under analysis in this chapter include examples of all three kinds: international coursebooks (*New Headway*), localized coursebooks (*For Teens*) and local coursebooks (*Top Teens*).

The following are the coursebooks to be analysed:[3]

Primary materials:[4]

- *Brilliant* 1 & 2 (Macmillan) (Br)

- *English Adventure* 1 & 2 (Longman) (EA)
- *Happy Street* 1 & 2 (OUP) (HS)

Secondary materials:

- *Blockbuster* 1 (Express Publishing) (B)
- *Click on* 1 (Express Publishing) (CO)
- *Dream Team* Starter, 1 & 2 (OUP) (DT)
- *For Teens* 1 & 2 (Longman) (FT)
- *Friends United* 1 & 2 (Macmillan) (FU)
- *Go for it!* 1 (Thomson) (GFI)
- *New Headway* Elementary & Pre-intermediate (OUP) (NH)
- *New Snapshot* Starter, Elementary & Pre-intermediate (Longman) (NSS, NSE, NSPI)
- *On Stage* (OS) – Art & Communication (A&C), Humanities (H) (Longman)
- *Opportunities* Beginner, Elementary & Pre-intermediate (Longman) (OB, OE, OPI)
- *Pacesetter* Starter (OUP) (PS)
- *Tools* – Business & Management 1 (B&M), Nature & Environment 1 (N&E) (Richmond)
- *Top Teens* 1 & 2 (Macmillan) (TT)

Evaluation

To what extent do the materials provide exposure to English in authentic use?

Under this criterion we will consider the extent to which the materials represent real instances of communication instead of being mere opportunities to teach language. In this respect, because of the nature of the materials analysed (mostly beginner and elementary levels of the coursebooks) very scanty use of authentic materials was found. Tomlinson (2003: 5–6) refers to the distinction between authentic texts, i.e. 'texts not written especially for language teaching', and 'teacher-made texts' (or rather 'author-made'), i.e. those especially written for the coursebook, containing simple vocabulary and structures but not necessarily felt by competent users of English to be contrived. Their authenticity is enhanced through efficient use of graphic devices such as typography and visuals. *United Magazine*, a fifteen-page full-colour teenage magazine issued as a separate publication sold together with every level of the coursebook *Friends United*, serves as an example. The magazine is 'designed for students to use alone as extension work, though it can also be used in class' (FU 1; TB: 5). *United Magazine* contains very attractive fully illustrated texts that give the publication the feeling of a real teenage magazine as opposed to one specially designed for language teaching.[5]

In general terms, the texts contained in the coursebooks are *teacher-made* and show a varying degree of sophistication as regards their visual appeal and language use. The Elementary and Pre-intermediate levels of *Opportunities*, the

New Headway series and *Tools* (N&E) are the coursebooks that contain the largest quantity of adapted or simplified materials based on authentic texts such as newspapers or websites. Simplified versions of literary works such as *Money Talks* by O. Henry (OB: 126–127) or Robin Hood (CO) can also be found. Authentic pop songs by groups like Abba, The Corrs, The Beatles, Queen, etc. are included in several coursebooks (OPI, FT, TT, OS H, the *Dream Team, New Headway* and *New Snapshot* series). Prose texts featuring different genres such as magazine articles, web pages, e-mails, letters, postcards and notices, amongst the most frequent ones, are included in all the coursebooks analysed. Other teacher-made texts include comics and songs.

Some coursebooks (FT, FU, DT, PS, NSS and NSE) feature photostories or storylines (TT) through which the new contents are introduced. *Opportunities* Beginner does not contain a storyline but makes use of dialogues for the introduction of new contents. *Go for it!* resorts to short exchanges. In all these cases the dialogues or exchanges are used with the deliberate purpose of teaching language, but differences can be noted. For example, some of the brief dialogues in *Blockbuster 1* sound contrived as they contain unnatural repetitions and complete answers when this is unlikely in real-life conversations:

> Tom: What do you usually do in the morning Claire?
> Claire: Well, I get up at 7:00 and I have breakfast.
> Tom: Do you catch the train to work?
> Claire: No, I don't. I always walk to work. (B 1: 71)

In contrast, the prose texts in the 'cultural corner' section may be perceived as more authentic, displaying features typical of the genre, as shown in this description of springtime in the UK: 'The first sign of spring in the UK is when flowers appear (...). Wild daffodils have delicate yellow petals. You can see them in fields' (B 1: 80).

In general, texts used in primary coursebooks are teacher-made, designed to present a language item in a context. In *Happy Street* texts used are stories, songs, chants, a comic-strip 'Colin in Computerland', interviews, poems, magazine articles, TV charts, cartoons, diary entries, letters. Many of these texts are accompanied by authentic pictures. Extended reading material is provided in both books as an additional feature. As stated for the secondary coursebooks, the graphic devices make the texts look authentic. In comparison, texts in *English Adventure* and *Brilliant* are less varied. The former includes cartoons from Disney movies at the beginning of each unit, songs and short descriptions of toys, monsters, people, bedrooms and animals. *Brilliant* features a cartoon-like story to introduce each unit, a song in most units and descriptive texts.

To what extent is the exposure to English in use likely to be meaningful to the target learners?

Meaningfulness is closely related to the learners' age and sociocultural background. Even if one can agree that in today's globalized world (and mainly due to the influence of the media) children and adolescents like the same types

of music, TV programmes, films, fashion, celebrities, etc., there exist local or regional preferences that cannot be overlooked as they are a part of the learners' world.

The inclusion of a fairly large number of international personalities from showbiz and sports can be observed in all the coursebooks analysed: Britney Spears, John Lennon, Avril Lavigne, Ricky Martin, among others, are mentioned by several of the coursebooks. Others such as Robbie Williams, Shakira or the Spice Girls are included in at least one of them. Among the personalities from history and politics we find Martin Luther King mentioned in three of the coursebooks. Examples of other personalities found are: W. Disney, M. Gandhi and N. Mandela. This selection of personalities deemed to be familiar to teenagers in most parts of the world suggests that coursebook authors use this resource with the purposes of creating confidence and interest. Confidence is created by the students' encounter with familiar linguistic information (cognates, place names, etc.) and non-linguistic information (familiar facts, personalities, etc.). In local and localized coursebooks the selection of personalities becomes more culture specific. The local coursebooks *Top Teens*, *For Teens* and *On Stage* include a wide array of local references such as showbiz personalities (Valeria Mazza, Fito Páez, Carlos Bilardo, etc.), personalities from culture, science and history (Ernesto Sábato, Luis Federico Leloir, Carlos Saavedra Lamas), place names (Chajarí, Mar del Plata, La Boca). Even in the case of local coursebooks some of these references may be unknown to the students. Most students in Argentina know where Mar del Plata and La Boca are located, but few will identify Chajarí. The same may be the case with the personalities from culture, science and history.

The choice of topics included in the coursebooks is quite similar in most cases and is centred round everyday life, school life, entertainment and leisure, fashion and appearance among the most recurrent ones. This homogeneity in topic choice is related to the proficiency levels (mostly beginner and elementary coursebooks) and the related linguistic resources needed for their realization (structures, vocabulary, text types, functions). The topics are closely connected to the learners' previous experience and are likely to be connected with the children's and adolescents' world. However, what looks like a safe procedure entails the risk of overloading the coursebook with bland and uninspiring contents and denying learners from the opportunity to explore new realities. Pre-intermediate coursebooks include more sophisticated topics, such as design and art, fantasy and science fiction, immigration, work and money, etc., which are typically related to the sphere of experience of senior adolescents.

The coursebooks chosen are meaningful to young learners but in different ways. In *Happy Street* and *Brilliant*, teacher-made texts used to present the units become meaningful to learners as the story, the characters and the different settings in which the actions take place are closely connected to their own world. In the *English Adventure* series the texts are based on famous Disney movies, significant to children worldwide. Topics are nearly the same in all series (family, classroom objects, food, animals, clothes, body, house, hobbies) and are directly connected to students' reality and daily life; their own experience and world.

While this is an important condition in young learners' materials, an affective connection is essential as well as pushing the learners' imagination and expression a bit further away from everyday contents so as not 'to underestimate learners linguistically, intellectually and emotionally' (Tomlinson 2003: 8).

To what extent are the texts likely to interest the learners?

For the analysis of *interest* we will first refer to the storyline (if included) and secondly we will consider the other texts, especially those that portray aspects of the target culture.

In *English Adventure* interest is exclusively created by the inclusion of well-known Disney characters and storylines (Toy Story, Monsters Inc.). The stories in *Happy Street* include characters children can easily identify with, generally involved in humorous episodes. The action in *Brilliant* takes place on 'Brilliant Island' where a magical story develops, sparking children's imagination, as each episode combines fantasy and reality.

Many coursebooks for adolescent learners use photostories. In *For Teens 1* humour, mischief and wit are strong motivators, whereas in Book 2 a boy is involved in a mysterious journey into the past. *Pacesetter Starter* features a group of typical British teenagers that meet at a youth club. In *New Snapshot* the photostory includes attractive location photography that can be used to 'discuss British life and culture and give students an opportunity to make comparisons with their own lives' (NSPI TB: xvii). In the photostories of *Friends United* the characters are involved in situations with conflicts adolescents can clearly identify with. *Top Teens* uses a storyline 'featuring Argentine teenagers, which provides a fresh and engaging context for language learning' (TT 1: back cover).

All coursebooks deal with topics such as family, home, free time, fashion, school, leisure activities, etc. as well as the lives of celebrities and descriptions of famous places. To counterbalance the uncontroversial and potentially less engaging nature of these topics many coursebooks include more motivating themes such as unusual teenagers (NHE, FT, TT), life in the 1950s (FT 2) or cross-curricular topics like science, the environment and history (TT, DT, FU, B). In the *On Stage* and the *Tools* series interest is closely related to the upper-secondary school track chosen by the learners such as Humanities or Science.

When considering interest, satisfying the learners' curiosity about life in the target language communities is important. To this end, many coursebooks contain 'culture capsules' (FU, DT, CO 1, B and the *Opportunities* series) with references to clothes, holidays, school life, etc. or fact files about places in these countries. *New Snapshot* has a documentary video providing 'authentic and current insights into the lives and cultural background of teenagers in the UK and the USA' (NSE TB: xviii).

Primary coursebooks offer some opportunities for children to encounter references to the target culture. In *English Adventure* these are included in the 'Our World' section. In *Happy Street* there are a few implicit cultural references in the Extended Reading section such as the description of different types of houses and British money (HS 1), as well as breakfast, celebrations and weather (HS 2). *Brilliant* is the series with the most cultural references, the Adventure

Notebook's texts featuring 'children, animals and places from around the world' (Br 1, TB: 22)

To what extent are the activities likely to provide achievable challenges to the learners?

This section focuses on the activities aimed at the development of speaking and writing skills, i.e. those involving the production of a continuous piece of discourse with a communicative purpose rather than the mere practice of a grammatical structure. We will look into the kind of guidance provided to the learners, as this plays a key role in terms of achievability.

Brief oral exchanges such as asking and answering questions following a model and using prompts given are found in most of the coursebooks. In more controlled activities learners may be asked to modify dialogues, for example by adding other characters (TT 1: 22), whereas in freer activities the construction of dialogues may be supported by interaction guides, such as 'Greet Maria' (GFI 1: 92).

Speaking activities, usually oral presentations such as descriptions of people, places and objects, narratives and reports are included in many of the series. By providing more or less scaffolding with content and structure as well as models, the books enable learners to tackle activities with a higher degree of success. These activities cater mainly for the needs of less able learners, empowering them to produce oral output which gives them a sense of achievement. More challenging activities requiring students to react spontaneously in less predictable situations are less frequent.

Models of the expected performance are frequently given. Activities such as 'Describe your bedroom' (FT 1: 21) or 'Ask and answer questions about places near your partner's home!' (NSS: 57) show learners possible examples. Additionally, beginning sentences encourage students to start speaking. For example, when asked to 'Tell the class about your partner's animal', learners can be encouraged to start speaking by using the sentences given: 'It's a bear. It lives in ...' as a way to start the description (OB: 72).

Free speaking activities where learners are simply given a question to answer or an instruction such as 'speak about a friend' are the exception rather than the rule in beginner level coursebooks. Open-ended questions are asked as an introduction to reading or listening texts in *Top Teens* 2, or the *New Headway* series. The elementary and pre-intermediate level coursebooks include more complex speaking tasks such as role-plays, talks, telling stories, reporting, descriptions, discussions, etc., involving more elaborate preparation. In the *New Headway* series many of these activities are integrated with other skills such as listening or reading. For instance, after listening to a passage about Sweden, students are asked to compare what they learned about that country with their own (NHPI: 49).

Writing activities are, on the whole, more carefully prepared and staged than speaking activities. Activity types in lower level coursebooks include mostly guided text construction (examples: FT 1: 35, TT 2: 31, CO 1: 53, DT 2: 26), parallel writing (for example in FU 2: 47, GFI 1, WB: 9, NSS: 96, B 1: 95) and some free writing (FT 2: 13, GFT 1, WB: 43).

Good writing activities provide learners with support for text structure and content. Structure guides include questions (NSE: 58) or subtitles (DT S: 44), whereas content guides may be key words (FT 1: 35), notes (FU 1 & 2), information gathered in charts (CO 1: 113), etc. For example, *Dream Team* 2 proposes the following activity: 'Write about a tourist attraction in your country, e.g. a cathedral, museum or theme park.' A writing guide follows, proposing a structure for the text divided into 'Introduction', 'Description' and 'Conclusion'. For each section questions are given, for example, 'What is the name of the attraction?' or 'Why is it famous?' (DT 2: 26). Additionally, sentence beginnings (GFI 1, W: 26, NSS: 102) encourage learners to start writing. In one example, also serving as structure guide, learners are asked to write about their clothes and the following help is provided: 'At home I wear ...', 'At school I ...', 'On holiday I ...' (FU 1: 35).

The process approach advocated by some coursebooks (GFI and the *Opportunities* series) further enables learners to develop writing skills. In *Go for it!* 1 writing activities start with a 'Pre-writing' activity leading on to 'Personalizing', 'Writing for a purpose' or 'Sharing information' activities. The 'Communication Workshop' in *Opportunities* typically begins with a model of a text type and an accompanying comprehension activity guiding the learners to discover aspects of text organization, content, layout, etc. A writing and a subsequent speaking task follow. In both cases the tasks begin with a planning stage in which learners complete tables, write notes or make lists, thus generating content and preparing the necessary linguistic resources. The editing stage makes the learners focus on selected aspects of grammar, spelling and punctuation.

In the *Happy Street* series, lesson 4 in every unit provides 'children with a classroom-based opportunity for oral interaction with a partner ... in the form of a simple question and answer game or a short dialogue for role-play' (HS 2, TB: 10). Enough scaffolding is provided, as 'each game or role-play is carefully structured so that the language the children need to use is realistically controlled' (HS 2, TB: 10). The same type of oral activities is presented in the other two series analysed. The authors of *Brilliant* explicitly state that 'children should be encouraged to have mini dialogues even if they know only a few words in English' (Br 1, TB: 8).

Regarding writing skills, *Happy Street* 1 provides a written model 'for children to imitate in their own writing' (HS 1 TB: 10). Some activities require using the class book in order to complete them. In Activity Book 2 we find more creative writing activities in which the language needed is less controlled by a model text previously given, as students now have a wider language scope to which they can resort. *Brilliant* promotes creative writing projects using 'the little English they have at their disposal to write in a creative and imaginative way'. (Br 1, TB: 8). The activity book of the series presents writing activities which are easily understood so that children can use them independently and at their own pace (Br 1, TB: 7).

To what extent are the activities likely to engage the learners affectively?
There is at present a growing recognition of the central role that feelings play in the learning process. Coursebooks can involve the whole person by includ-

ing activities and texts that connect to the students' experiences, opinions and feelings, i.e. by 'humanizing' them (Tomlinson 2001).

In our analysis, we looked for texts and tasks including the following: involvement of emotions and feelings, encouragement of self-knowledge, affective strategies, personalized activities and engagement of learners' imagination and creativity. Some coursebooks – notably those targeted at adolescents – take the learner's affect into account. For example, the photostory in *Friends United* 1 'includes ... references to relevant topics such as friendship, honesty, respect to others, safety, etc.' (FU 1 TB: 4). In *Top Teens*, 'Students will identify with the characters, their adventures, responsibilities and difficulties' (TT 1, back cover). But these constitute an exception rather than the rule. For example, the topics of love and friendship, two central issues during adolescence, are only dealt with in some of the coursebooks (NSS, NSE, OB, FU 2 in 'United Magazine', NHE, NHPI, DT 2). In addition, many of the coursebooks contain pop songs but only a few take advantage of the lyrics to involve emotions and imagination, rather than focusing exclusively on linguistic features.

There are few activities that engage learners' imagination and creativity such as: 'create your own cave painting' (B 1: 128); guessing endings to and writing stories (PS: 83); or creating a poem using a model (TT 1: 86). This may be because of the types of texts included in most textbooks: descriptions, expository texts about uncontroversial topics (some exceptions are teens' problems or the generation gap). Furthermore, the generalized lack of use of literature as criticized in Tomlinson (2003: 8) – the *Opportunities* series constituting an exception – deprives the materials of the possibility of mobilizing learners' feelings.

Virtually none of the textbooks contribute to self-knowledge allowing for the discovery of different learning styles, or include affective strategies. The exception is *Go for it!* 1, as the teacher's book includes suggestions such as asking the learners where and when they read (TB: 33) or whether they can recognize the purpose of the activities they do (TB: 89), etc.

What most coursebooks attempt to do is to personalize activities, notably in *Go for it!* 1: 'In personalized learning, opportunities are given for students to relate unit content to their own life, interests and feelings' (TB 1: vi). Since the topics dealt with are largely neutral and matter-of-fact, mainly in the beginner and elementary level materials, learners mostly report about their own routines, likes, etc. rather than reporting on emotions or opinions. *Tools* (N&E) presents problematic situations related to teenagers' lives, giving learners a chance for affective involvement. One such activity asks learners what they would do, e.g. 'Your best friend is an addict' (8). In contrast, pre-intermediate coursebooks invite students to give their opinion about topics discussed (for example, in NHPI: 20).

Another way to involve learners is to relate the coursebook to the students' experiences by dealing with topics and places that are familiar to them (López Barrios *et al.* 2006a; Tomlinson 2001). Furthermore, when confronted with informative materials about the target culture, learners should be offered opportunities to express their impressions rather than merely absorbing the information uncritically.

In primary school materials, 'Intellectual, aesthetic and emotional involvement' (Tomlinson 2003: 21) is stimulated by activities promoting the use of language learned in connection to the students themselves (for example, 'About me!' (in HS, WB 1 & 2) or by activities that include drawing and colouring (HS). Asking learners to write and talk about themselves, their house, their family, their city, their toys, their friends, etc. helps build students' sense of identity and thus contribute to their 'positive view of themselves as learners' (Tavella 2003: 28).

Feelings are explicitly addressed in *Brilliant* 2 through a miming game in which learners have to guess how their classmates are feeling (scared, tired, etc.). Movement – a humanistic technique for engaging the whole person (Moskowitz 1999) – plays an important role in these series.

To what extent are the activities likely to engage the target learners cognitively?

The focus of this section is the kind of cognitive engagement fostered by the materials analysed, including training of cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

Training in and application of cognitive strategies are features present in many of the coursebooks. Especially in the receptive skills area, coursebooks offer preparation before reading and listening activities by making learners activate prior knowledge (TT, NHE, NHPI), hypothesizing about content on the basis of the first impression offered by the text, the title and subtitle (TT), making and checking predictions (FT, FU), identifying text type (TT), inferring and deducing from context (OE, OPI, TT 2). Additionally, training in reading and listening microskills (PE, OE, OPI), identifying pronoun reference (TT 2), vocabulary recognition (OB, GFT), dictionary use (OE, OPI, NSE, DT 2) and task-solving strategies (OPI) are offered.

Training in metacognitive strategies is more scarce. Training in strategy evaluation takes place through offering questions such as asking learners if finding the names of places is relevant in a tourist guide (TT 1: 57); or in the Teacher's Book of *Go for it!* 1, for example, in Unit 12 (TB: 81), the 'evaluate your reading strategy' invites learners to reflect on features of a text that make it difficult to read. In *Dream Team* 2 learners are asked to evaluate advice given on reading comprehension. Additionally, instances of self-evaluation are found in several coursebooks (GFI, B, CO, DT, NSS, NSE, NSPI, TT and in the 'Language Powerbooks' of *Opportunities*). This feature leads learners to reflect on their own learning and ideally to increase their sense of achievement and self-efficacy and thus contribute to strengthening their self-esteem.

Strategy programmes aiming at the systematic development of strategies to deal with different aspects of learning are a regular feature in many coursebooks (FU, OE, OPI, DT and NS). Despite the fact that the *On Stage* series is specifically designed for Argentine upper secondary schools where the development of the reading skill is a key aim, the series does not include strategy training sections.

The consideration of the cognitive demands of activities is especially sensitive in primary coursebooks, as these should match the learners' level of cogni-

tive development (Williams & Burden 1997). In *Happy Street* students become cognitively involved in the games at the end of each unit as they need to think critically to guess their partner's choice. Some activities require children to use previous knowledge, reference material (class book) and critical thinking. Additionally, the workbook contains a self-evaluation section. Similarly, in *English Adventure 1* the activities that follow the vocabulary presentation require inferring for the learners to make appropriate guesses. In *Brilliant* some activities imply a degree of awareness of the language system, which is not always simple for learners at this stage.

To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for learners to make discoveries about how English is used?

This section analyses the extent to which materials lead learners 'to make discoveries for themselves' (Tomlinson (2003: 7). A distinction can be drawn between discovery activities, i.e. those that make learners find out regularities in language samples and reach their own conclusions, and consciousness raising activities which are more structured and push all the learners towards the same pre-determined conclusion.[6]

Although most of the books include some type of reflection on language they differ in the degree of guidance offered to discover how it works. Activities range from a strong inductive discovery approach in every lesson (as in PS, OE, OPI), a weaker one giving learners samples of the new language in table form and asking them to 'Look at the examples with your teacher' (OB) or to 'Read and study' (TT) and inviting learners to perform some language analysis activity (NHE, NHPI, NSS, NSE, FT, GFI, DT), to a combined inductive/deductive one where learners are offered ready-made tables without rules at the presentation stage but including these at a later point in the lesson (CO, FU). Most of these activities belong to the 'consciousness raising' type and are thus predominantly controlled. Even though activities are varied, if we compare textbooks there is little variation within each book. For example, in *New Snapshot Starter* out of eleven CR-activities found, seven require the students to study a table and formulate (or complete) a rule, three to study some examples and formulate a rule and one to identify a rule from given options.

Virtually all the activities observed raise students' awareness of the *form* of the language, but few deal with *meaning* and almost none focus on *use*, thus largely overlooking the semantic and pragmatic aspects of language.

Most of the activities in the coursebooks for primary schools are controlled and imply very few possibilities of making discoveries of how the language is used. Since learners at the 'concrete operational stage' are beginning to develop abstract reasoning, language discovery activities could be too challenging for them. *Brilliant* is the only coursebook that includes a 'Grammar box' summarizing the structure being dealt with in the unit. It might be said that not all young learners can reach their own conclusions from these boxes and analyse how the language system is structured. Neither *Happy Street* nor *English Adventure* has such an explicit way of dealing with grammar rules and use 'model sentences' (EA) or 'modelled texts' (HS) instead.

To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for meaningful use of English?

For this category we considered the opportunities offered by the coursebook to use language for a communicative purpose, which is the main tenet of the communicative approach. This implies the use of functions such as introducing yourself, seeking and giving personal information, giving directions, etc.

As was said before, most of the textbooks include role-plays and information-gap activities, affording the learner an opportunity to use language meaningfully. Nevertheless, these activities tend to focus heavily on linguistic competence, leaving almost no opportunities for learners to develop the socio-linguistic, strategic and discourse competences needed for effective communication. Projects are included in a number of coursebooks (DT, PS, GFI, FU among others). For example, in *Pacesetter Starter* the consolidation units end with a project such as 'a letter to a friend' or 'a tourist guide'. Projects in *Go for it!* include making a webpage or writing a story for the class newspaper. In all cases learners are guided in the production process and are provided with a model of the final outcome expected from them.

In primary coursebooks, opportunities to use the language meaningfully are given only in less controlled activities or in some guessing games in which students are naturally engaged because they entail a personal challenge. Project work can be an excellent means to encourage meaningful use of English. *Brilliant* and *English Adventure* include specific ideas for further developing the language of the units in projects.

To what extent do the materials provide opportunities for the learners to gain feedback on the effectiveness of their use of English?

In this section interactive activities where learners exchange information and negotiate meaning (guessing games, memory games, information-gap activities and the like) are analysed as well as those productive skills activities where learners share their productions to gain a response on the part of their peers.

Interactive activities aim at practising a particular structure in a game-like activity, adding meaningfulness to the exchange. An example of a guessing game: a learner is asked to choose a celebrity and to ask five questions to discover the classmate's identity (FU 1: 11). Information-gap activities are also a regular feature (for example, in FT, GFI, NHE, NHPI).

The productive skills activities (speaking as well as writing) may also involve gaining feedback on the effectiveness of the message conveyed. An example is the 'Talkback' activity in the *Opportunities* series where learners 'get other students to read and react to the content of what has been written' (OE TB: 6): After telling each other memories from childhood, in the report stage the learners tell the class 'one or two interesting things' about their partner's memories (OB: 80). Similar activities can be found in the *Top Teens* series and in *Go for it!* 1. The 'Extension' activities featured by the *Art & Communication* volume of the *On Stage* series often ask learners to report the information produced and to ask the class to vote for the most original show (7), the most innovative work of art (39), etc. Since the learners lack the resources to justify their

choices – let alone the means to create the text, as was pointed out above under the heading 'To what extent are the activities likely to provide achievable challenges to the learners?' – it is not very likely that teachers will actually allow the class do these activities.

The primary coursebooks analysed include instances of interactive activities such as guessing, memory and word games (HS) and also puzzles (EA), for students to practise the new vocabulary and/or communicative function in a context-based situation. *Brilliant* mixes some interactive activities with more grammar-based activities and the teacher's book includes ideas for classroom games of different types.

To what extent are the materials likely to sustain positive impact?

To consider the positive impact of materials revealed as the learners' motivation to use them, the following aspects are instrumental towards this end: the texts, the activities as well as content and visual appeal. As these aspects have been analysed in depth in the previous sections, they will only be briefly mentioned here.

The most motivating stories are those in the *Friends United* and *For Teens* series. The topics of friendship and values such as honesty, loyalty, solidarity as well as emotions like hatred, happiness, etc. are present in the stories, thus creating a motivation for the learners to read on. In *For Teens* 1 the motivators are fun, wit and mischief; in *For Teens* 2 the journey into the past, technology changes across time and space. Photographs taken in authentic locations in the UK add appeal to the photostory in the *New Snapshot* series. The storyline in *Top Teens* lacks the elements present in the two other series and, although the situations are those in which teenagers are likely to be involved like training a dog, gossip, camping, talking about music, etc., these everyday situations involve Spanish speakers speaking English in contexts where this is unlikely.

As regards activities and the degree of challenge they confront learners with, *Opportunities* and *Go for it!* 1 are the coursebooks that rank best because the graded preparation offered for the learners to express themselves orally and in writing encourage them to communicate in English from the beginning. This is reflected in *Opportunities* in the 'Communication Workshop' section and in the process approach to skills development evinced in *Go for it!* 1. The *Top Teens*, *Friends United* and *New Headway* series come second as regards the challenge posed by the task and the degree of help offered by the materials. *For Teens*, *Click On* and *Blockbuster* offer very simple tasks which may fail to provide a challenge and thus be less successful in sparking acquisition, causing motivation to flag in the long run. The development of reading comprehension as proposed by the activities in *On Stage* and the *Tools* series stand a better chance of fulfilling their purpose than the productive skills activities because of the lack of balance between the demands of the activity and the degree of guidance provided.

Considering the interest that the contents dealt with in the coursebooks may awaken in learners, *Opportunities* Elementary and Pre-intermediate and *New Headway* rank highest because of the variety of topics and text types covered, whereas the contents of the Beginner level are felt to be less motivating because of the predominance of survival contents necessary for international travel.

As mentioned before, the contents covered by the *On Stage* and *Tools* series should be inherently motivating, as the learners who use these materials are streamed according to interest in a special field such as Humanities or Business & Management. *Friends United* 1 & 2 and *New Snapshot Starter* draw largely on famous celebrities to interest their learners.

An important factor to analyse is the visual appeal of the coursebooks, mainly because our analysis focuses on primary and secondary students for whom the quality of the visuals may enhance motivation to use the materials. In this area, *Opportunities*, *New Headway* and *Friends United* as well as *Blockbuster* present the most visually appealing artwork through their use of photographs and drawings. Additionally, the photographs shown in these coursebooks show many facets of life in the UK, thus conveying aspects of life in the UK through texts and visuals. *Go for it!* 1 relies less on photographs and more on colourful drawings and, as said before, is quite neutral in its visual portrayal of aspects of the target culture. *Top Teens*, *For Teens*, *Dream Team*, *Tools* and *Pacesetter Starter* display artwork of less appealing nature and largely lack a visual portrayal of the target culture while some of the artwork in *Click On* may seem a little childish to teenagers' eyes. With its monochrome artwork, the *On Stage* series are the least visually appealing of the coursebooks analysed. Admittedly, the visual appeal is a marketing factor contributing to increasing sales, but it is a given that a visually appealing coursebook will attract the learner more than a less visually appealing one, thus adding to motivation and contributing to arouse interest.

In the primary coursebooks, the content in the series analysed is likely to engage students as it is closely connected to their own world as young learners. Regarding the activities, even if some of them are too controlled, they help students feel successful. The storyline and the visual impact of *English Adventure* are likely to be more attractive and interesting for young learners than those in the other two coursebooks.

Our Personal Evaluation of the Materials

On balance, we find a number of positive points as well as a number of weaknesses, as is shown in Table 17.1.

Table 17.1

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Primary coursebooks	
• Tendency to personalize coursebooks, to relate topics to students' personal lives • Varied text types with graphic devices that help them look authentic	• Too many oral and written activities requiring controlled and planned discourse • Few creative activities

• Topics related to their own reality • Lexical areas relevant to young learners • Achievable activities • Attempts to develop students' metacognitive strategies • Inclusion of interactive activities that involve students cognitively	• Few attempts to cater for different learning styles • There is a neglect of activities that cater for students' affective engagement • Few attempts to guide students into the discovery of the language system
Materials for secondary schools and language schools	
• Attractive variety of texts with visual appeal • Relevant topics • Inclusion of cultural information • Achievable activities including interaction and the production of written texts • Affective engagement through motivating contents (photostories, texts, songs) • Some attempts to engage learners cognitively in their interlanguage development	• Neglect of opportunities for students to make linguistic and cultural contrasts • Strong emphasis on life in the UK to the detriment of other English-speaking countries (notably the USA) • Heavy presence of functional language and comparatively few possibilities for learners to express their emotions • Weak learner and strategy training

Our Suggestions for Improvements

In primary coursebooks:

- More creative activities making use of less controlled and planned discourse
- Inclusion of activities that consider students' individual learning styles
- Systematic inclusion of activities that cater for learners' affective needs
- Systematic strategy training accounting for children's cognitive level.

In secondary and language school coursebooks:

- Inclusion of linguistic contrasts to raise language awareness
- Inclusion of activities for the development of intercultural competence
- Activities allowing the expression of the learners' own thoughts and feelings
- Situations where speakers of English come in contact with the learners in their own environment.

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Endnotes

[1] These are mostly non-profit cultural organizations such as the Associations of English Culture in Argentina and Brazil. For more information see www.britishcouncil.org/argentina-english-learn_english_in_argentina.htm.
[2] Non-profit organizations of cultural exchange between the Latin American countries and the USA. See www.buenosaires.usembassy.gov/binational_centers.html.
[3] The selection was made according to the information provided by bookshops and colleagues.
[4] The following acronyms are used: TB (teacher's book), WB (workbook).
[5] Compare similar learners' magazines such as *Click* or *Crown* from Mary Glasgow Publications.
[6] Cf. López Barrios *et al.*, 2006b.

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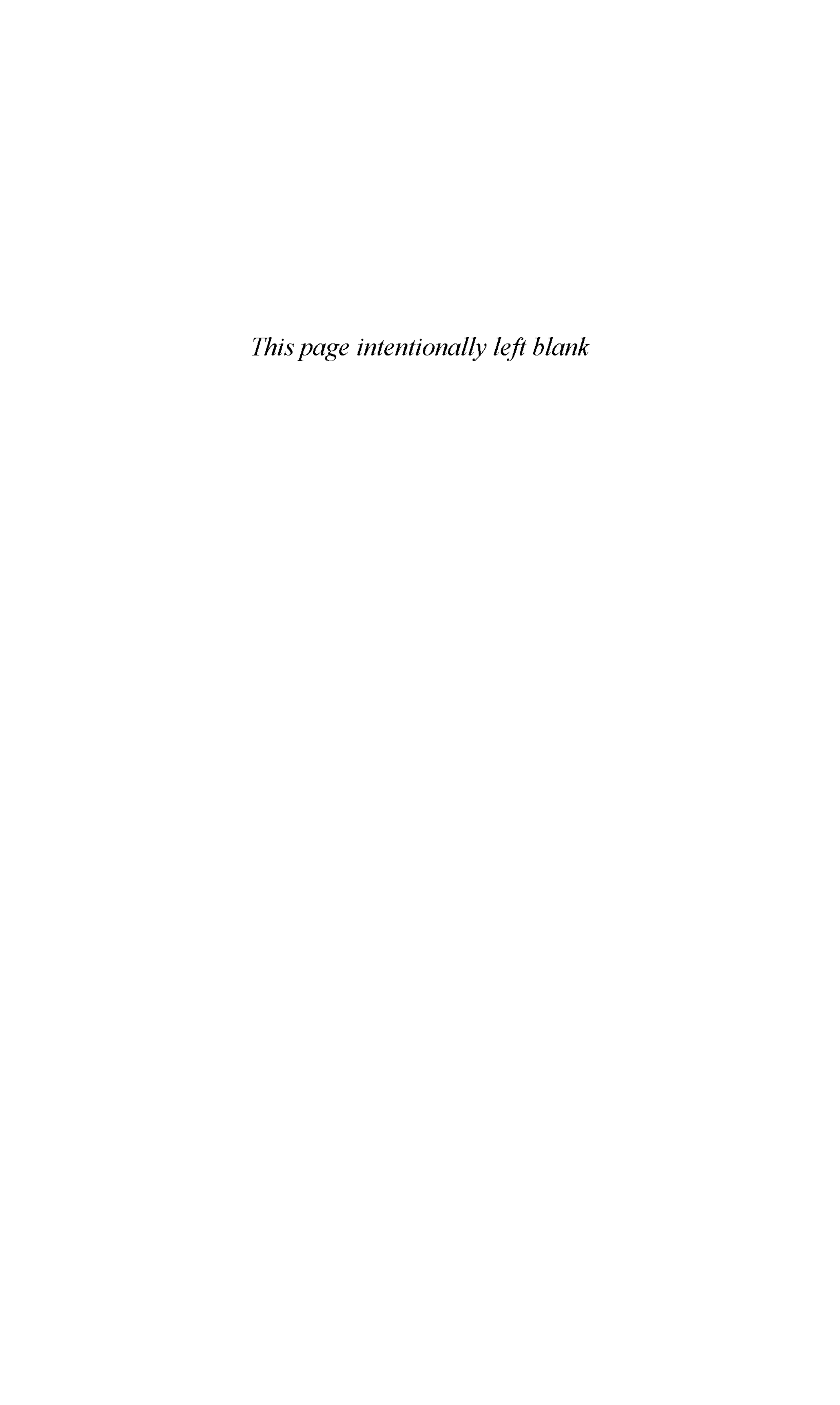
Part 4

CONCLUSIONS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Chapter 18

Conclusions about ELT Materials in Use around the World

Brian Tomlinson

Potentially Negative Characteristics of Currently Used ELT Materials

In Chapter 1, 'Language Acquisition and Language Learning Materials', I gave my personal list of characteristics of language learning materials which could actually be considered to be inhibiting language acquisition and development. It seems that many of the writers of chapters in this volume agree with me about the following potentially negative characteristics:

Underestimating learners

Chapters 2, 4, 8, 9 and 10 point out that the language level, cognitive level and affective level of many materials is below the ability of the learners and Chapter 4 stresses how insultingly low the scientific level of EST materials often is. It would seem that many materials, especially those developed for linguistically low level learners, underestimate the intellectual and emotional maturity of their target learners. They are impoverishing the learning experience in a misguided attempt to make learning easier and many of us would like materials developers to find ways of providing learners with appropriate and achievable challenges (e.g. by providing different versions of the same text to chose from; by providing texts of different lengths and demands for learners to select from for use with generic tasks; and by providing intelligent content in low level courses).

Overuse of the PPP approach

Chapters 2, 4, 5 and 9 point out that the overuse of PPP approaches is putting the emphasis on teaching rather than learning and is preventing a more effective application of language acquisition theory to practice. It should be possible to provide teachers and learners with a choice as to the weighting and sequencing of stages in the lesson procedure (e.g. starting with production activities and then providing presentation and practice in relation to the learner performance).

Insufficient use of recycling

Chapters 2, 3, 9 and 15 in particular make the point that materials typically fail

to provide the recycling of learning points necessary for language acquisition to take place. It should certainly be easy for computer software to reveal the inadequacy of recycling in a course (Mukundan 2006) and for steps then to be taken to add experiences of learning points before and after they are focused on.

Excessive focus on practice of typical examination tasks

Chapters 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10 and 13 draw attention to the tendency for courses to be driven by preparation for examinations and to take up valuable class learning time in testing. On the PKG project in Indonesia we were able to demonstrate that learners in our experimental classes who spent all their time experiencing, exploring and using English did better on conventional examinations than learners in the control classes who spent most of their time practising for the examination (Tomlinson 1990). I just wish that the 'authorities' would have the confidence to encourage teachers to spend their time providing learning opportunities rather than examination practice and that publishers would then cater for the changing demand (Tomlinson 2005).

Failing to help the learners to make full use of the language experience available to them outside the classroom

No chapter actually draws any attention to activities helping learners to make use of the language available to them outside the classroom and Chapters 2, 9 and 17 criticize the lack of such activities. I am hoping that the next big development will be for ELT materials to include activities which encourage learners to make use of the environment outside their classroom (be it English rich or English impoverished) to find opportunities to gain authentic input and to achieve authentic output too.

Further Points of Criticism

In addition the contributors to this book make the following general criticisms of currently used ELT materials:

- They do not try to achieve affective engagement (e.g. Chapters 2, 5, 7, 8, 15 and 17).
- They focus on what to teach rather than on how to promote learning (e.g. Chapters 2, 4, 5, 9, 15 and 17).
- They are form-focused and control-centred and provide little exposure to language in authentic use and few opportunities to use language to achieve communication (e.g. Chapters 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15 and 17).
- They are Anglo-centric or Euro-centric in their topics and themes and in their assumptions about the best ways to learn (e.g. Chapters 4, 5, 6, 13, 14 and 15).
- They portray non-European cultures superficially and insensitively (e.g. Chapters 2, 5, 9 and 15).

This is quite a long list of the potentially negative characteristics of currently used English language materials. I would like to end this book though on a positive note by listing the potentially positive attributes of currently used materials as agreed by the contributors to this book and by echoing their main requests for positive developments.

Potentially Positive Attributes of Currently Used ELT Materials

- Many local materials do provide comprehensible connections to the culture of the learners (e.g. Chapters 3, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17).
- Many materials do aim to achieve personalization by getting the learners to articulate their thoughts and feelings and to connect the materials to their own lives (e.g. Chapters 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16).
- Many materials (especially those at higher levels) do try to involve the learners in serious, educationally valuable issues (e.g. Chapters 2, 5, 9, 10).
- Most materials make an attempt to be contemporary in their topics and themes and to connect with their target learners (e.g. Chapters 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14).
- Many materials now include language awareness activities helping learners to make discoveries for themselves about how English is typically used (though many of these still ask the learners to discover the obvious and push them towards a correct discovery) (e.g. Chapters 2, 9, 11).

The most positive chapter is probably Chapter 3 – 'Materials for Teaching English to Young Learners'. It seems that materials for young learners now do realize the importance of making language learning enjoyable, of engaging the learners and of providing opportunities for genuine interaction and expression of thoughts and feelings. Perhaps materials for adult learners should move in this experiential direction too.

Requests for Future Developments in ELT Materials

I would like to echo the many voices in this book which have called out for ELT materials to:

- pay more attention to how to facilitate intake and less attention to the presentation of language points
- aim for more affective and cognitive engagement
- provide more opportunities for outcome focused communication
- be much more flexible in providing opportunities for choice of texts, tasks and route
- help teachers to achieve class specific adaptation.

Final Pleas

The one approach to helping learners to achieve language acquisition and development which seems to have unequivocal support from researchers, methodologists and practitioners is extensive reading (e.g. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 13 and 16). Using extensive reading on ELT programmes is so easy. It just needs encouragement for teachers, allocation of time, public recognition of its value and the provision of engaging materials for the learners to read (or incentives for learners to provide materials for themselves (Tomlinson 2003: 164)). My plea to Ministries of Education and to institutions round the world is to give priority to the provision of extensive readers when doing budget allocations (they are much more cost effective than multi-media laboratories, for example) and to have the courage to recommend that teachers encourage learners to read what they want to read when they want to read and how they want to read without having to pay for the pleasure by doing written tasks.

Finally I would like to make a plea for publishers, researchers, authors, teachers and learners to come together to share their research, experience and views about how to develop and use materials in order to best facilitate language acquisition and development. If anybody has any contribution they would like to make to this quest, please contact me at brianjohntomlinson@gmail.com and I will include them in a paper I am going to write and in a major MATSDA Conference I intend to organize.

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