

folio



Journal of the Materials Development Association

MATSDA

In this issue:

Jo Appleton

Discover Your City: An Integrated Skills Course

Alan Maley

The Creative Spark in ELT: A Retrospective ... Part Two

Dr. Mario López Barrios & Elba Villanueva de Debat

Minding the Needs of the Argentine Learner: Global Textbooks and their Adapted Versions for the Local Context

Sue Leather

Four tips for writing a really good original reader

M^a del Pilar Montijano Cabrera

Enticing Advanced Foreign Language Learners to Really Speak

Soufiane Trabelsi

Towards A Framework for Authentic Business English Teaching Materials for Tunisian Intermediates

Kris Bayne

Colouring Outside the Lines: A Training Exercise in the Adaptation of Written Instruction in ELT Materials

Daniel Droukis & Kiyoshi Yukitoki

That First Publishing Experience

Dorothy Zemach

Working with an Editor

Chris Mares

The Template Conundrum

Patricia L. Duffy

Personal Coding: the Varieties of Linguistic Experience

Barry Bakin

Start Blogging for yourself and for your Students

Contents

<i>Editorial, Carlos Islam</i>	2
<i>Greeting from the President</i>	3
<i>From the Chair</i>	4

PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES

Discover Your City: An Integrated Skills Course	6
<i>Jo Appleton, Leeds Metropolitan University, England</i>	

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES

The Creative Spark in ELT: A Retrospective ... Part Two	9
<i>Alan Maley</i>	

Minding the Needs of the Argentine Learner: Global Textbooks and their Adapted Versions for the Local Context	14
<i>Dr. Mario López Barrios, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina and Elba Villanueva de Debat, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina</i>	

Four tips for writing a really good original reader	17
<i>Sue Leather</i>	

Enticing Advanced Foreign Language Learners to Really Speak	19
<i>M^a del Pilar Montijano Cabrera, University of Málaga, Spain</i>	

Towards A Framework for Authentic Business English Teaching Materials for Tunisian Intermediates	24
<i>Soufiane Trabelsi, Tunisia</i>	

Colouring Outside the Lines: A Training Exercise in the Adaptation of Written Instruction in ELT Materials	30
<i>Kris Bayne, International Christian University, Japan</i>	

That First Publishing Experience	34
<i>Daniel Droukis and Kiyoshi Yukitoki, Kyushu Kyoritsu University</i>	

PUBLISHING PERSPECTIVES

Working with an Editor	37
<i>Dorothy Zemach, Cambridge University Press, USA</i>	

The Template Conundrum	40
<i>Chris Mares, The University of Maine, USA</i>	

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

Personal Coding: the Varieties of Linguistic Experience	42
<i>Patricia L. Duffy, United Nations, USA</i>	

COMPUTER PERSPECTIVES

Start Blogging for yourself and for your Students	45
<i>Barry Bakin, Los Angeles Unified School District, USA.</i>	

REVIEWS

Reviews	47
<i>Carrie Steenburgh, The University of Maine, USA</i>	

SPOTLIGHT ON A MATERIALS WRITER

Featured Writer: ????	42
<i>Freelance Register</i>	44

Editor's Message

Carlos Islam, United Nations, USA

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ISSN 1357 406X

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Greetings from the President

Brian Tomlinson, MATSDA President, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

A happy new year to all our members and readers. Let's hope 2006 is a great year for materials development. It certainly looks as though it'll be a great year for MATSDA.

At the end of 2005 Hitomi Masuhara and I did a joint MATSDA presentation at an Applied Linguistics Seminar at the University of Auckland in New Zealand and enthused a large number of people to get interested in joining MATSDA and in contributing to FOLIO. Also in December I gave a plenary presentation at the TESOL Symposium in Senegal and got a lot of African teachers and academics interested in MATSDA. Earlier in the year MATSDA had contributed to the NILE Conference in Norwich, had organised a materials writing workshop in Slaidburn, Lancashire and had increased its profile around the world as a result of conference presentations by myself, Dave Allan, Hitomi Masuhara, Ivor Timmis and Jo Appleton in Malaysia, Singapore, Turkey, Germany, Switzerland, the USA and many other countries.

2006 promises to be an even busier year for MATSDA. On January 21st and 22nd we'll be having a conference in Dublin with the theme of What We Know and What We Do: Connecting Theory and Practice in Materials Development for Language Teaching (with plenaries by Vivian Cook and Keith Johnson) and then in early June we'll be having a materials writing workshop focusing on writing extensive readers (probably at the Marton Arms near Ingleton). At the end of November we'll be having a two day MATSDA Conference in Chiba, Japan and at the end of the year (or early 2007) we'll be having a MATSDA Conference in

Cordoba, Spain. In addition Committee Members, such as Dave Allan, Hitomi Masuhara, Ivor Timmis, Jo Appleton and myself, will be promoting MATSDA while giving presentations at the IATEFL Conference in Harrogate and at conferences in Australia, Tunisia, India, Cyprus, Portugal, Malaysia, Poland and Japan. Also in 2006 Tomlinson, B. (ed.) *Language Acquisition and Development: Studies in First and Other Language Acquisition will be published by Continuum*. This contains chapters by myself, by MATSDA Committee Members, Hitomi Masuhara and Ivor Timmis, and by previous presenters at MATSDA Conferences, such as Alan Maley, Jane Arnold, Bao Dat and Erlin Barnard Susanti. The book focuses on similarities and differences between first and other language acquisition and most chapters consider implications for future materials development. Once the manuscript for this book is delivered to Continuum a large team of materials developers will be starting work on *The Material World: A Survey of English Language Teaching Materials Used Around the World*. This book will attempt a critical review of the materials commonly used in each area of the world for teaching English as another language. I'll be editing this book and anybody interested in joining our team of writers should contact me at B.Tomlinson@leedsmet.ac.uk

Have a great 2006.

Brian Tomlinson

President of MATSDA

Greetings from the Chair

Dave Allan, MATSDA Chair, Norwich Institute for Language Education (NILE)

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WORLD WIDE READERS

A Series of Web Readers for Adult Learners of English to Enjoy

Edited by Brian Tomlinson and Alan Maley

The Books

- The books are extensive readers aiming to provide enjoyable and engaging reading in English for non-native speakers anywhere in the world. The writers have not been subjected to linguistic grading or censorship of language or topics. Instead they have been encouraged and helped to write intuitively for older teenagers and adults.

Objectives of World Wide Readers

- To provide reading pleasure
- To help develop reading confidence and competence in English
- To provide an effective means of acquiring English during, outside and after English courses

The Launch

We are launching the series in January 2005 with the following books. We will add an extra ten books every six months.

- The Picture in the Attic by Richard MacAndrew and Cathy Lawday
- Blowin in the Wind by Olivia Farrington
- Dead Cold by Sue Leather
- Finders Keepers by Brian Tomlinson
- Jungle Fever by Jo Appleton
- Lanterns of Childhood by Bao Dat
- Perfect Present by Ron Barnett
- Why Didn't You Tell Me? by David A. Hill
- Family Ties by Jennifer Balchin
- There Is A Time by Alan Maley

The Website

For free samples of the readers and for details of how to download the readers go from January 2005 to: *www.ebooksworld.de*

Brian Tomlinson and Alan Maley

Discover Your City: An Integrated Skills Course

Jo Appleton, Leeds Metropolitan University, England

Reflection is an integral part of undergraduate study and a skill which is undeniably useful in life. The art of reflection is being given increasing prominence in many academic fields, journals and institutes, including Language Learning. I believe we should embed reflection and evaluation on our courses, not only to help students build useful skills for their future study and careers but to help us make improvements and changes to our courses and materials. The following is one example of how you could do this and could be adapted to a wide range of courses.

These materials are from week 6 of a 12 week course entitled 'Discover your City' which is now a module on the International Foundation Studies programme at Leeds Met. This is an Integrated Skills Course based on the main idea that learners will complete the tasks of researching, developing, and producing and evaluating a 'Group Project' based on interaction with a particular outside community within the city.

So far, so good!

Reflection and Evaluation

Suggestions for how to begin

1. To begin, you could do one or more of the following:
2. Show a humorous photo, cartoon or advert, related to reflection or evaluation and ask for the learner's reactions.
 - a) Read a funny poem about reflection or evaluation. Ask for reactions or ask learners to draw their interpretation.
 - b) Play a 'reflective/evaluative type' song and ask some questions such as: How does it make you feel? What images did you see in your mind? Have you ever felt like this?
 - c) Ask learners what 'Reflection' means to them? Ask them to draw/write or describe their ideas to a partner.

Task Suggestion

Let the learners know that they are now going to reflect on the course and evaluate their own learning experience. Let them know that any of the points made will be listened to and acted on if deemed appropriate. You could either work through the sections with the class or allow them to work in their own time, giving a time limit of 45-60 minutes. Monitor closely and give help whenever asked for. You could encourage learners to share their experiences of the course so far with a partner or a small group. Remind learners that discussion and the sharing of ideas is always useful language practice and usually interesting to hear what other people think.

TASK

To reflect and evaluate on your skills and the course so far

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

You will learn more about the importance of reflection, enrich your vocabulary, and be better able to evaluate the skills and qualities you are gaining during this course

WHAT YOU'LL PRACTISE

You will practise identifying your own strengths and weaknesses

You will practise evaluating your progress so far

You will practise evaluating the course so far

You will find out more about each other's thoughts

Time for Reflection

1. It is now a good time to look at the different aspects of the course and to think more about your successes and areas to improve.
2. First, read the following text about reflective learning. While you are reading, think if you agree or disagree with the information.

Reflective Learning

When you start your degree course, you will be responsible for your own progress – for your development as an autonomous learner. Although you will receive formal assessment grades and comments from lecturers, it is important not to be dependent on the assessment and views of other people. You will benefit from being able to work things out for yourself, through a process of analysis and reflection, what you do well, what you need to improve, and your priorities.

The research suggests that people develop reflection skills over time. In the early stages most people need to make time when they consciously reflect on what they have just achieved – this is called a 'reflection on action'. As they become more experienced at it, they are able to reflect on things while they are happening – this is called 'reflection in action'.

Your performance as a student is likely to improve if you develop a habit of putting time aside to reflect on how you learn. You will find that you study more effectively if you consider such things as:

- Your motivation
- Changes in your attitude and ideas
- The appropriateness of your current study strategies to the tasks you are undertaking
- Which skills you need for different kinds of assignment
- What is blocking your learning
- Any gaps there are in your knowledge

(Adapted from S, Cottrell (1999) The Study Skills Handbook)

3. When we 'reflect', we think about past actions, past or ongoing situations, good experiences and bad experiences. You may like to discuss your thoughts about your experience on this course so far with a partner. Tell them about the following:

- What was good and not so good about the course so far?
- What could have been done differently?
- Why did this happen?
- How do I feel about this?
- What would be a better reaction if that happens again?
- What is the most important or useful thing about this course?

- How can I reproduce this success in other areas of my life?

3. As you know, a good way to develop your reflective skills is to use a diary or learning log. This involves recording what you learn in terms of:

- The experience – a brief summary of what you are doing
- Your reflection – what you feel you are learning from this
- Actions – what you could improve/ how the course could improve/change

Now, think about your course so far and use the box below to reflect on it. Begin by writing a short description of the experience. Then reflect on the experience and write down what you felt was important. Explain what you have learnt so far and how you feel about it. If, appropriate, note down any future actions you intend to take as a result. You should spend between 15 and 20 minutes writing.

EXPERIENCE OF THE COURSE SO FAR

WHAT I HAVE LEARNT SO FAR

ACTIONS I COULD TAKE TO HELP WITH THE COURSE OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE COURSE

4. When you have completed the reflection, exchange it with other people if you wish, or, if you prefer, just keep it as a reminder to yourself. You could use this approach to record and reflect other courses, tasks, experiences, or even jobs.
5. Look back at writing you did at the beginning of this course. Compare the writing you have just completed with it. Has your writing improved since then? Do you find writing a bit easier now?
6. Now, think about some of the skills and qualities you have developed or learnt on this course. Read through the self-evaluation form and tick any of the skills and qualities you now have or feel able to do. Put a mark out of 10 to show how good this quality is and how well you can perform the skill.

Self – Evaluation – Current Skills and Qualities

✓	Score 1 - 10	Skills & Qualities with People	✓	Score 1 - 10	Skills & Qualities with Activities
		Ability to get on with people from other backgrounds			Ability to read difficult texts
		Ability to see and understand other peoples point of view			Researching information in the library
		Able to deal with the general public			Researching information on the Internet
		Ability to work well in a group			Writing questionnaires
		Ready to help others			Analysing data
		Being sensitive to others feelings			Visualisation (seeing picture in your mind as you read/listen)
		Speaking clearly			Writing introductions & conclusions
		Making your point			Writing a chapter of a project
		Agreeing and disagreeing with people			Writing letters
		Being able to take advice from others			Ability to speak confidently in front of others
		Talking with people on the phone			Ability to give a presentation
		Ability to read people's body language (non-verbal communication)			Reflecting and Evaluating
		Skills & Qualities with Activities			Personal Qualities
		Creativity, design and layout			Ability to ask for help when needed
		Organising information			Ability to learn from mistakes
		Managing your time			Willingness to take risks and experiment
		Making decision			Ability to set my own goals
		Setting priorities			Ability to stay motivated
		Organising work to meet Deadlines			Trust in my own actions
		Taking part in meetings			Ability to stay calm (unstressed)

(Adapted from S, Cottrell (1999) *The Study Skills Handbook*)

- 10 shows you have maximum skill/quality and 1 shows you have minimum skill/quality at the moment, and this is something you could work on improving in the future. Remember you are evaluating your ability to do these in the English language.
- Finally, think about what you have reflected on and evaluated. Identify skills you need to keep improving and congratulate yourself on skills you feel confident using now.

Follow-Up

- Complete a diary/journal and review what you have learnt so far on this course.
- Email your teacher any suggestions you have for how the course could be improved or changed.
- Discover more about 'Reflection' by looking at the following:
 - The Befriender (2002) *Why do Ministry Reflection?* [Internet], Available from: < <http://www.BefrienderMinistry.org> > [Last Accessed 22nd August 2005]

- Boud, D. Keogh, R. Walker, D. (eds) (1997) *Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning*. London, Kogan Page
- Cottrell, S. (1999) *The Study Skills Handbook*. London. Macmillan.
- Gibbs (1988) *Learning by doing: a guide to teaching and learning methods*. London, FEU.
- Kolb D. A. (1984) *Experiential Learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice Hall.
- Moon, J. (1999) *Learning Journals: A handbook for Academics, Students and Professional Development*. London, Kogan Page.
- Moon, J. (2002) *Reflective Writing: Some Initial Guidance for Students*. [Internet] London, London Metropolitan University. Available from < <http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/employability/contact/im101/reflective.cfm> > [Last Accessed 22nd August 2005]

The Creative Spark in ELT: A Retrospective ... Part Two

Alan Maley

This is the second half of a two part article Alan has written for Folio. The first half was published in Spring 2005 in Volume 10/1 of Folio. In the first part of his article Alan highlighted the development in ELT in what he called 'Academic' and 'Methodological' creativity. He also sets the historical context which produced the environment allowing creative ideas in the field to take shape. In this part of the article Alan will focus on describing the development of 'Institutional' and 'Individual' creativity.

Institutional Creativity

Institutions, whether public or private, can be powerful engines of creativity. The vision of one or more individuals within an institution can promote an atmosphere favourable to the generation of new ideas. The institution itself can provide the resources necessary to put those ideas into effect. Contrariwise, institutions can, through a lack of creative leadership and a bureaucratic control of resources, just as easily stifle creativity. In the nature of things, institutions frequently experience both creative and mummified phases.

Understandably, I cannot mention all the institutions which have had a creative influence on developments in our field. Any selection is invidious but I shall mention what I consider to be good examples of institutional creativity, with apologies to those I have omitted for want of space. The institutions I shall review will include university centres, private language schools, associations, regional and national centres, test and examination centres, and publishers.

University centres have had a strong creative influence from the outset. The University of Edinburgh under the influence of J.R.Firth was the nursery for a galaxy of academic stars: Pit Corder, Peter Strevens, John Sinclair, Michael Halliday, Henry Widdowson, Alan Davies and many others were distinguished alumni. It is sobering to think just how many of the key ideas we now take for granted emerged from this one centre. Similar earlier centres of influence included the University of Michigan and the Institute of Education, London at the time of Bruce Pattison. In the 1970's and 80's especially, the Institute of English Language Education (IELE) at Lancaster was one of the powerhouses of creative energy, initially under the

leadership of Chris Candlin, with influential figures such as Dick Allwright, Charles Alderson, Cyril Weir, Mick Short, Geoffrey Leech and Tom Hutchinson. Also in the UK, the Centre for Applied Language Studies (CALS) at Reading played a key role for a time under Ron White and with the key contributions of the late lamented Gill Sturtridge and Eddie Williams. So also did the University of Birmingham under John Sinclair, and the Institute of Education, London in the time of Henry Widdowson and Chris Brumfit. The College of St Mark and St John in Plymouth with Rod Bolitho and Tony Wright has also had an important role in teacher training and coursebook development, especially in Eastern Europe.

In the USA, Georgetown University with its now famous roundtables, has acted as a magnet for new and challenging ideas. The School for International Training (SIT) at Brattleboro', Vermont under Donald Freeman and Diane Larsen-Freeman has provided much of the impetus for classroom research already referred to above, aided in no small degree by the fact that it is an independent institution, not a university, and that it has a strong educational ethos. In Canada, the Ontario Institute for Secondary Education (OISE) initially under David Stern, with researchers such as Merrill Swain, Patsy Lightbown and Nina Spada has long made important contributions to SLA, and in the field of bi-lingual education. In Australia, Macquarie University became a key centre following the migration of Chris Candlin from Lancaster and the setting up of the NCELTR.

Private language schools have exercised a surprising degree of influence on developments in methodology and materials design during the period under review. The vision of John and Brita Haycraft in founding International House, London, of Frank Bell in setting up the Bell schools, of Pilgrims and of Eurocentres, have loomed large. The favourable climate for experimentation in classroom practices, in designing innovative materials and for instituting experience-based teacher training which these schools (and others like them) provided has fuelled many of the more interesting features of the Communicative Approach. It is unsurprising that many of the better-known authors of coursebooks and resource materials served their apprenticeship in such schools.

Mention must also be made of the role of regional

and national institutions. One of the most highly significant has been the Council of Europe. The team led by John Trim from the 1970s onward has largely defined the content of language teaching in the European context. The publication of the Threshold Level and its subsequent versions (Van Ek 1975) made possible a hitherto unthinkable degree of cohesion in syllabus and materials design. The Common European Framework (Morrow 2004) is the latest chapter in this story. In Asia, the Regional Language Centre (RELC) in Singapore has had a seminal influence on materials and teacher training in the SEAMEO countries, though this has somewhat diminished in recent years. Nevertheless, the lists of RELC publications bear eloquent testimony to the creative work of this institution over the years.

The role of publishers in promoting creativity and innovation also deserves special mention, particularly in the earlier part of the period under review. As is often the case, it was the vision of a few individuals which was central. Publishers such as Adrian du Plessis, who built the CUP list from almost nothing, John Milne, who created and sustained the Heinemann readers series, Della Summers and her team of dictionary writers at Longman: all have made major contributions. To cite particular, relatively recent instances, the production of the TV series 'Follow Me' by the BBC (Tomalin), which became a major engine of innovation in ELT in China; the publication of the Collins COBUILD dictionary (Sinclair et al 1987), which was the granddaddy of all the recent learner dictionaries; of the Longman English Activator (Summers 1993), a new concept dictionary enabling students to find words they did not yet know rather than simply looking up meanings of unknown vocabulary; of the Cambridge Readers series under Philip Prowse, with its exclusive focus on readers originally written for language learners, rather than simplifications of existing works; the development of teachers' resource books series by OUP (Maley 1985 onward) and CUP (Ur) especially, thus offering banks of creative techniques for teachers to choose from, rather than relying exclusively on coursebooks – all of these have served to fuel the energy of our ELT profession. It is sad to have to comment that with the growth of competition and the higher investment and marketing costs incurred, publishers now tend to take fewer risks than before. It is however, encouraging to note the existence of some small, niche publishers, such as Saffire and DELTA who continue the tradition of risk, without which innovation cannot easily take place.

The role of teachers' journals and magazines has also been central to stimulating teacher creativity and development. In the UK, the special role played by the *English Language Teaching Journal* (Morrow) spans the whole of the period. It offers a unique blend of academic and teacher inputs with broad appeal. Other particularly influential magazines include *Modern English Teacher* (MET) and *English Teaching*

Professional (ETp). Such magazines offer a forum for teachers themselves to share ideas and opinions – a forum they are all too often denied elsewhere.

It would be impossible to omit mention the role played by the British Council in promoting creative approaches to ELT. In earlier years, their centre in Portland Place London, was a testing ground for new ideas and approaches, under the directorship of Jo Barnett, Dennis Sharrocks, Don Byrne, and David Harper. The Council's cadre of inventive and opportunistic English Language Officers (of whom I was one!) had considerable freedom to operate as they saw fit in the widely different contexts and cultures in which they worked. Sadly, the later shift in emphasis from a service-oriented to a profit-oriented organisation, focussed mainly on exploiting the English language through direct teaching, examinations work, and promotional activity, has done nothing to enhance the Council's role in promoting creativity. It is widely viewed now as an institution which is 'on the make' rather than one which is 'making'. Like many other previously successful institutions, it has succumbed to management leprosy. As a source of creative ideas, it is all but dead.

Finally, what of the role of professional associations? Through their conferences, newsletters and other publications, and their special interest groups, international associations such as TESOL and IATEFL have offered teachers a forum for the exchange of ideas, a platform for publication and an opportunity to exercise leadership roles. Apart from these major international associations, and their many affiliated national counterparts, bodies such as the Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT), *Lingua e nuova didattica* (LEND) in Italy, LABCI in Latin America, and many others at national level have played a key creative role in teacher development.

Institutions have clearly been integral to generating and sustaining creative ideas in ELT. The main problem with institutions is however, the fact that they are institutions. Given the right conditions of leadership, vision and resources, they function well. All too often however, they fall victim to personal ambition and conflict, to organisational sclerosis and to the blight of management bureaucracy, 'restructuring' and resource scarcity. Fortunate then are those who slip the noose of the institution and manage to survive independently. It is to them that I now turn.

Individual Creativity

This final section will clearly be highly influenced by my own personal experience and preferences formed over the past 40 years. My aim here is to draw attention to some individual talents – people who have somehow managed to remain independent – free spirits who have had an effect by their ability to think outside

the box, to question conventional wisdom, to dare to be different.

I would start with Colin Mortimer, who back in the early 1970's was almost alone in putting forward an aesthetic view on materials writing. In an article (undated) 'The Dramatic Implicatory Component', written while he was attached to what was then the CIEL (Central Institute of English Language) in Hyderabad he wrote,

It is sometimes salutary for those of us who write special dialogues, and other materials for language learning purposes to try to regard the restrictions under which we work ...rather in the way that a poet would regard the narrow confines of sonnet form, or the composer the rigid constraints of fugue form – that is, more as a stimulus and challenge to creative endeavour than as a justification for trite work.

He went on, *...there are lessons that poets, dramatists and novelists can teach us about how to put words together which...will not only enhance the appeal of our materials, but also contribute greatly to their learnability: lessons about intra-, inter-, and supra- sentence cohesion, lessons about rhythm, about meaningful repetition, about other stylistic patternings of one sort or another, about economy, about playing with the reader's, hearer's or watcher's expectations, about suspense, irony, symbolism, levels of meaning...*

His own publications, particularly *Dramatic Monologues for Listening Comprehension* (1980) were a perfect expression of these ideas. Few people have even heard of Colin Mortimer, yet his ideas have been enormously important for a whole generation of materials writers, even when unconscious or unacknowledged.

Robert O'Neill is another 'lone ranger' whose contribution is all too easily forgotten. His materials, in particular *Kernel Lessons Intermediate* (O'Neill et al, 1971), were a good example of Mortimer's ideas in practice. *Kernel Lessons* was perhaps the most innovative and influential course of its time, and while now 'out of date' still retains its qualities of human interest and pedagogic soundness. O'Neill has always been committed to writing materials which grab the interest of students (his video course, *The Lost Secret* made with the BBC, is a cameo classic). However, he remains equally committed to debunking the more fashionable manifestations of the communicative movement. His imaginative reach and his intellectual rigour have made him uniquely influential, as has his commitment to helping younger, less-experienced teachers and writers.

In the States, Earl Stevick has been among the most influential independent minds. His *Memory, Meaning*

and Method (1976, 1980) served to open the eyes of many teachers to the nature of learning and gave a critical, yet sympathetic, account of some of the more outlandish methods then being propounded. His strong insistence on the pragmatic application of untested theoretical ideas, his shrewd common sense, his intellectual rigour, and his humane (and aesthetic) approach to learning make him a truly unique figure.

Perhaps the single most creative breakthrough book both in the States and elsewhere was Gertrude Moskowitz' *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Classroom* (1978). Here was a powerful call for 'humanising' and personalising learning. If such humanistic ideas are now part of the staple of our work, it is in large measure due to the efforts of both Stevick and Moskowitz in introducing them, explaining them and showing how they could be practically applied.

The work of John Fanselow is perhaps less well-known but he has been a true iconoclast in the best tradition of confronting what is with what might be. A charismatic speaker, his published work is relatively little-known. However, his *Breaking Rules* (1987) was in essence an injunction to re-examine teaching habits by reversing them, by 'making strange', and has been hugely influential (even if, like Chomsky, little read!). 'Do the opposite' was a powerful heuristic for teachers who wished to make changes in their practice. His later book *Contrasting Conversations* (1992) shows how detailed observation leading to quite small changes can bring about significant improvements in teaching.

Among those who stand out as individual creative talents are those, like Carolyn Graham or Andrew Wright, who have taken a particular type of activity and made it their own. Single-handed, Carolyn Graham has created the genre of Jazz Chants through her personal performances and presentations, and the series of books of jazz chants.(1978 onwards) The harnessing of rhythm and movement to language learning in this way has had a major impact, especially (though not only) in the teaching of younger learners.

Andrew Wright was at the forefront of a movement to re-introduce the art of storytelling (and story-making) within ELT. His story-telling sessions at IATEFL conferences were legendary, and his tireless promotion of this art both through workshops worldwide and through his books (1996, 1997) has fostered a new interest among teachers and writers.

(Rinvoluceri and Morgan 1990, Taylor 2000, Wajnryb 2003).

In a similar way, Ken Wilson and Doug Case (1998) have made an impact through *The English-Speaking Theatre*. The original, entertaining, yet subtly language-focussed sketches put on at International House from the 1970s onward have shown convincingly that learning does not all have to be dull, and that humour

has a definite place in ELT! Taking a different yet complementary approach to drama, Alan Maley and Alan Duff set about harnessing the techniques of dramatic training to ELT in their *Drama Techniques in Language Learning* (1982, 2005). Maley was to go on to focus on the way teachers rely on their voices and to raise awareness of it. (Maley 2000)

Undoubtedly, one of the best-known and most productive individual talents has been Mario Rinvolucri. His creative energies have involved him in highly influential workshops worldwide and in a series of books exploring unusual approaches to teaching. These have included re-examining traditional techniques, such as dictation (Davis and Rinvolucri 1988) or letter-writing (Burbridge et al 1996)), reaching out into 'feeder-fields' outside ELT for inspiration, such as NLP or Multiple Intelligences, and in providing a platform for new talent through his webzine www.hltmag.com. His ability to spot new talent and to nurture it has been, and remains, a significant part of his creative contribution.

The impact of the Internet on teacher consciousness has undoubtedly been enhanced by the work of pioneering enthusiasts such as Dave Sperling. The success of Dave's Internet Café <http://www.eslcafe.com/search/> is now legendary, and he must surely figure prominently in any list of individual creative talents for having spotted early what was to be a major resource for teachers, and for finding a way of making its workings available and accessible to ordinary teachers, while simultaneously offering them a platform for sharing ideas.

Scott Thornbury has made a major iconoclastic contribution to our thinking about materials and teaching through his 'Dogme' movement. Based on an eponymous Danish film-making movement, Thornbury asserts that what is most important in the teaching/learning situation is not the sophistication of the materials or the teaching technology, or even the academic qualifications of the teachers. Rather, it is to do with the quality of the interaction between and among learners and teachers. Extreme though this minimalist view may be, it rests on a foundation of common sense and intuitive understanding of the importance of 'atmosphere', and has led to intense debate, using the Internet as a forum: < teaching unplugged >

Some individuals have made outstanding creative contributions by establishing whole new areas of inquiry. One of these is the critical study of teaching materials – the area to which this journal is devoted. However, it is largely to the efforts of one individual, Brian Tomlinson, that this area owes its existence. Tomlinson was involved in the pioneering study by Cunningsworth on materials evaluation.(1984). Since then, he has almost single-handedly raised the study of materials to a 'respectable' domain in its own right.

His achievements include the creation of graduate programmes for materials design and development at Leeds Metropolitan, University, the establishment of MATSDA (Materials Development Association and its journal, *Folio*, as a forum for debate, and two collections of seminal papers on materials (Tomlinson 1998, 2003)

The importance of extensive reading as a key to improving language proficiency has already been referred to above. Two individuals who have had a significant impact in the recent past are Philip Prowse and Richard Day. It was Prowse, dissatisfied by the shortcomings of simplified versions of original novels, who pioneered the concept of original novels written for a language learning audience in the Cambridge English Readers. The success of this series, now well-established, was by no means a foregone conclusion. Yet the enthusiastic response it evoked from both teachers and students has made the term 'Language Learner Literature' a reality. Richard Day's contribution has been to disseminate and make accessible to teachers the good news that extensive reading is the single most effective route to language learning success. He has done this through his publications, in association with Julian Bamford (Day and Bamford 1998, Bamford and Day 2004), and by founding the Extensive Reading Foundation, dedicated to promoting quality in reading materials for language learners worldwide. www.erfoundation.org Through his efforts, there is now a real appreciation both from producers (writers and publishers) and consumers (teachers and students) that a literature for language learners is here to stay.

Here Comes Everybody was the title of Anthony Burgess' book on James Joyce. It could equally well have been applied to David Crystal. He is, of course, a distinguished academic but arguably his greatest contribution has been as an independent author with a prodigious output on issues as various as the historical development of English (2004), the role of English in the world (1997) and its negative consequences in threatening the very existence of smaller languages (2000), the role of 'play' in language use (1998), and the impact of the Internet on language (2001). The impact of this protean, independent author is difficult to assess but it must surely be considerable.

Conclusion

What is immediately striking is the sheer volume, range and variety of creative achievement during what is in millennial terms a short period of time. It is also clear that we have been catholic in absorbing, borrowing and adapting ideas from other domains. It is heartening too to note the role of individuals – a large number of them – in bringing about change. One might term this proliferation of individual influences 'parallel

distributed leadership'. Leadership is not confined to one centre, group or ideology. This I take as a healthy sign. Without contention between alternative views, progress is stultified.

The question does however arise as to whether we have entered a period of relative stability or even stagnation following the paradigm shift in the last quarter of the 20th century. What exactly should we understand by the 'post-method condition'? (Kumaravadivelu 2003) Are we simply elaborating on the advances of understanding from that period? It may be a result of my own ageing process, but when I survey the current situation, I do sometimes have the feeling that we are engaging with more of the same, rather than breaking through to new insights.

What then seem to be the necessary conditions for creative development (and for leadership) in the 21st century?

- Creative, critical thinking arises from individuals, and from interaction between such individuals.
- There needs to be a conducive 'Zeitgeist' which favours individual, creative thinking and interchange.
- There need to be channels of communication for the transfer and discussion of creative ideas.
- It is desirable (though not essential) that there should be strong institutional support for change/innovation.

What challenges remain? Here are five questions to consider:

- How do humans learn second languages? Despite the multitudes of studies, our ignorance still outstrips our knowledge.

- How do we apply such knowledge as we do possess to the ways in which languages are taught? The gap between theory / research is still awesome.
- How do we devise appropriate methodologies to cope with the galloping demand for English as a global medium of communication? Responding to this question in the new linguistic power configurations of our century will be a major challenge.
- How do we find appropriate pedagogical applications for the technological tsunami which is engulfing us?
- How do we prepare teachers for the rapidly changing demands they will have to satisfy? In particular, how do we ensure that they are thoroughly versed in the alternatives open to them, without succumbing to conventional thinking? How, in short, can we ensure that they are 'creative'?

(For a full bibliography go to <http://www.matsda.org>)

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Minding the Needs of the Argentine Learner: Global Textbooks and their Adapted Versions for the Local Context

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(Reprinted from FAAPI 2003 Conference Proceedings. Córdoba: Comunicarte. 118-124. ISBN 987-9280-99-7)

The problem under analysis

One important insight of Second Language Acquisition is the fact that there is no “prototype” learner. Individual differences in students (motivation, aptitude, strategic behaviour, age, sex, leaning styles, different intelligences, etc.) make it difficult for materials designers to have a picture of the “ideal” learner. For this reason, individual variation is difficult to be accounted for in learning materials. Nevertheless, there is a tendency in the last few years to “localise” coursebooks, as Tomlinson (2001) says: “One way of connecting coursebooks to the real world which the learners live in is obviously to localise them”. By this he means producing a coursebook that takes into account the characteristics of the teaching / learning situation in a special region of the world, so that learners are confronted with contents and learning practices they are familiar with and that are geared to their needs and interests. Furthermore, a localised textbook should take into account the socio-cultural features of the region where the coursebook is intended to be used, and build on the experiences of the learners (Gerighausen und Seel, 1982; Rösler 1992).

International publishers have started producing adapted (“local”) versions of textbooks either written for the international market or specially conceived for learners from a determined region (for example, Latin America) or with the same native language (Spanish) and a roughly similar cultural background (Latin America and Spain). Since the production of ELT materials is a commercial activity which is largely in the hands of international publishing houses, creating local textbooks is constrained by the laws of the market: “Unfortunately local coursebooks don’t generate as much profit as global coursebooks and, despite a recent trend of producing localised versions of coursebooks, the global coursebook is going to remain the resource used by the majority of learners of English in the world” (Tomlinson 2001: 5)¹. The purpose of our research is to look into the differences

between the international and the adapted versions of coursebooks in order to single out their distinguishing features and to elaborate quality criteria for the design of context sensitive materials to suit the practice of TEFL in the Argentine context.

Global coursebooks with adaptations (and coursebooks specially conceived for the Latin American context)

In line with the Educational Reform that took place in our country in the mid nineties – and in the context of the favourable economic outlook of those days – international publishers conducted some coursebook projects specially targeted at the local market. Two cases in point are “New Let’s Go for EGB” (Elsworth, Rose and Date 2000) and “Dream Team for Argentina” (Whitney and Sharman, 2001), which have been the object of this analysis. The compliance of these series with the new requirements the Federal Law of Education is made explicit by the publishers and authors: OUP advertises “Dream Team” as having been designed to “specifically meet the needs of students and teachers in Argentina” (OUP Argentina Catalogue 2002), whereas “New Let’s Go for EGB” “has been written to meet the Contenidos Básicos Comunes of the Educación General Básica in Argentina” (Mugglestone, Elsworth and Rose, 2000, iii). Both coursebooks have been extensively piloted by teachers in different cities of Argentina, as is acknowledged in their inside covers. Nevertheless, the degree of localisation between the international and the Argentine editions is considerably different in both coursebooks.

What does an adaptation mean?

Producing an adapted version of a coursebook entails a different treatment of some aspects or the incorporation of new information that are relevant to the learners of the region for which the book was conceived. This may mean a different degree of contextualisation, the possibility of including linguistic contrasts, a special treatment of cross-cultural confrontation as well as adaptations that involve a facilitation of the learning process.

1. Skehan (1998: 260), Canagarajah (1999: 84) and Gray (2002: 155) also refer to this fact.

What are the characteristics of the adapted versions of these textbooks?

A comparison of the two coursebooks mentioned above reveals that some changes have been introduced in the local editions. “New Let’s Go for EGB” reveals a deeper degree of adaptation, involving the following aspects: contextualisation, linguistic contrast, intercultural reflection, and facilitation of learning. The changes found in “Dream Team” are, in general, much less significant and involve mainly the area of contextualisation and cross-cultural confrontation.

Contextualisation

In “Let’s Go for EGB 1”, although the themes and topics are virtually the same in both editions, there is some reference, in the adapted version, to local places and famous people the Argentine student is familiar with. New features of the Argentine edition are the “World Watch” section, which gives “information about aspects of British and Argentinian life and culture” (Mugglestone, Elsworth and Rose, 2000: v), including information on Mar del Plata (p. 31) and Tierra del Fuego (p. 40), and the “Skills for Reading” section where students find reading passages about wildlife in South America (p. 25). Regarding familiar personalities, information about and pictures of the Argentine folk singer Soledad Pastorutti and the football player Batistuta have been included. The world map in the local edition includes the names of some Latin American countries that do not appear in the international one. In “Dream Team Starter” contextualisation is found in the inclusion of Lucas, an Argentine boy studying English in the UK (OUP Argentina 2002 Catalogue) as one of the main characters in the series.

Linguistic contrast

This area is one that is not sufficiently exploited. In “New Let’s Go for EGB”, there is only one instance in which the students’ attention is called to the similarities or differences between Spanish and English. This is done as part of a reading strategy training exercise at the semantic level to highlight cognates. Curiously, the exercise rubric says “Reading tip: difficult vocabulary” when the example given is the word condor, which is the same in English and Spanish (p. 25). Contrastivity is not exploited at the phonological or syntactic levels. No recourse to contrastivity is found in the “Dream Team” series, save for an activity which requires students to translate the adverbs of frequency into the student’s L1 (p. 23). Despite this lack, the teacher’s book indicates that “the use of the students’ own language is sometimes recommended in the ... teaching notes” (p. 13). However, these do not aim at contrastive aspects

but are meant to enable students to express ideas they cannot verbalise in English, in order to clarify points of grammar (in exercise 8, p. 7, cf. Teacher’s book, p. 23) or to contextualise the introduction of new topics, for example, when asking students about their attitudes towards homework (page 12, cf. Teacher’s book, page 27). A series that has been conceived for use in Argentina should have taken the advantage of possible interlingual contrasts between English and Spanish, especially in the areas of grammar, phonology, lexis and spelling. One possible reason for this lack may be the strictly monolingual training of EFL teachers in Argentina, which discourages linguistic contrasts for fear of inducing errors, a view that is not in line with present-day research in second language acquisition theories.

Intercultural reflection

Both series tend to stress the importance of this area. “Dream Team for Argentina” states as one of the highlights of the coursebook the fact that students learn to “compare their lives with those of people in other cultures by following the everyday activities of a group of teenagers ... and by learning about such things [as] the history of rock music” (Newbold and Whitney, 2000: 6). Contents inviting students to intercultural reflection are mainly contained in the “Cultural Studies” section, whose aim is to encourage students “to compare life in the UK, USA, and other countries around the world with their own lives” (Newbold and Whitney, 2000: 8). Topics include short pieces of information about aspects of every day life in Britain (Britain as a multicultural society and its reflection on eating habits, p. 17), information on Edinburgh as an example of a description of a city (p. 25), different types of houses (p. 35, 36), etc. As regards “New Let’s Go for EGB”, the original textbook provides more information about Great Britain regarding places, typical meals and drinks, clothes, and traditions; in other words what is called “culture with a small c”. A few of the lessons related to cultural aspects have been replaced by more international topics. For instance, a text with photos about “Celebrations in Britain” in the international edition (p. 60) has been substituted by another about “World Celebrations” in the local one (p. 54). A spotlight on football concerning the UK player Owen and the Argentine player Batistuta replaces the spotlight on “Food in the UK” of the international version. However, the local coursebook also includes some snapshots of stereotyped aspects of the British way of life: tea, a Scottish piper, the Loch Ness monster, the Millennium Dome (the Big Ben in the international textbook), and one of Prince Charles’s sons. In general terms, both coursebooks ask students to contrast the information provided in the textbook about Great Britain or other countries to what they already know about Argentina. Unfortunately, the coursebooks do not foster intercultural reflection on other divergent

or convergent aspects, or provide opportunities for learners to go beyond the mere comparison of facts, which often results in an unfavourable assessment of the student's own culture and a glorification of the foreign one (López Barrios et al, 2003).

Facilitation of learning

The local version of "Let's Go for EGB" includes some pedagogical innovations like the inclusion of a box with explicit objectives for each unit as well as a focus on reading skills with texts on cross-curricular themes that have pre, during, and post-reading exercises aimed at developing some subskills. This last section replaces a story in episodes presented in comic format in the original edition. The section "Now you can" at the end of each unit has been substituted by a "Self-check" section to encourage reflection on learning. A remarkable feature of the coursebook is the bilingual wordlist at the end of the book. Although the localised version of "Dream Team" does not display any features specially designed to facilitate learning in the Argentine context, both the international and the local editions contain self-assessment as well as "learning to learn" sections

Conclusions

Both coursebooks attempt to take advantage of the possibility of producing more suitable materials for the learning / teaching situation in the Argentine secondary school context, even if the degree to which the localisation has been ventured varies considerably from one series to the other. "Let's Go for EGB" features a deeper range of changes in its local version than "Dream Team for Argentina". Even so, one is left with the impression that some of the changes are more cosmetic than significant contributions to a true regionalisation, as giving the characters Spanish names or replacing a few photographs by better known places and personalities means not taking learners and teachers seriously enough². The common linguistic and cultural background of Argentine (or Southern Cone learners) should be taken greater advantage of by coursebook writers and publishing houses so that, apart from offering an affordable product – a combined course and workbook is an important feature of both analysed series – a more contextualised coursebook reaches the hands of learners and teachers.

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2. Rösler (1992) argues in a similar vein for a more comprehensive degree of regionalisation in coursebooks for German as a foreign language.

Four tips for writing a really good original reader

Sue Leather

Really good stories have really good characters. Think of Jane Austen, think of Tolstoy, think of any great writer. They tell great stories, but they always start from great characters, characters you care about- and that can mean positively or negatively- characters who feel 'real.' It seems to me that if you have a good plot, but with bad characterisation, you'll get a mediocre story. So, my first tip is 'character first.'

When people find out that I write, they often ask me: 'where do your stories come from?' 'They come from my characters' is my usual reply. Perhaps there are some writers who work out the entire plot of their story before they start writing. I'm not one of them. For me, it's important to do my creative work on character. Once I have the character fairly well drawn and 'rounded' then the whole thing is much easier. The characters begin to take on a life of their own; they talk to me at inconvenient times, they insist on telling me their story. Sometimes I get exasperated with them. They are part of me, yet they are fast becoming a separate entity. I find them intensely interesting, and would like to know more about them. I hope my readers will have the same feeling.

Once you have really believable characters coming to life in your head, they'll start talking fairly naturally. This is what makes dialogue believable. Then I find that their descriptions come quite effortlessly too. One of the mistakes writers sometimes make is trying to describe too much. The hair, the eyes, the clothes, the height, the build... Remember that the reader has an imagination too. So, for example, this is how I introduce Bill Gershon, in 'Dead Cold.' Gershon is the chief of the Pine Ridge police, and my heroine, Flick Laine, is sent there to work with him on a murder.

Something told me that Bill Gershon, Chief of Pine Ridge Police, wasn't happy to see me. 'So,' he said, as I walked into his office, 'Cohn told me he was sending a woman...'

'Yeah, aren't you lucky?' I said, smiling.

Then...

I looked at Gershon. He was a round person; round body, round face, round glasses. About fifty, fifty-five maybe, with almost no hair. Then

I looked around at his office. Yeah, I thought, parking tickets, not murder.

All we know about Gershon physically is that he's fat and he's balding. We don't know the colour of his eyes, his hair or the kind of clothes he wears. The reader has something to fill in. His character comes through in the way he talks to Flick and we immediately know how she feels about him. The 'parking tickets, not murder' line tells us about his limitations.

Choosing a specific feature and focusing on that can both make the reader feel that the character really exists. It can also help the reader to see the world from the narrator's point of view. So, for example, in my CUP reader, *Death in the Dojo*, my heroine Kate's contact at Scotland Yard, Jonty Adams is described like this:

'Jonty was a slim, nervous guy in his late thirties with a thin moustache and a terrible taste in ties. He was wearing a particularly horrible grey one with little pink pigs all over it. I tried to ignore it. It wasn't easy.'

Here we learn something about Jonty, but we also learn about Kate. What's more, Jonty's awful ties give him a very specific 'feel'; he's a real person.

Jonty exists through Kate's relationship with him; we see him through her eyes. This brings us onto my third tip, show, don't tell! Showing a person's character, or the relationship between characters by the use of dialogue or action is almost always more effective than telling the reader. It makes your narrative really come alive.

This way of describing people applies also to describing things and places. Less is often more. Or, as the excellent American crime fiction writer, Elmore Leonard, said: 'I try to leave out the parts that people skip.' A reader doesn't read every single word, so the trick is to make your descriptions compelling. My second tip, then, is make your descriptions sparse but evocative.

If you want to keep your readers reading, remember that beginnings and endings of chapters are very important too. For example:

'Neither of the two people in the room paid any attention to the way I came in, although only one of them was dead.'

Who can resist reading more after that? This is the end of Chapter Six of the classic 'The Big Sleep' by Raymond Chandler, the great American thriller writer.

Excellent writers like Chandler use 'hooks' to keep their readers reading. This is what gives them 'page-turnability,' which is what Somerset Maugham said about Jane Austen. So my fourth technical tip is to use 'hooks', particularly at the end of chapters, so that your readers will want to carry on turning the pages.

To sum up, my four tips are: character first, sparse but evocative descriptions, show don't tell, and use 'hooks.' Well, that seems like a lot to think about.... But as Raymond Chandler said, "Technique alone is never enough. You have to have passion." I agree. You have to really *want* to tell the story that your characters are telling you. The story has to be fighting to get out. For me it's a process of discovery about my characters and their story; as I write I want to know what will happen at the end. I'm excited by the prospect of 'discovering' the story.

But it's not even just that. It's also a process of discovery about myself. Writing is not easy, but it's a wonderful journey of self-discovery. By writing I learn more and more about myself and how to be a better writer. And since, as the great South African writer Doris Lessing said, "You only learn to be a better writer by actually writing,' excuse me while I get back to writing my new story.

Sue Leather has written original readers at all levels for Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, Macmillan Heinemann, Mary Glasgow and World Wide Readers. Her intermediate thriller 'Dead Cold' is the winner of the 2005 Language Learner Literature Award organised by the Extensive Reading Foundation. 'Dead Cold' is published by World Wide Readers, and can be found at <http://www.ebooksworld.de>. It will be published by Cambridge University Press in 2006.

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Enticing Advanced Foreign Language Learners to Really Speak

M^a del Pilar Montijano Cabrera, University of Málaga, Spain

Reasons supporting the adaptation of speaking materials

Many authors¹ have offered guidelines to follow in order to teach the skill of foreign language speaking effectively. These principles proposed, however, do not differentiate among kind of learners but regard all of them as equals and thus do not cater for their potential differing learning needs. Should we consider such guidelines as really effective?

Speaking activities featured in textbooks may gain effectiveness if we tailor them successfully. The way they appear, they can't help but mean no more than an initial source of ideas in the process of giving actual shape to our oral lessons. In fact, textbooks are designed with a standard student in mind, and no student fits 100% in the 'standard' as everybody is different². Consequently, what succeeds with a given group of students may not be so efficient with other different cohorts. Once being adapted –with the receivers of the teaching in mind–, any activity may increase many times its teaching potential.

Adapting and personalizing effectively standard FL speaking materials should be rendered as an inherent must of teaching speaking effectively, because of the multitude of advantages it will bring about. Its most outstanding feature is that it provides an effective way to tune into our students' actual concerns and needs, and gain relevance and interest, too. Also, it contributes to set the right level of cognitive challenge for our students, and this will enhance the students' positive self-image as language learners. In turn, a better self-image will boost their self-esteem as language learners and the consequent impact on their motivation³ will be invaluable.

It is crucial to face the unique concurring circumstances of our students and be committed to helping them learn. All teachers should cross the boundaries of merely adopting faithfully the activities found in textbooks, in the precise way in which they appear, to encompass adaptation as the main bedrock of teaching.

What to do before the class starts

If we want our students to take full advantage of every speaking activity, it is vital to analyse in advance its real learning potential for our learners. This should be the necessary preliminary step for any speaking class, because, as we have stated above, there are no actual 'standard' students, and consequently there are no magic, simplistic, effective speaking tasks which can be adopted worldwide without being adapted in some way or another.

A useful tool for such purpose can be a checklist of features and priorities. Different authors have proposed different ones⁴ for the assessment of published fluency activities. A checklist will work as a device to x-ray the learnability of the materials found in the textbook for our actual students. By considering pros and cons we can decide in advance how to offset the weaknesses, if any, and thus maximise learners' learning.

I propose the following checklist for analysing the teaching potential of the speaking activities (see figure 1).

Checklists are really useful pedagogical utensils for teachers for tailoring learning materials to their actual students. They are helpful not only in determining the nature of the practice we can provide our students with in each case, but also in the assessment of the degree

1. cf. Rivers & Temperley (1978), Ur (1981), Bygate (1987), Seligson (1997) or Hedge (2000).

2. No two students have the same level of linguistic knowledge or knowledge of the world. Learners may also vary in their degree of involvement with their own process of learning, their motivation, their personality, their social or ethnic backgrounds, the aims they pursue or their age, just to mention some of the variables that influence on the idiosyncratic development of the learning process.

3. In the world of language learning, we know that an essential vitamin is to count with great doses of motivation because of its triggering impulse in the students' self-drive towards learning.

4. Harmer (1991), Littlewood (1981) and Hedge (2000) have offered lists, categorising variables differently, for evaluating the speaking material provided in textbooks.

Features of the Activity	True	False	Not Sure
Authenticity of the situation re-created	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usefulness of the language elicited by the situation in a potential real-life use of the language practised	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Experience with the convention of real-life conversations: turn-taking, use of fillers, self-repair, false starts or re-drafting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scope of the topic is clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Topic provided allows for a variety of points of view leading to a meaningful interaction among students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Topic is engaging and motivating for students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Topic is thought-provoking and intriguing enough for students to want to have their voice heard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Topic is familiar enough to students so that they can use their own background knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Topic is relevant to students and it invites them to participate actively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity does not test, but teach speaking by providing actual guidelines and support to the students on how to cope with speaking without uncertainty or fear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity provides opportunities for the use of a wide range of communicative functions and expressions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activity provides opportunities for the use of a wide range of lexical items and grammatical patterns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 1

of student involvement with and satisfaction of any given activity. Being mindful of what every activity offers, teachers may more easily become facilitators in the students production of the target language, as we will explain below, being more confident about the support, of different sorts, they should provide their student in each case.

The implementation of adapted FL speaking materials

The essential rationale to guide the implementation of oral lessons is that speaking activity that students engage in, if practised effectively, will have a direct impact on students' self-image and will contribute to a progressively better performance⁵.

Given the standardization of materials we find in textbooks, teachers should always tailor those materials to make them appropriate for their learners' particular characteristics and learning needs. This would make materials more inviting for learners to take an active part in the use of the language.

In a previous study⁶, I provided a series of major guidelines to follow so as to adapt speaking materials, together with a reflection upon the effects these could have on the students who attend lessons conducted once materials have been adapted. I will elaborate now on a more in-depth and comprehensive model about how to tailor oral materials with the aim of helping learners maximize their own learning and take full advantage of every opportunity to learn to speak.

I want to make clear that all the five principles I include in my proposal together constitute the basics of what effective tailoring of speaking materials should consist of, but they do not purport to become a linear sequence of actions, in which one should necessarily precede another. They are all cross-related. Then, their relationship is not hierarchical, but one of mutual complementation.

1st Principle; Raising student awareness with respect to the value of active involvement

Speaking correctly, appropriately and fluently depends more than anything else on one's accumulated

5. The happier the students become, the more eager they will be to go on participating in further oral interactions by means of the target language. The more they participate, the more experience they will accumulate in using the language, something crucial for the eventual development of speaking.

6. cf. Montijano Cabrera (2004: 30-35).

experience. Without it, we would merely 'study' or 'know about' a certain language, but we could hardly be able to use it naturally for communicative purposes.

Teachers should support strongly their students' practice and involvement in interactions through the language. Teachers should make speaking relevant, and that involves prioritizing it. The more often teachers ask students to practice all sorts of exchanges, the more opportunities the students will become conscientious about the value that these interactions have for their own learning of speaking. It is crucial that learners appreciate the importance of investing effort in performing appropriately in class. Their class is the most suitable scenario for engaging in rehearsals, because if the learners happen to have any kind of gaps in knowledge, while being in class they may take risks and try their own combinations of words and patterns, negotiate with their class-mates or ask their teacher for assistance.

Sometimes, the high frequency with which a certain kind of activity is dealt in class is a triggering factor in itself to make students aware of its importance. When this is the case, teachers should explain explicitly to their students why they are practising that skill so often, so as to raise their awareness in this regard.

2nd Principle; Create a low-anxiety atmosphere

Worries and prejudices may prevent learners from wanting to engage naturally in class-interactions. If students are preoccupied by their inaccuracies or pressured by peer exposure, they may decide to decline participation. And without participating, they would never learn to speak. Consequently, all students' contribution should be welcome and their errors, if any, should not constitute a major concern. Given that mistakes emerge simply as the result of students' risk-taking in trying to get their meanings understood, learners should regard them as an inherent variable of their own process of learning and look at them as something natural.

Accordingly, by avoiding negative feelings and pressure on the part of the students, teachers help create a more optimal environment for practicing, rehearsing and, thus, learning. The more supportive the surrounding becomes, the less anxious our students will be, and the more they will participate. A supportive learning atmosphere enhances the students' self-confidence and willingness to engage in class activities, something which, in its turn, will become a source of inner motivation that learners may channel by taking part actively in manifold activities of different nature in

class. We can thus say that a supportive learning atmosphere may mean a source of active engagement in class activities.

3rd Principle; Provision of visual support

In our ordinary life, we hardly ever are asked to give our view on a given topic, with no or little understanding of our immediate environment. The cognitive effort that we would be required to make so as to tune into the 'other, new' context would be so demanding that we would lose all interest.

In general, in the average communicative encounters we maintain through our first language, there is always something in the context around us that makes us plug easily into the situation and the topic being dealt with, so that the content of our exchanges is always meaningful. Our memory search –when interpreting the messages we receive or when choosing the linguistic items we need for our output– does not have to be really extensive, because we are provided with an essential framework of reference which supports us in either understanding or producing messages. Definitely, using language in context becomes a much easier task than dealing with it in a vacuum.

However, let's consider the way in which most debates, discussions and communicative exchanges usually take place in class. More often than not, what teachers do is to ask their students to imagine or to pretend to be in places where in fact they are not, and to tune into situations they might not ever be interested in at all. At what cost? Is this an interesting, motivating task? Is the level of challenge we are posing right or fair? Surprisingly enough, teachers may even get angry if learners don't contribute illuminating and intriguing ideas almost on the spot to the situation recreated, neglecting that the experience can be entirely unsettling and uninteresting.

By providing visual support we could lessen the degree of challenge that the activity poses. Bringing to class photographs or pictures (from magazines, brochures, etc.), we can help contextualize the situation, thus increasing the meaningfulness of the activity and the students' interest in contributing⁷. The students would find starting to speak less demanding because they would be provided with a framework of reference and a stimulus.

Using pictures as a way to make students start speaking would also allow teachers to provide learners with 'quality time' to elaborate their own thoughts and prepare their reaction. It is a way to avail learners of a supporting structure which, in essence, means a way to facilitate a more meaningful, motivated and realistic

7. A useful way to exploit the visual support brought to class is to ask learners provocative questions about what they see or elicit their own reactions to the situations depicted that will give them clues about the topic to be dealt. Other times, just by showing them to the learners and asking them to figure out and anticipate what they think the topic for debate is going to be can trigger their involvement and participation.

involvement in the conversational exchange in class.

4th Principle; Provision of linguistic support

An outstanding misconception that should be overcome about the foreign language speaking class –particularly for those students at intermediate and advanced levels–, is that, at its best, it should consist exclusively of free exchange of turns, unequally delivered by students, without the need of a previous stage which could provide support and pave the way to a more successful, natural and realistic interaction. It seems as if by simply imposing or ‘throwing’ a topic to students were enough for them to start talking about it immediately, naturally and without constraints. The fact that these students have sufficient linguistic confidence to survive in a target language environment should not be seen straightforwardly as if they have nothing to improve. I reckon it appropriate to remind at this point that these learners may still show inaccuracies and a relatively narrow range of lexical knowledge in their performance.

My view is that not because free exchanges are not exercises of a controlled nature, teachers should simply drop students into a sort of ‘vacuum’, as far as support is concerned. It is of paramount importance to avail students of linguistic support. My proposal, in this regard, is to conduct a previous analysis of the predominant kinds of linguistic functions that are likely to appear in the performance of the task. The teacher should elicit from the students those structures and phrases most likely to appear in relation to the topic to be dealt with and that will consequently constitute the basic linguistic scaffolding before the class starts. She should handle elicitation with care, addressing learners warmly, allowing time for reflection and remembering. It is absolutely essential to elicit the language from the students, rather than simply offer a compilation of language in a list, as it allows them to gain self-confidence. When the whole class works together, students can build a repertoire of language structures and expressions which will help them to have accurate strings of words which are readily available in their minds. Also, the learners can realize how much they already know and gain self-confidence. They then tackle the activity more happily.

This phase of the class is also the right occasion to ask their teacher about doubts or things they might not be very confident about. The whole activity of revising and pooling linguistic knowledge prior to actually engaging in speaking is of uppermost importance because of the rewarding psychological effect it has on students, who tackle speaking in a much less fearful and more daring mood.

5th principle; Making the activity relevant

Sometimes students do not participate in class simply

because they are not interested in the topic described in the textbook. The theme for debate should be motivating, appealing and engaging. It is critical that the activity be relevant and catchy for the learners. If they perceive it like that, they will be willing to express themselves. When the topic proposed is boring or irrelevant, students are not inclined to take part. In fact, in our ordinary communicative exchanges in real life, we always decide whether to participate or not in different conversational exchanges on the basis of our motivation and purposes. We say something when we have a desire to speak. The lesson we learn from life is that tailoring must be done with contents as well. Adjusting the scope of the topic to the students’ real interests becomes necessary. By eliciting some information –either by using thought-provoking questions or by brainstorming with the whole class at the same time–, the teacher may detect the students’ preferences or major foci of concern in relation to the topic that the textbook activity suggests. According to the students’ answers, the teacher should adjust the scope of the issue so as to conduct the debate in line with the students’ interests.

Before the class is split into groups, the initial whole-class work on brainstorming and contributing general ideas serves as a warm-up period for students who may unevenly and freely contribute quite a wide range of different ideas. Then, the students are divided into groups of three or four for a better exploitation of class time.

Sometimes the distance between the topic that was initially suggested by the textbook activity and the actual issue the learners discuss can be really huge. This should not be perceived as a problem. On the contrary, it is simply an indicator of the teacher’s comprehensive task of gradually finding out her students’ real major interests.

Needless to say, teachers’ resourcefulness when conducting the whole class oral work prior to the actual discussion in small groups is definitely a distinguishing mark of effectiveness. An imaginative, creative teacher who is fully committed to engage students in speaking is much more likely to create a much more inviting atmosphere for learners. The more engaging the teacher, the more willing the learners will be.

Why tailor oral lessons?

Teaching Speaking effectively is demanding but without doubt feasible, as long as we adapt standard materials to our learners’ characteristics. It will require a serious planning and thinking exercise of balancing many variables every time plus providing learners with support of a different nature and the resoluteness to respond to students’ interests when modifying the scope of topics.

As we have seen, teachers can do a lot to turn an ineffective oral class – which would only witness the students' reluctance to participate– into a really meaningful, memorable, effective, personalized and successful lesson in which learners may feel comfortable and relaxed to participate and from which they can really feel they have learned a lot.

It is, thus, not only the quality of the class that gets better as a result of the process of adaptation, but also the students' self-image that improves as a result of their perception of the class and of their own attitude to it.

Conclusion

Research conclusions after analysing the impact of implementing oral classes consisting of adapted materials.

Debating whether students agree on the following statement: *'money is not everything. There is more to look for in a job than how well you are paid'*, rather than on: *'talk about the future of the world of work'*, or, say, deciding what aspects amaze them in some printed ads, by looking at the ads that they have previously cut out from different magazines, instead of discussing *'advertising'* in general means a great deal more than creating a new scope for discussion. As students have reported in informal chats with their teacher, they feel more comfortable speaking about something which has emerged in class, than one that is imposed by the textbook. They also stated feeling happy at the realization that the class was not entirely and tightly planned, but open to their contributions and, in fact, organically implemented on the basis of their suggestions. They felt so rewarded that it led to more and more willingness to engage in practice, because they found the class interesting and relevant.

I was so motivated to listen to my students explaining how inviting the class was, and the extent to which they were happy to participate. This reinforces and corroborates what I witnessed while teaching: everybody was taking an active part in the discussion in his/her group. Once I started to apply this model

to adapt all textbook oral activities, a new dynamics prevailed in our lessons and a general mood of engagement and active participation prevailed for the subsequent classes.

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Towards A Framework for Authentic Business English Teaching Materials for Tunisian Intermediates

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Materials development has recently known an important growth, thus becoming at the same time both a course of study within Applied Linguistics and an area of expertise within ELT (English Language Teaching) profession. This may be justified by its importance in any language syllabus in ELT and more specifically in ESP (English for Specific Purposes) field where it assumes much greater importance with regard to the use of authentic materials which have become a major requirement. Yet, there has been much controversy about what makes up authenticity in ELT and more specifically in ESP. This paper is meant to: a) review literature on the growth of materials development especially with relation to ESP, b) define authenticity and develop its trends both in ELT and in connection to ESP as well, and c) put forward a framework for authenticity of business English learning and teaching materials for Tunisian intermediates bearing in mind that the research study is still underway.

Growth of Materials development

Tomlinson defines it as being

both a field of study and practical undertaking. As a field it studies the principles and Procedures of the design, implementation and evaluation of language teaching materials. As an undertaking it involves the production, evaluation and adaptation of language teaching materials, by teachers for their own classrooms and by materials writers for sale or distribution. (Tomlinson, 2003:1)

Surveying the history of materials development, formerly it was treated as a sub-section of methodology in which materials were usually introduced as examples of methods in action rather than as a means to explore the principles and procedures of their development. (Tomlinson, 2001) It was not a main concern for authors. Only a few books dealt with it in the 1980s (ibid). It was only in 1990s that materials development started to be given prominence and included principles and procedures in approaching it. The result was change in the attitudes towards materials development by applying theories of language learning in order to provide a monitored process for developing materials. (ibid: 1-2)

At present, certain positive and negative trends can be noticed while having a glimpse on the current literature of materials development. It is beyond this paper to recall them all in detail, but only some of them will be outlined below. Among those positive trends some are:

- Focus on the learner and his discovery of meaning while analyzing samples of language use.
- Focus on corpus data reflecting actual language use.
- Helping learning through more interactive learning packages using different media.
- Focus on more extensive reading and provocative content
- Personalizing the learning process by taking his profile into consideration.
- Engaging learners more affectively by enhancing their expression of feelings.
- The shift from spoken practice of written grammar towards more spoken grammar in use. (Tomlinson, 2003:7)

At the same time, some of negative trends can be outlined as follows:

- Centrality of grammar and its written practice in the curriculum.
- More focus on listening and speaking in coursebooks.
- Underestimating learners' attention spans in coping with reading and writing.
- Neglecting or misusing literature in coursebooks.
- Predominance of analytical activities and the lack of consideration of learners' preferred learning styles.
- Lack of provision of meaningful topic content.
- Underestimating learners' linguistic, intellectual and emotional sides. (ibid:8)

Materials development can be approached from different perspectives, so after reviewing its major trends let us deal with it from an ESP view. This is to be developed in the following part.

ESP and Business English

ESP has grown worldwide in terms of types and functions or roles. These have major implications for language pedagogy and more particularly teaching materials. With regard to ESP business English has known a growth in the recent years, thus attracting many researchers to put it under study and especially business English materials. For example authenticity of materials has been a major preoccupation among specialists in language studies and materials development. This is the main area of focus of this paper. In defining ESP, West argues that “*ESP rests on five conceptions: authenticity, research-base, language, need and learning methodology*”. (West, 1997:33) He adds by saying that “*these conceptions all have dual and potentially conflicting origins in both the real world...and in ESP pedagogy*”. (ibid: 33)

As far as business English is concerned, Dudley-Evans and St John attempt to identify that ESP variety by saying that “[o]ne major change has been the emergence of Business English as a major strand of ESP teaching. Early ESP work was dominated by English for Science and Technology... However, in the 1990s...the largest area of growth is Business English.” (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998:31) Seen in this way, both ESP and business English have been allocated much concern in teaching and research especially with regard to their implications for developing materials, an area which itself has known a noticeable growth. Having said that, one may wonder how ESP can impact on materials development.

ESP Materials development

Materials development is among the most characteristic features of ESP in comparison with EGP (English for General Purposes). It can be considered one of the tasks that take most of the ESP teacher’s time and effort. This is because the required materials that normally fit the specific subject area of particular learners may not be available commercially. Publishers are not ready to produce materials for very limited markets or audience as the cost of developing and marketing a coursebook or any other instructional material is much the same regardless of whether it sells one thousand copies or one hundred thousand copies.

Accordingly, a course which is tailored to the needs of a specific group of learners will not be within one’s reach in the market. (Hutchinson and Waters 1987) For these reasons, there is a tradition for ESP instructors to produce their in-house or local materials. These are written by the teachers of a particular institution for the students of that institution. Such an undertaking can often be an abuse on the part of the teachers as they lack the sufficient training and the expertise of materials development. Hutchinson and Waters

(1987) argue that this may be called ‘a rather cavalier attitude’ to materials writing as it may imply that if one can teach, he can write. So, it can be asserted that materials writing in ESP is not any simple task, but it needs expertise and empowerment in technicalities of an expert in order to suit the needs of the ESP teaching and learning situation.

Implications of ESP Materials development

Among the most important implications for designing ESP materials derived from research and pedagogy in ESP and Applied linguistics as well as SLA research findings one can identify the following:

1. Centrality of learners’ needs (immediate and future)
2. Consideration of learners’ learning styles
3. Text genuineness and task authenticity
4. Need for communication (oral and written)
5. The input should stimulate interaction
6. The input should be motivating and engaging
7. The input should draw learners’ attention to the formal features of the code
8. The use of the four skills integratively
9. Variety of activities done with the materials
10. Enhancing personalized practice
11. Fostering apprehension before comprehension
12. On-going feedback of methodology and materials (bearing in mind learners’ needs, interests and styles)

These implications should be the guiding principles that inform materials developers and more particularly those involved in ESP while designing materials and implementing them. It is not a matter of choice but of requirement as the above mentioned points are the fruit of many years of research, assessment and experience derived from many studies done in the field. In other words, they are based on practice and theory rather than theory alone. It is worth reminding the reader that the new approach to ESP materials development and model of authenticity are fed by and inspired from those implications.

Authenticity and Materials development

Authenticity in ELT has been a major tenet both within the communicative movement for language learning and teaching as well as within ESP as it assumes

great importance. Recently there has been a major controversy over what makes up authenticity, thus resulting in confusion among the community of both language researchers and ESP practitioners. Thus, one premise of this paper is to put forward a workable approach to authenticity and more particularly that of ESP materials. Major trends and issues relating to authenticity will be developed. In a later step, a framework for authentic materials in business English will be outlined and discussed.

Authenticity Trends

To begin with, while reading the literature on authenticity one may notice the existence of four trends. These can be summarized as follows:

Trend 1

Authenticity is a native speaker property. It is the product of the situation where native speakers are conversing. Authentic input, whether written or oral, is delivered by a native speaker to communicate meaning to another native one. It is not designed for language learning nor teaching. (Wilkins, 1976; Porter and Roberts, 1987; Bacon, 1992; Bacon and Finnemann, 1990; Swaffar, 1985; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1997)

Trend 2

Authenticity is qualified as real communication used for social purposes. It is enacted in the daily life between real speakers or users of the language. It is a depiction of reality. Authentic materials are not developed for teaching purposes but for social ones, i.e., designed to convey a real message. (Nunan, 1989; Linder, 2000; Brown and Yule, 1983; Peacock, 1998; Grellet, 1981)

Trend 3

Authenticity is a matter of interaction with language. It has to do with an appropriate response to it. It is realized in the act of interpretation. It depends on a congruence of the language producer's intention and the language receiver's interpretation. (Widdowson, 1978/1979/1990; Lee, 1995; Breen, 1985)

Trend 4

Authenticity is not an abstract concept but rather a practical one. It relates to the fitness to the learning purpose. It is related to specific learners' needs and less concerned with 'the authentic' nature of the input materials. It is a matter of what learners do, or are required to do, with those materials. Materials more related to the learners' individual goals and professional realities. (Spelleri, 2003; Hutchinson and

Waters, 1987; Clarke, 1989; Candlin and Breen, 1979; Dumitrescu, 2000; Bathia, 1994)

Criticism of Authenticity Trends

It seems that each trend has tackled the issue from a particular perspective but at the same time this very perspective may be narrower than expected. In other words, each approach focuses only on one element and loses sight of many other no less important ones. So, one may be allowed to say that each trend can be questioned in one matter or another, thus making it essential and appropriate to have an approach which is likely to bring all the trends together, while trying to remedy their shortcomings and attempt to put forward a comprehensive model of authenticity that takes into account recent developments in learning and teaching approaches as well as recent findings of SLA and materials development. Accordingly, none of these approaches/trends can be seen as a provider of a solution to the debate/controversy over what makes up authenticity in ELT, let alone ESP authenticity and more particularly business English within an EFL context. In other words, there is no comprehensive model appearing from the four trends previously cited.

None of them takes into account the full profile of the learners and the specificities of the ESP learning context. All of the trends are rather vague in tacking authenticity and relating it to the learner or it may rather be the fact that there are certain degrees in doing so. They can be rather placed on a continuum. What is recommended, therefore, is to have a minimum degree of flexibility allowed by a framework for authenticity of materials whether in ELT, ESP or business English. That is to say, there should be a consideration of almost ESP wider variables in mind while developing materials. The alternative approach might be the following: one has to develop specific criteria for designing specific materials for specific learners in a specific context (as localized as possible), that is, for an exclusively narrow group of materials users with clear realistic needs and clearly reachable objectives.

What is also of great importance is that materials are just valid and usable only for that context in terms of time and place (for that setting and that is all not else), i.e., they may need modification, whether minor or major, it depends, after a certain period of time because of the change that occurs to the variables as a whole/or the circumstances of the setting, because if these change, the basis on which the materials and relevant methodology are used/designed will thus need change as well. In a nutshell, appropriate authentic materials would be tailored materials to both the circumstances and audience relevant to them or for which they are made. The same materials may not be appropriate to similar learners in another context, even if they were in the same country.

Authenticity Issues

In addition to trends, one may detect some main issues with regard to authenticity in ELT. These can be summarized as follows:

- Authenticity is an absolute quality vs. a practical concept.
- Authenticity vs. genuineness. (Widdowson, 1990)
- Authenticity vs. inauthenticity (i.e. artificiality). (Taylor, 1994)
- Authenticity of language use vs. authenticity of language text.
- Genuineness vs. naturalness (real communication) “*reality does not travel with the text*”. (Widdowson, 1990)
- The class own creation of authenticity “*pedagogy is bound to be a contrivance: that is precisely its purpose. If what goes on in the classroom exactly replicates the outside world, there will be no point in pedagogy at all*” (ibid: 163).
- If learners are presented with the right tasks and materials, they can impose their own authenticity on what goes on there (Candlin, 1993).
- What makes texts authentic?
- What makes tasks authentic?
- What makes the class authentic?
- Authenticity is a context-based phenomenon.

Towards A New Framework for Authenticity

Defining the framework

What is meant by framework in this context is a set of criteria that determine authenticity of materials used in business that take into consideration the relevant parameters of the learning and teaching context where materials are being used. Those criteria are inspired from insights of findings from SLA research, Applied Linguistics, authenticity trends and ESP and MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT growth. The principles on which the framework is based are the following: a) the specificity of the ESP context, b) the centrality of learners’ needs, c) the consideration of learners’ profile (learning styles, affective side cognitive side, interests), d) the consideration of ESP methodology and pedagogy, e) the use of English as a medium of communication among non-natives, f) the MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT research findings, g) SLA research implications for MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT and h) the consideration of career market needs trends. There are also some variables or sources that have informed the framework (See appendix A)

An Alternative Approach to Authenticity

An attempt has been made to put forward an alternative model of authenticity that builds on both of the shortcomings of the trends and the insights inspired from the previously mentioned implications. According to the study, which is still in process, from which the present paper is derived, the following research questions underlying the main rationale for undertaking the project are worth outlining:

- Are the materials used in teaching business English intermediate students in Tunisian context authentic?
- What determines their authenticity?
 - a/ Are they tailored to their profile?
 - b/ Do they satisfy their needs?
 - c/ Do they suit their socio-cultural background?
 - d/ Are they derived from professional genuine input?
 - e/ Are they affectively engaging and motivating to them?
 - f/ Are they sensitive to their learning styles?
 - g/ Are they suitable to their learning context?
 - h/ Are they relevant to their target professional/ occupational needs?
 - i/ Do they offer the opportunity of NNS’ communication ?

Because the research project, from which these questions are derived, is still in process, it is too early to claim any finding, but it is worth recalling the methodological tools relied upon so to yield data on those queries. The study makes use of a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and a materials analysis. So for the time being, the present paper contents itself just with stating the main theoretical background of the study, the major rationale behind undertaking it and the major research questions. To put things in practical terms, it is potentially thought appropriate to implement the framework phases in a particular way. This can be illustrated through the figure below that includes the main steps for execution.

What is meant by this cycle is that the materials developer starts by enquiring about the learners’ profile. This can be achieved through a questionnaire, diary, interview, and an informal discussion with learners themselves. Then, the investigation shifts its focus to the context of learning, i.e., the staff, the resources, the place and the time available. All these are vital factors that impact on learning and the needs for it. Later there should be a conception of the syllabus which has to be based on needs analysis

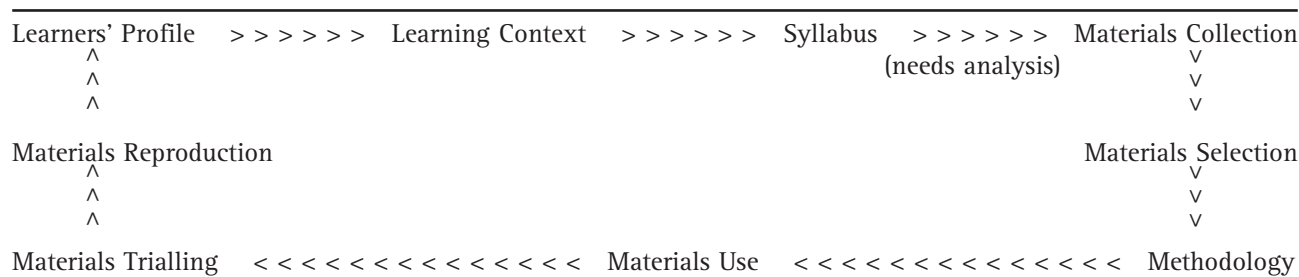


Figure 1: Procedures for Implementing the Framework

from which particular needs for materials are broadly considered. This is to be followed by an extensive materials collection step according to the input derived from previous phases of the cycle.

The process becomes more selective to include only what is relevant for the learning needs and objectives that are matched with learners' profile, their local context and their future professional prospects. The more localized the materials are, the more appropriate they may be. Once materials are collected accordingly, they are used for trialling and piloting by both learners and the teacher (and why not other colleagues). Given the feedback resulting from trailing, materials are to be revisited or redesigned. And the whole cycle is likely to be repeated in this way in the sense that the end-product is not a final version nor a perfect one as the process previously done will be done on on-going basis.

Conclusion

The present paper, which is inspired from a presentation previously delivered during an annual postgraduate research MATSDA Conference in Leeds Metropolitan University, tackles the theme of Perspectives on Materials development. Materials development has been dealt with from four angles, namely, ESP, authenticity movement, SLA research and ELT. (See Appendix B) More specifically, the paper deals with the major developments within materials development in terms of it being at the same time a field of study and a practical undertaking. The paper also argues that materials development is increasingly under impact from other areas such as ESP and SLA research and Applied Linguistics. The bigger part of the paper introduces the notion of authenticity of ESP materials and especially the trends of authenticity in ELT together with the controversy surrounding them. Despite the existence of many trends, it is assumed that these lack the realization of the priority of students' profile which is the very advocacy of the proposed framework for authentic materials used in teaching ESP in general and business English in particular.

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Appendix A

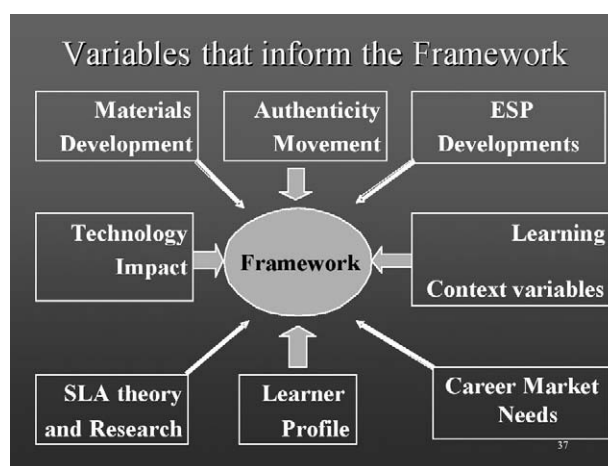


Figure 2: Variables that inform the Framework

Appendix B

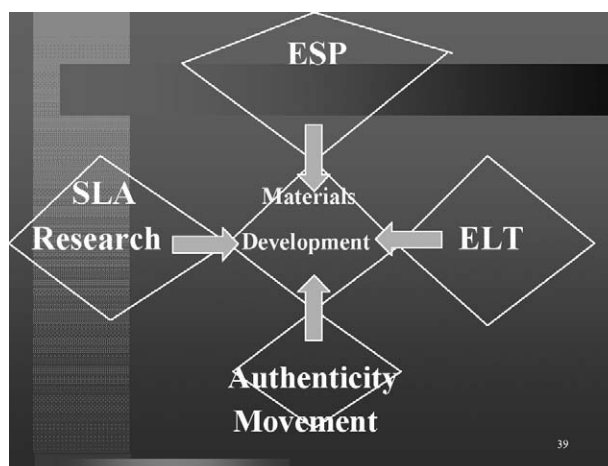


Figure 3 : Perspectives on Materials development

Colouring Outside the Lines: A Training Exercise in the Adaptation of Written Instruction in ELT Materials

Kris Bayne, International Christian University, Japan

Materials adaptation

Making changes to materials in order to improve them or make them more suitable for a particular type of learner. Adaptation can include reducing, adding, omitting, modifying and supplementing. Most teachers adapt materials every time they use a textbook in order to maximise the value of the book for their particular learners. (Tomlinson 1998: xi)

It is generally acknowledged that, for better or worse, pre-packaged, published textbooks are the mainstays of most EFL/ESL curricula and classrooms. It is also recognised that no textbook is perfect and that the teacher is an active and expected agent in adapting when needed. As Tomlinson describes above, adaptations may take various forms. However, novice teachers and perhaps non-native speaker teachers may feel the need, even the obligation, to follow textbook materials, literally, *to the letter*. What they actually follow and what encapsulates the methodology and aims of any given learning task is the written instruction, or rubric, that precede and frame the task. This paper will describe a three-part training exercise with the goal of raising awareness of rubrics and the potential for their adaptation by teachers.

Rubrics

Rubrics have a variety of functions (establishing student groupings, language channel, limits affecting time, contextual information, sequences to follow etc.), and comprise more than the sententious directive (for more detail see Bayne 2002 or Bayne 2005).

The simple models below include *Unit/Topical Heading*, multi-functional, imperative, sentence-level rubric, instructional example, and even the layout of the table gives an indication of how to complete the task. The overriding function being that they direct the users, both students and teacher, to do something in a certain way.

For example, from a unit on *Personal Questions*, a rubric may direct students to:

Move around the class. Ask five students questions to complete the table below.

Example: What kind of do you like?

	Music	Movies	Food	Clothes	Sports
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

An activity may only be manifested in a rubric also as in:

Work in pairs. Imagine you have to interview a famous person. With your partner think of five new questions to ask. Practice by asking your partner. Then ask five different people.

While teachers may opt to modify a particular task in their own way for their own reasons, this is often a result of classroom experience, self-confidence and familiarity with a given text or task type, all elements that accumulate with time.

Focus

It may be of benefit in the training of teachers to 'fast-track' this ability and raise the confidence to adapt established materials. 'Adaptation' here does not necessarily mean a major overhaul of tasks that would require large investments of time or energy in re-creating the actual textbook tasks for classroom use. Adaptation can be achieved by focusing on the task rubric and on ways to utilize the existing task structures. We could add 'substituting' to Tomlinson's gloss above. For instance, the table activity above could be adapted by replacing the rubric to include an element of prediction:

Write in the names of five class members. Write what YOU THINK they like under each topic.

Ask them.

Or it could be conducted as a survey:

Make a group of four. Decide on one item for each column across (e.g. under Food, bananas).

Decide on levels down (e.g. Like a lot, Like, Don't Like Much, Dislike). Ask ten people their opinion of bananas. Keep a record in the column. Report your results to your group.

Neither of these adaptations compromise the intent of the unit, asking personal questions.

Training Exercise

There are three objectives for this training exercise, all of which aim to raise awareness and confidence. It can be divided into three parts (times are minimum suggestions):

- rubrics and their centrality (10-15 minutes)
- ability of teachers to adapt rubrics (5-10 minutes)
- possibilities for adaptation (20-30 minutes)

Materials Needed

For the section on rubrics in general (Part I), a selection of EFL/ESL textbooks (or photocopies of one or two pages) is required. There should be sufficient to provide one text per pair of participants. If possible participants could bring textbook of their own choosing. Part II requires no materials. For the adaptation section (Part III), a single general task/activity is required. It could be one selected from existing published materials or one devised for the purpose. This is initially of the trainer's choice, with follow-up activities chosen by trainees (see Options below).

Participants & Time Needed

There are no limits, however a group of around twenty would be a manageable number. A basic session of 50-60 minutes would suffice for an elementary treatment, possibly with a follow-up session of the same duration. (If the participants are known, i.e. trainees in a program, it may be possible to have preliminaries for Part I completed before the actual exercise session.)

Exercise Description

Part I, focusing on rubrics and their centrality, requires that participants (including the trainers) understand the nature of rubrics and their function and construction. My own research in this area leads me to believe that it is a very under-researched aspect of materials production. For this paper, however, I will only deal with aspects of the exercise described here.

1. Participants are directed to consider what are the actual components of a 'task' in a textbook. From this the item 'instruction' or 'direction' is hopefully mentioned.
2. Using the textbooks supplied, participants are asked to itemise what they feel comprises the 'written instruction', or rubric. It may be wise to nominate certain pages to focus the search (only 16, 32 and 48 for example). A list can be compiled or organised visually or verbally.
3. Add to and confirm the above by using one or two representative example pages, i.e. ones which have just about every potential feature of rubrics. Overhead projectors are useful for this or enough photocopies for pairs if an OHP is not.
4. Time could be allowed for participants to again examine published textbooks and ask questions.

Steps 1- 4 should establish a basic understanding of the parameters and functions of rubrics and participants should be able to identify functions with any text they care to open.

Part II, highlighting the ability of teachers to adapt rubrics, functions as a bridge between Part I and III in that it briefly establishes why teachers may wish to adapt and therefore that they can and should. This can be run as a small group or whole group brainstorming and discussion session. Questions raised might include:

- Who are the rubrics for?
- How are rubrics used in the classroom? By teachers? By students?
- How do teachers feel about the textbooks they use or have used?

This section should set up the idea of rubrics as a 'default setting' that is open to review and adaptation. (For ideas and contrasting views on materials adaptation in general see Tomlinson 2003, particularly articles by Saraceni and Islam & Mares).

Part III, a 'hands on' experience of the possibilities for adaptation, requires that participants be given one rubric-less task to work on over perhaps 20-30 minutes. They are required to develop their own way to use the remaining task elements. There are three basic steps to Part III:

- rubric/task adaptation
- adaptation explanation
- group discussion

The process will be outlined by way of describing the task as used by the author.

Original rubric: **Match the words on the left with their opposites on the right.** No instructional example was provided.

The rubric is not revealed to the participants until the end of the session.

Original Task description: Under a general unit heading, *Tell me about yourself*, the task required the matching of eight, randomly ordered sets of antonyms (e.g. quiet-noisy) listed in two vertical adjacent columns. The left side (a~h) were 'positive' adjectives (e.g. 'happy', 'punctual') and the right side (1~8) 'negative' (e.g. 'sad', 'late'). Learners had to complete the task to show the correct pairs of words. No instructional example was given.

Training Task: The original rubric was removed. The unit heading was maintained, as were the letter and number designations. Each Participant received a single photocopied page containing the training task. They were verbally directed to consider individually how to complete the task and to do so (10 minutes). Once this was done, each participant outlined his or her adaptation to small groups (up to 10 minutes). Volunteers later did the same for the whole group who could ask questions and makes comments (10-15). Time was allowed for final feedback and questions (the original rubric can be revealed at this time).

Discussion

What Worked

This training exercise has been conducted with two groups of mostly experienced EFL/ESL teachers, a number of whom were active materials writers in the field. The final Part III, 'hands-on' aspect of the activity worked extremely well, as we could expect of experienced teachers who had used (and even written) a variety of textbooks over many years (Head). While the selected task was simple, it was, in a sense, 'limited' by this simplicity. While the participants mentioned that at first glance they could see the original intent most were able to go on and arrive at a variety of adaptations, however. For example,

- Task was completed as it was intended by the materials writer/textbook: opposites were matched, usually by drawing lines.
- Task was completed as intended and a sentence was written using some of the words.
- Task was completed as it was intended; however, synonyms for each word were found and added to the page.
- Task was completed by using the Unit Title as a cue; 'positive' items that participants felt described

themselves were circled.

- (Taking the point of view of an L2 learner) Unfamiliar words were circled
- Circle for 'positive' traits about themselves, triangle for 'negative' traits about themselves.
- Items circled were the traits most desired in a partner or friend ('kind', 'helpful' etc.). (Or 'least desired' as a comment was made during later discussion.)

In most cases participants intended that after individuals completed the written task there would be an extended verbal group presentation of the results. Overall the adaptations themselves are clearly much more learner-centred (and interesting) than the original rubric.

What was striking and encouraging was that many participants, veterans that they mostly were, commented that they had never really considered the functions of the rubrics before and that the initial Part I analysis of rubrics was enlightening. The result was that they better understood why they felt a compulsion to adapt, so, in effect, the training exercise filled in a 'gap' between the actual rubric in a book and their subsequent adaptations. Two non-native participants also confirmed that they tended to follow rubrics as they are written in a text and were very impressed and encouraged by the variety of proposed adaptations.

What Did Not Work

No actual problems arose out of this exercise itself. Participants did comment that time constraints prevented them from actually trying out the various adaptations, but this was a consequence of limits imposed by the forums in which the exercise was used (a conference workshop and an in-house teacher development day).

One potential problem with the application of rubric adaptations in a real classroom is that the textbook rubric will still exist and there is potential for confusion among students as to what to do. This would be true of any form of materials adaptation, perhaps. We could say there is 'first rubric interference' in that second language learners are sometimes more willing to believe their eyes (reading the written rubric) than their ears (listening to the teacher's verbal adaptation). My own research into this has revealed strategies used by both teachers (Bayne 1995) and students (Bayne 1998) and these can sometimes be at odds. How the teacher in the classroom presents the adapted task is paramount. Usually it is verbal, with kinesthetic and paralinguistic support, and this 'instruction giving' aspect of 'teacher talk' also probably requires further training. It may be that alternative rubrics need to be written as well as spoken for full effect.

Exercise Extension

While immediately above I have suggested an area of improvement may be the in class delivery of alternatives, I will limit this section to the exercise described. Given more time I would have made more of the products of the activity, and it was clear the participants were eager for this. I will outline three possible options:

Option A

This step would slot in where at Part III in my sessions described I moved on to outlining in small groups.

- Have participants formalize their rubric adaptation in writing, i.e. create a rubric (including instructional example if necessary) that would be clearly understood by other users.
- These could be written onto sheets of paper and posted around the room. (Requires large sheets of paper, thick marker pens, pins or tape for posting.)
- Participants can then review the different interpretations, writing comments if they wish.
- Each sheet could be collected and organised with copies made and returned to the participants at a later date.

The single session exercise might end at this point.

Option B

The exercise could be taken to further lengths by involving individuals, pairs or groups in a project that would see them find and adapt activities, perhaps from textbooks they are using or have used. Multiple rubric adaptations, perhaps even focused on different skills could be a feature. Similar to Option A, they could be presented in a subsequent meeting as a poster session, for example.

Option C

The trainer (or participants) could select a textbook. Small groups could be allotted one unit each and set the task of creating alternative rubrics for as many of the tasks as possible. These could be presented to the group as an organised and 'professional' supplement. This option may also be incorporated into any materials made by trainees.

Conclusion

Focusing on textbook rubrics and ways to adapt materials via rubric adaptation, this paper described an awareness raising exercise for use in teacher training and development. While it is an exercise that could benefit teachers in training, novice teachers and

possibly non-native speaker teachers, the results of two sessions conducted by the author suggest that it is also of value for experienced teachers. In closing I would also suggest that given the increased emphasis on learner autonomy and student involvement in materials development (cf. Nunan 1997, Clarke 1998), exercises such as this one could also be relevant and possible with the target users, the learners.

Kristofer Bayne is an English teacher and materials writer in Japan. His experiences of over twenty years range from teaching in vocational schools to teaching high proficiency level students in his current position as an instructor in the EAP programme at International Christian University. He has written and presented on a variety of subjects stemming from his classroom experiences, including an on-going interest in content-based materials for lower-level learners, textbook rubrics, intercultural communication and, more recently, academic writing.

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That First Publishing Experience

Daniel Droukis and Kiyoshi Yukitoki, Kyushu Kyoritsu University

In 2005, we published a textbook, *Go Overseas* through Shohakusha Publishing Company. While it was the fifth textbook publication for Yukitoki, it was the first experience for me, for whom it represented the realization of a long time goal. The experience led us to look back at questions Mares (2003) posed about having a textbook published and how they are related to our experiences. It is also interesting to look at this from the views of Curtis on publishing your first book. (Folio, Vol. 10.1).

1. Why do I want to write a textbook?

“Your motivations should stem from a desire to produce materials that you feel would be better for you, your students and other teachers working in a similar environment (Mares).” This first point is something few can argue with for it reflects a frustration that many teachers feel when they fail to find a book that suits the particular needs of their students. This was also true in our situation, where we wanted a book that was better suited to our students. Since we have many students who have little experience with the language, we wanted a book that would put them in a more comfortable situation using language that was not entirely overwhelming. Also, from the perspective of professional development publishing, a textbook is very well received by colleagues and by the institution that you are employed. There is also the sense of personal satisfaction that you receive by working hard to produce a book that others will use and benefit from. “If financial rewards are an important part of your motivation, you will be disappointed (Curtis).” This, fortunately I already understood. Having the experience and adding to my list of accomplishments was (and still remains) the more important goal from my writing.

2. How will my coursebook contribute to the market?

“Your coursebook needs to offer something new and different to the market. This could be from the point of view of syllabus, language presentation, format or activity type (Mares).” I believe that this is a very sensitive point. What is actually new to the market is a difficult question. Here we have a book about foreign travel, which is hardly something new. Yet as we considered the language abilities of our students, it was clear that they needed to be presented with

material that was not culturally threatening and that was suitable for their present language abilities. Many books of this type tend to contain conversations which are too challenging for the students we were writing for. Thus, in this sense we have tried to contribute to the market by meeting the needs of the student who has less confidence in using the language but wants to study using material that is practical and has the potential to be useful in the future.

3. Who will/will not be able to use my coursebook?

“Your coursebook needs to be pitched at a market niche where its projected sales will fall into marketing expectations for a product. To do this there needs to be a clear sense of the target teacher group in terms of their language ability, education, teacher-training experience, willingness to try new things and time available for preparation (Mares).” On this point, we already had our ideas in place. After many years of teaching university students who were not English majors or had little experience in using the language for speaking, we felt that this type of text would appeal to many other teachers in Japan who either had students who were interested in foreign travel or who needed to have material presented to them on a more basic level.

4. What will teachers and learners get from my coursebook that they cannot get elsewhere?

“If your book provides material that is more authentic, activities that work better, practice that is perceived more useful or some extra feature not available in other coursebooks, this will give your book an edge in the market (Mares).” Since the book is based on actual experiences that are essential in travel activities, it does give the student non-threatening practice. This allows the student to be more comfortable in working with the material. More authentic materials are always desirable in textbooks, but allowing the students to work more on the four skills may be more appropriate for the students we are focusing on. This question is the hardest for the teacher-writer to answer because so many of the books for this level are indeed quite similar. Often, it will be the case that teachers will choose a new textbook because they have simply become bored with the book they have been using for

several years and need to make a change to keep their teaching fresh. Perhaps all we can ask from a book is that it provides a good guide for the teacher and the student. Whether the material is different from other books may depend more on the teacher who uses it, how long the teacher uses it and how well the students are able to navigate the different sections of the book.

5. How will my coursebook be structured?

“Your coursebook will need to be user-friendly in that teachers should be able to use it within the system they work (Mares)”. When we created the book, we hoped that it would be user-friendly. The amount of material, (ten units) we felt, was reasonable for teaching the students we had within one school year and contained four skills exercises along with vocabulary development activities. We believed that one unit could be done in two class periods (180 minutes). While the structure has been easy for the students to work with, it has taken a longer time period for some classes to complete the work. This does not seem to be because of the structure but due to a variety of factors that affected the time available for teaching the classes. During the piloting process we had been satisfied that the book was being covered adequately in the time period we had envisaged.

6. Will my book be part of a series?

“Coursebooks do better if they are part of a series (Mares)”. This is something that we had not considered. It was not proposed by the publisher, and it does not seem to be the type of book or topic that would be appropriate for a series at this time. However, once the school year has been completed and we have seen one cycle of the book, we will be able to assess the appropriateness of other additions to this book. It seems like a very ambitious goal to have a series, and it would be interesting to hear future comments from readers on how books in a series come to be developed. It also makes us question which type of book is more desirable: the one that stands alone, or the ones that are part of a series.

7. Do I envisage my coursebook requiring teacher guides, workbooks, resource packs, a website?

“A coursebook seldom exists alone. A teacher’s guide is a standard requirement. These guides can come in many forms but they need to provide tape scripts, if not in the coursebook, answers, a description of the unit template and a rationale (Mares)”. These are all provided by a simple teacher’s manual, which is very similar to those found with other books of this type. It is essential for the teacher who uses the book in order to make usage smooth and error-free. Books

of this type often will not require extensive teacher’s guides. Those who are unfamiliar with their use may be concerned at first with the lack of direction often found in other books. Teachers may soon come to realize that they are not as essential in producing a good lesson as they first thought.

8. What parts of the writing am I prepared to delegate to others?

“In instances where assistance is required in the writing of the book care should be taken to find someone who understands the nature of your coursebook and is sympathetic to your pedagogical approach (Mares)”. This would seem to be quite true but was of little concern to us as we worked on each section of the book together thus making it easier for all the parts to fit together as a whole. Some writers delegate sections to be written which we feel can sometimes lead to an unevenness in the structure of the book. This can be avoided by working together on each section and coming to agreement on the use or omission of words, phrases or other aspects of the book. An important part of this is also the aspect of time involved. Since we were doing this as a team with a goal of finishing it by the end of the summer we spent a great deal of time together (probably tough on both of us, not to mention family). Once the original was done then came the rewriting of the sections that the publisher either didn’t like or wanted in a different format which turned out to be just as challenging as the original writing. Curtis’ advice, “allow for considerable amounts of time needed to read through and give feedback on a number of full versions of the manuscript after the first round of writing is finished” (Curtis 2005:19) proves to be good advice I could have used when we were first going through the process. Yukitoki, having been through this several times before handled all in stride but I must admit that as a first-timer I found the process frustrating. I cannot imagine having gone through the process as the lone writer. Having a co-author to work with definitely helped in getting through the process.

9. What look do I envisage my coursebook having?

“The presence of photos or illustrations only or a combination of both will also influence the look (Mares)”. When the book was first sent to the publisher, we had seen what they had done with the books Yukitoki had published with this particular publisher and had a good idea of what to expect. Therefore, the finished product was not a surprise (negatively or positively) in this respect. This aspect of the publication should perhaps be left to the publisher as they have the image of what type of book is selling well at the moment. Of course, how those books are presented will actually come down to how their art department designs it. Again, in this regard I was

quite surprised to see how little input the writers had in this area. We were presented with versions of the text which I immediately approved of but were met more critically by Yukitoki as having gone through the process before knew very well what would work and what would not.

10. What unique features will my course-book have?

“Marketers need a selling point, something to point at or show to potential users that will immediately be identified as something they need (Mares)”. The book that we wrote was unique in that it applied a situation normally challenging to new learners and allowed them to do activities that could be applied to real situations that they would probably be involved in doing in the near future. Rather than portraying the situation as being overwhelming, it depicts the travel experience as something that anyone can do. Rather than being a confidence deflator, it is a confidence builder, which, it is hoped, makes it an excellent selling point.

11. What type of promotional activity am I prepared to be engaged in?

“Being willing to appear at conferences, workshops and seminars is a plus. Authors need good visibility (Mares)”. This sounds very intriguing, but also challenging, and would be an interesting activity if the opportunity were ever to present itself.

Conclusion

Publishers are constantly looking for new material. If you are thinking of writing a coursebook, you will need to keep all of these factors in mind as work on your book progresses. It seems that books need to be unique yet similar to what is currently being published. It also appears that you will have to go beyond thinking about the current book project you are working on and relate it to what you may be producing in the future. In our case, we did not look beyond this book, but perhaps future endeavors will require us to think about

what we have written as part of future publications or a series. Curtis advises, “if it is your first book you are likely to be very keen to get it done. But, in addition to all the time needed for detail work, there will be delays” (Curtis 2005:19). Probably, if I had better known about the delays I would have been able to get through the entire process in a calmer manner.

Book Information

Type of book: This is a conversation book

Target user: The book is intended for those students at universities, colleges and language schools who are interested in studying the language for foreign travel,

User environment: Japanese colleges, universities and language schools.

What the book intends to teach: The book is designed to teach students how to successfully deal with travel situations.

Kiyoshi Yukitoki is a Professor at Kyushu Kyoritsu University. He's very much interested in English education in Southeast Asian countries and has written a number of papers on it. He has also published several English textbooks and the latest one will be out later this year.

Daniel Droukis is an Associate Professor at Kyushu Kyoritsu University in Kitakyushu City, Japan where he teaches general English courses. He is interested in materials development has written papers and articles on language teaching and will have a second textbook published this year.

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Working with an Editor

Dorothy Zemach, Cambridge University Press, USA

So your proposal has been accepted, or you've accepted a call from a publisher to work on a book. What happens next?

What are the challenges? From my experiences as a writer and an editor, I'd say the biggest challenges are (not necessarily in order of importance, of course)

- rewriting
- developing and maintaining a good relationship
- knowing when to stand firm and when to compromise
- deadlines, and meeting them

Rewriting

OK, when I said I wasn't listing the challenges in order of importance, I lied. This is the big one. You work hard at crafting the very best materials you possibly can, you have your colleagues read them over and make changes, you try them out in classes, you proofread a few dozen times, and then you send them, all polished, off to your editor... who wants changes? Now what? For me, at least, and other writers I've spoken with about this, come the Four Stages of Rewriting:

1. Denial: What do you mean this exercise isn't clear? Everyone I showed it to understood it. Of course that's a good paragraph. This is the most interesting subject possible for this unit.
2. Anger: Oh, and when was my editor last in the ESL classroom? Is she saying she knows how to teach better than I do? I've been using these materials for years! How dare she criticize them!
3. Grief: But I can't rewrite the whole section; I don't have time. I spent three days doing Internet research for this. I can't just toss aside a whole month of work!
4. Acceptance: Well, if I have to change the topic, I can think of something else. If we need games to please teachers in Brazil, I guess I can add them to the review sections. That isn't really a very interesting essay, is it?

The sooner you can move through these stages, the easier it will be for everyone (and while negotiating and discussing is always an option at any time, it

helps not to send off venting emails while in stages 1-3! See later discussion on relationships). No matter how brilliant you are (and obviously you are, because someone wants to publish your book), you are just one person or team of writers. Your publisher is responsible for shaping your materials into those that can be used by a wide range of teachers, almost none of whom you have ever met, and many of whom live and teach in circumstances you aren't familiar with. That's why you're going through the publishing process with a company, and not just handing out photocopies to your colleagues. Rewriting is an inevitable part of this process.

Developing and maintaining a good relationship

While clearly this involves having good "people skills," it helps to remember that you and your editor have the same goal: producing an effective textbook that will sell. No matter how often or how strongly you may disagree on details about how to achieve that goal, you are always on the same side.

It sounds obvious to say that good communication is a key, perhaps even the key, to working out most differences, yet it bears repeating because people forget it all the time. Different editors have their individual styles, as do different authors. Some authors want to hear from their editors all the time; others only want to hear if there is a problem. Some authors want to be informed of every change to be made, no matter how minor; others get annoyed if all of these changes are communicated. It will save both sides trial and (possibly) error if you figure out some things about how you like to communicate, and let your editor know. Do you, from time to time, need reassurance that your materials are good? Do you like several points mentioned in one long email, or would you prefer a separate message for each point? Do you prefer communicating on the phone or by email? While an editor can't accommodate every wish, it helps to know.

It's email that makes it possible for authors half the world away to work on projects; but it's also email that makes it possible to sent angry or hurt reactions too quickly, yet in a form in which they can live on. Think of every message you are sending as one that will be kept for a year, and then reread. Is what you

are writing clear and polite? If you're tired and upset, wait a few hours before hitting that <send>. Remember too that while authors are usually writing one book at a time, editors are usually working on several books at a time, with many authors. Every editor I've ever worked with likes to maintain a friendly relationship with authors; yet they may simply not have time to remember your birthday or comment on all the photos you sent from your last vacation. Editors cannot be your penpals. To me, the relationship is similar in a way to a teacher and students: A teacher is friendly to students, but is not their friend. They work together for a common goal, but that goal is not a personal relationship; rather, their relationship should facilitate the work.

An important part of keeping email communications straight is having only one person on an author team be responsible for emailing the editor. You may certainly cc your co-authors, and ask your editor to cc your co-authors in his replies, but it is not helpful to have co-authors emailing the same editor with different replies to the same queries. You and your co-authors need to talk amongst yourselves, decide on one response, and have one person communicate that response to the editor. In a similar vein, your editor cannot be used for settling co-author disputes. How you divide your workload (and your royalties) and whose version of exercise 2.3 is best are issues you need to work out before you email your editor.

Knowing when to stand firm and when to compromise

Remembering from the first point of this article that some amount of rewriting is inevitable, it is essential that you choose your battles. You are the author. The publisher is trusting you to create materials that are pedagogically sound. If you are asked to OK something that you feel to be wrong, then you need to speak up. For example, if you are writing a vocabulary textbook, and you feel that vocabulary should be reviewed periodically, then you should make sure that regular reviews are included. However, whether the review puzzle should be a crossword or a word search is a more a matter of opinion.

For me, the hardest thing about compromising as an author was seeing the problem as having more than just two solutions, mine and the one offered by the editor. There are always more than two options, though. If the editor can't accept your proposal, and you can't accept the editor's, then you need to think of something else. The vocabulary doesn't have to be reviewed by *either* a crossword puzzle or a word search; there could be scrambled words, or a hangman game, or a concentration game created by a group of students, or a jeopardy game presented as a photocopiable in the teacher's book, and so on. There

are many paths up the mountain.

I recall once having a packager, who was also working as an editor, though he didn't work directly for the publishing company, tell a co-author and me that we couldn't use the terms *finite clause* and *non-finite clause* in a grammar book for native English speakers, because "...[E]veryone knows that the opposite of *finite* is *infinite*." Well, we couldn't write a grammar book that asked students to produce *infinite clauses*; but neither could we convince the editor that these were standard terms. In the end, we compromised on not labeling the clauses with any terms at all. It wasn't the best solution for us, and you'll notice that I'm not mentioning the book by name. But at least we were able to keep something absolutely incorrect out of the book.

In ELT these days, I don't think it's that common for editors to make mistakes on the magnitude of *infinite clause*. More often, changes and compromises are asked for because the editor needs to respond to requests from what I always hear called "the markets"; that means, teachers in the countries where your book will be sold. Sometimes teachers are surveyed directly, and editors also talk to field staff in local offices and sales representatives, who take careful note of what kinds of materials teachers request, compliment, and complain about. To take a hypothetical example: You want to review vocabulary in every unit with word searches, and your main market has indicated repeatedly that they hate word searches. Your editor would be remiss in duty if he didn't ask you to remove the word searches. And to take a real example: The first draft of Chapter 1 of *Paragraph Writing* (co-authored with Carlos Islam, Macmillan ELT 2005) had "Pets" as its topic. Carlos wrote a rather good paragraph about dogs (and we were finding it surprisingly hard to write good sample paragraphs) that, we felt, nicely anchored the unit. Our editor at Macmillan, however, told us that if we wanted to sell into the Middle East, we couldn't include a paragraph about dogs. We tried to argue the point once, saying that even if Middle Easterners didn't keep dogs as pets themselves, surely they would be able to cope with the knowledge that Americans do. Macmillan responded that in some countries, a textbook inspector of sorts checks over incoming books and gives bad marks including any of a variety of taboo topics; including, apparently, dogs. So dogs was out... and then cats are not popular pets in many Asian countries... we were now looking at a unit on pets that didn't include dogs or cats. We spent maybe a day feeling stuck, until the (now obvious) solution dawned: Change the topic. Of course, that meant rewriting every example paragraph and exercise sentence, but the new chapter (on part-time jobs) was actually much stronger.

Most editor/author relationships that I know of that have soured have gone astray here, over not being able to compromise quickly, effectively, and politely.

Pick your battles, and even then be willing to offer several different alternatives to whatever the sticking point is.

Deadlines, and meeting them

My biggest surprise as a first-time writer was at how long it takes to get a book out. I wrote a teacher's guide to someone else's textbook, which I thought of as rather like writing the recipe for someone else's dish. There were definite challenges, of course, in writing succinctly and clearly, and in coming up with fresh and creative supplementary activities and adaptations; but I still imagined we'd sort of breeze through it in a few months and I'd soon have my book on my shelf. One of the first emails I got from my editor, though, asked me to deliver the manuscript in a year. Fortunately, I remembered from my college days my reaction to deadlines, which is often to do nothing until the last minute. Clearly a year-long project was not going to be something I could knock off in a few nights, so I asked my editor to set several intermediate deadlines for me, to prompt me to action. Of course, I knew that these intermediate deadlines weren't "real," but just having them and feeling accountable made it far easier to start—and finish—chunks of work. Any good editor should be able to do this for you, by the way, so if you need more deadlines than you've been offered, just ask!

When discussing deadlines at the start of a project, be realistic in estimating how many hours a week (and months a year) you will have to spend on your book, and in forecasting periods when you won't be able to work as much. Will some weeks involve more work at a second job? Are you planning a vacation? Build these time periods into your deadline discussion, so you're not caught finishing an entire manuscript while giving and grading final exams when your relatives are visiting for Christmas.

Once you have agreed on deadlines, take them seriously. If you don't send in your work on time, you delay a

long chain of other people, including all of the people working directly on your manuscript and therefore all of the other projects those people are working on as well. If you know you won't meet a deadline, it is essential that you communicate with your editor as soon as possible to discuss solutions. Some deadlines may have a little wiggle room, and you can have a few more days or weeks. Some deadlines affect production schedules, and if you can't meet your obligations, others will have to be hired to do so. Editors realize you can't schedule illnesses and family emergencies, and they won't hate you if "life happens." But they will need to know about any problems as soon as possible so they can begin scrambling for solutions.

To sum up, then:

1. Be willing to revise your materials.
2. Be courteous, clear, and practical.
3. Stand up for what you know to be right; but remember, there is never only one way.
4. Fulfill your obligations.

This advice holds equally well for authors and editors. A freelance editor recently remarked to me in an email, "All I want to do is work with reasonable people being nice to each other to make a nice book." Surely that's a goal any author would set as well.

Dorothy E. Zemach is a senior development editor at Cambridge University Press in the US. She taught general, business, and academic ESL for more than 17 years in Japan, Morocco, and the US. Her areas of interest and specialization are the teaching of writing, discourse analysis, pragmatics, and materials development. She has written textbooks on grammar, writing, video, and business English.

The ideas for this article come from Dorothy's years of experience as an author and now an editor.

The Template Conundrum

Chris Mares, The University of Maine, USA

You're at a publisher's stand at an ELT conference, you pick up an integrated skills book and you have a flick through. You look at the contents page, the layout, the illustrations. You pause at random pages, read an instruction or two, start to actually do an activity in your head, and then start looking for any distinctive features. Next you register the number of units and how each unit is structured. Finally, you give the book a quick heft, feel the texture of the pages and you're done, at least in terms of first impressions. As teachers we've all done this and as writers we know that a lot of work has gone into conceptualizing and structuring the materials under consideration. Decisions have been made regarding the number teaching hours the book should account for, the number of units in the book, the length of each unit, and yes, the template for each unit.

The ELT skills books that I have been involved in writing have been broken down into units and each unit has a template, that is to say a predictable and recognizable flow of activities and activity types. For example, in an integrated skills book, the basic template might be as follows:

Page 1: Warm up

Page 2: Listening activities

Page 3: Grammar presentation and practice plus writing activities

Page 4: Speaking activities

Page 5: Reading and Writing activities

Page 6: Review activity and unit summary

This information is neither new nor surprising but from the writer's perspective I think it deserves some in-depth examination. Why? Because I believe there is a template conundrum and I think it needs to be explored. First though, let's consider the simple issue of advantages and disadvantages of the template from the writer's point of view.

The advantages of a template

A template is a shape, a structure, an organizing principle, which by its very nature will impose some parameters on the creative possibilities within a unit. Certain pages need to 'do' certain things. Certain

activity types can only take up so much space. In my experience, during the writing process the mind becomes trained to create for the template. There can only be so much material and only so many activities and they have to be sequenced in a particular way and have to fit the space available. One argument then would be that a template can facilitate the writing process by providing something to work with, something to tie ideas or activity types to.

The disadvantages

The inverse argument is also true. A template by its very nature can constrict the creative process by dictating what can be done and also, perhaps, how it is to be done. In this sense a template can lead to mechanical writing, where the focus is on writing to the template rather than providing the most engaging materials and activities for our learners. A more insidious problem is the creation of a pedagogic illusion, which is to say that all target language should be treated in the same way and requires the same amount of coverage. Some grammar points or lexical areas, or even topics, may merit much more or less treatment, for that matter, than the template can accommodate. Do all topics, grammar points, lexical sets, etc. require a template of 6 pages?

Teachers and students

From the teachers' point of view the template assists with lesson preparation. It provides its own loose lesson plan and often, clear goals. This predictability helps with lesson planning and class management. Meanwhile, from the students' point of view the predictability provides a degree of safety and comfort, both of which are important in the learning process. Nevertheless, too much predictability can lead to boredom for students, not only with the material, but also the fact that a rigid template will tend to lead to a sameness in teaching style. Not, I think something we would ask for.

The conundrum and some solutions

We are in a situation where a template can facilitate writing and yet hinder creativity. However, it is not an all or nothing proposition. Let's consider the rigidity of the template. A degree of flexibility, for example,

would allow for more possibilities, more creativity, and also less rigid predictability. We might also consider more than one template. For example, alternating templates might offer more possibilities. Another possibility would be to have a template which had consistent features but not necessarily the same order, or confined by the same structure.

My preference

As a writer I have found templates can be constraining but I feel that some form of template is necessary in order to provide material that has a 'feel' to it and to make the material teachable and also engaging for students. In order to avoid the problem of 'sameness' it is important to ensure a wide range of activity types. For example, don't always have the same types of

listening activities. Vary the tasks. Vary the modes of interaction. The slot in the template may be a listening slot but that doesn't mean the activity needs to be identical to the listening activity in the previous unit.

Conclusion

By thinking creatively, keeping in mind the teacher needs and student needs we can turn a potential conundrum to advantage. To do this we must focus on interesting and engaging material and a wide range of activity types. Our template must offer the degree of flexibility necessary to allow for the most appropriate activities for our students. And there I shall leave it on the note of creativity and flexibility – the key to good teaching.

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Personal Coding: the Varieties of Linguistic Experience

Patricia L. Duffy, United Nations, USA

This the second half of a two part article Pat has written for Folio. The first half was published in Spring 2005 in Volume 10/1 of Folio. Part 2 of her article focuses on descriptions of neuroscientific research indicating variety in neural patterning for language processing.

First Hand Descriptions of Synesthetic Experiences of Language

This first description comes from Carmen Crosa, a Spanish language instructor, now retired from the UN Language and Communications Programme:

'When I think of things I have to do, I see them in my mind's eye, written on a list in what reminds me of a very formal notebook for bookkeeping - a kind of abstract form of a ledger. Everything on the list is written out very carefully. On the other hand, when I think of less formal activities, like writing cards to friends, I inwardly see these things on casually torn fragments of paper (like big pieces of confetti) with a bit of information on each piece.'

This next, more poetic description comes from Laura Glenn, an editor, whose inner language experience combines kinetic and visual elements:

'Whenever I am editing and looking for a word that is right on the tip of my tongue but cannot quite access it,' she says, 'I get an inner sensation of walking through mist. When the mist clears, the elusive word appears, written in the clearing.'

Laura Glenn's description may strike us as particularly poetic—almost metaphorical – but as researcher V. S. Ramachandran tells us, there may be a reason for that. The angular gyrus, the part of the brain involved in the sequencing of letters (the process one needs to spell a word) is also involved in metaphor-making. Thus, it may not be surprising if the very act of searching for a word takes the mental form of a metaphorical image, e.g., 'walking through mist'.

In the same way, it may not be surprising that color

figures prominently in the language processing of color-lexical synesthetes because the angular gyrus is located next to a part of the brain involved in aspects of color processing (called 'area V-4') -- and in some individuals, there may be greater cross-activation between these two areas as the experiment of Dr. Simon Baron-Cohen and his team at Cambridge University showed. Such cross-activation can lead to the kinds of perceptions Nabokov reported or synesthete and writer Alison Motluck, who reports perceiving:

...the glorious cherry red of an 'S'...the buffed black of an 'R'...the ugly, powdery pale blue of the letter 'P', the splendid rich purple of 'V'... 'I' and 'O'.

At this point, the mind may begin to boggle at the very different inner experiences of language that people can have. After all, aren't we all using the same parts of our brains to process language? The answer is yes and no. While certain neural areas are involved in all language processing, in given individual cases, there may be anomalous cross-talk between certain regions. Some recent neuroscientific research indicates that any given person's neural pattern for processing language may be as unique as his or her fingerprints. While it is true that for all of us, certain given areas of the brain are involved in language processing, it is also true that the brain is a much more dynamic and plastic environment than was once thought; neural patterns can take many forms.

Some research on how the brain processes language

As the research of Ramachandran and Baron-Cohen could indicate, some hyper-activation or unexpected neural cross-activation can take place between standard language-processing areas and other regions of the brain, producing some truly unique experiences of language.

The late world famous scientist, Francis Crick, co-discoverer of the double-helix nature of DNA, also did research indicating the uniqueness and complexity of language processing. Through their studies of brain activity during language use, Dr. Crick and his team at the Salk Institute in LaJolla, California, found that

different aspects of language are processed in different areas of the brain. In contrast to what was previously believed, there is not just one language centre in the left brain that is activated when words are heard, spoken, or thought of; rather, a variety of different centres spread throughout the brain's visual and auditory cortices are activated simultaneously, and the relevant information from each converges to form the full meaning of the word and its implications. One linguistic centre might provide information about the spelling of the word, another about its part of speech, another about the appearance of the word and/or the thing it represents.

With this model it is not hard to imagine that with any given individual, other areas of brain activation might get into the mix (and whatever principle organizes all of this information, causing it to converge in the meaningful way that it does, even to form a simple concept like 'cup', for example, is still a mystery; however, Dr. Crick believed that this as yet undiscovered 'binding principle' mediates meaningful language – and perhaps all forms of cognition). It is not hard to imagine with Crick's model that other areas of brain activation might get into the mix (such as those responsible for color processing, which is the case for those like Nabokov, who experience color-lexical synesthesia).

In fact, neurosurgeon Dr. George Ojemann of the University of Washington found that, while certain general tendencies existed in the neural processing of language, different people had language centers idiosyncratically scattered in different parts of their brains. Steven Pinker writes of Dr. Ojemann's research in his book, *The Language Instinct*:

'Why has it been so hard to draw an atlas of the brain with areas for different parts of language? According to one school of thought, it is because there aren't any...[Except] for sensation and movement, mental processes are patterns of neuronal activity that are widely distributed, hologram-style, all over the brain.'

Unexpected regions can also get into the language-processing neural mix because of the brain's plasticity and its flexibility in adapting given areas - even to functions for which they were not predisposed. This may explain why a minority of people has synesthetic and other particularly unusual modes of language experience. While, as Dr. Ojemann tells us, certain areas of the brain may be particularly pre-disposed toward language function, many others can take over if needed. To quote again from Steven Pinker's book, *The Language Instinct*:

'Many neurologists believe that this is why language centres are located in unexpected places in a significant minority of people. Birth is traumatic...The birth canal squeezes the baby's head like a lemon, and newborns

frequently suffer small strokes and brain insults. Adults with anomalous language centres may be recovered victims of these primal injuries, which bespeak no ill effects.'

The idea that all human beings can incorporate vivid sensory elements into their language processing is not new. As far back as the 1920's, two research psychologists at the University of Oregon - Raymond Wheeler and Thomas Cutsforth also came to this conclusion while studying colored language synesthesia. Following their study, the two psychologists concluded that 'there is no such thing as image-less, sensation-less meaning', in other words, we are always inwardly coding language and other information in a regular sensory ways so that, as they put it, 'synesthesia is an essential mechanism in the construction of meaning that functions in the same way as certain unattended mental functions in non-synesthetes'.

But what would happen of those 'unattended mental processes' were attended to? Could it be helpful for a student of language to become more aware of the unique way in which he or she processes language. Would encouraging greater attention to and awareness of this inner code be helpful as a tool for language learning—perhaps more helpful than getting at such experiences indirectly through learning style instruments?

Was it just such a keen awareness of inner language code that aided Nabokov in mastering four languages? At this point, of course, we can only speculate.

However, we do have the report of a contemporary synesthete, Natasha Lvovich, who has written about her color-lexical synesthesia in her book, *The Multilingual Self*. In one of its chapters called, 'Confessions of a Synesthete', Lvovich describes how the colors and tactile qualities vary in the different languages and how her awareness of this imagery figured in her process of learning three languages, French, Italian, English, in addition to her native Russian. Lvovich reports inner visual, tactile and auditory sensations in her personal coding of language. As in the case of Nabokov, for Lvovich, each word, and each alphabet letter evoke a color-tactile response – and this happens in the various languages she has learned. As Lvovich describes,

'In English, six is whitish, fuzzy, dull glass; in French, creamy in color and substance. [Monday] in Russian, Pondel'nik is grayish and dull, and [English] Monday is orange-red-brown-gamma. English L is tough, very glassy, upfront pink, while the softer Russian L (lya) sound is a soft, warm pink.'

Other speakers of languages with non-Roman alphabets also report seeing the characters of the language's writing systems in color. Shibana Tajwar, an environmental engineer, who is a speaker of Bengali and Urdu, says that the colors of sounds in both languages correspond

to similar sounds in English, although the shades may vary. Bengalis' aspirated 'C' sound is pale yellow, 'less lemon-y', as Tajwar puts it. She describes the four different 'T' sounds in Bengali and Urdu as having four different shades of blue. The Bengali 'T' sound that resembles English 'T' is navy blue.

Similarly, Su Kim, a native speaker of Korean, reports that she perceives the Korean 'ka' sound as navy blue, just like the English consonant 'K' (although she reports that the Korean sound has a 'rougher texture'.

Like Lvovich, Tajwar and Kim are aware of this internal imagery being an integral part of their experience of knowing/learning language.

But does this inner imagery help with second language learning? According to Lvovich, it does. As she writes of her success in learning English spelling:

'Of course much of my good spelling skills come from my linguistic background, knowledge of French and the well-trained ability to generalize about language rules, but a lot of it is due to the synesthetic memory that helped me to remember the sound-letter combinations with extra sensory support. For example, I recently learned the word, resilient, a brownie with a cutting silver edge.'

Certainly, it is interesting to consider the variety of personal language codes individuals can have. The rich inner 'language landscapes' of those with color-lexical synesthesia and other types of perceptual experience give one pause. It seems some value might be derived from encouraging language students to gain greater awareness of their 'personal language codes'. Teachers might encourage students to reflect on these in language-learning diaries, or even try to represent them on personal computers. At the very least such an exercise could be an interesting topic for class discussion. But could it also become a study tool? Might students find ways to use their naturally occurring inner perceptions as an aid to better remembering and retaining new language?

They might. But certainly the awareness of how we code is a pre-requisite to any usefulness it may have – and many of us are only vaguely conscious of how we internally represent information to ourselves. We often feel that knowledge of things has an invisible presence in our minds. And that could be true for not all of us are visual coders. However, it may also be true that even the information we do code visually -- or in other sensory modes – only seems to lack salient sensory qualities because we are not in the habit of attending to it directly – much in the same way that we may pass landmarks on a given street every day (and use them to know where we are and where we are going) but not notice much about the details of their features.

In the coming months, I plan to carry out more

interviews on personal language codes and also further develop a set of exercises I am creating to help students become more aware of the inner language experience – and to see ways in which the personal code might be applied as a tool. I plan to report the results of this research in a future piece.

Before closing, it may be of interest to remind ourselves that language evolved relatively late and in a relatively short time in human history. Our varied ways of processing and experiencing language may show the truth of William James' assertion that there is no 'typical mind that all minds are like.' They also show nature's preference for diversity as we humans and our language continue to evolve.

Patricia Duffy has been an instructor in the UN Language and Communications Programme since 1985. She has also taught English at New York University and the City University of New York. Pat is the author of two textbooks on English as a second language: Variations: Reading/Oral Communication Skills and Focus on Innovations and Innovators, as well as Blue Cats, a book about synesthetic perception.

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Start Blogging for yourself and for your Students

Barry Bakin, Los Angeles Unified School District, USA.

Have you ever thought that it would be nice to have a way for your students to contact you when they've been absent for several days so they could find out what class work they've missed? Would you like a way for your students to be able to receive and return assignments even if they were absent from class on any given day? Do you think that your students would like to have a place where they could easily publish their stories for other students to read and react to? If you work with children, would you like to have a way where parents could see what activities you're doing in class or have a way to easily and "officially" check what homework their children have been assigned? Would you simply like to be able to have a forum to let your own ideas and opinions about your teaching, your school, your colleagues or life in general be heard and reacted to? Would you like to be able to do all of these things without needing a course in website construction? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, it might be time for you to start to experiment with the world of "blogging."

"Blogging," the name for writing, publishing, and reacting to published ideas on a webpage intended for that purpose, is experiencing an explosion of growth and is perhaps on its way to becoming one of the most popular ways that Internet users interact with others world-wide. Short for "web-log," blogging is different than creating a class homepage in that it's done at websites which provide simple and easy tools for readers of any particular blog to interact with the creator of the blog by sending a message which is instantly viewable by others reading the blog, who can then in turn respond with a comment of their own. Formerly, internet websites were predominantly the creative domain of the website owner, who posted all information and determined all of the content. With blogs, the blog creator still has tools to limit and ultimately control the content, but the intent is to foster more of an interactive dialogue between the blog owner and anyone reading the blog. One also doesn't need much specialized knowledge or experience in creating websites. Blogging websites usually provide ready-made formats and the prospective "blogger" (one who creates or uses blogs) just has to choose the one that is most appealing, learn a few simple procedures for posting and editing messages, and with a few clicks of the mouse can be blogging within minutes. It is easy enough that even beginning-level ESL students can be blogging within one class period.

Did I mention that the whole enterprise is free? There are no costs involved other than those involved with being connected to the Internet in the first place. Of course, not all students will have Internet access at home so no assignments should be given that cannot also be done in class, and not all parents will be able to view the class blog from home so teachers should not expect 100% participation from that sector, but the percentage of students who have Internet access at home, or at a public library near their house is certainly increasing all the time.

What does blogging look like in an educational context? Doing a Google search of the two words "ESL" and "blogs" returns 287,000 entries. Much of those are commercially oriented and are just links to other sites, but you'll find many good examples of actual teacher blogs as well as academic articles discussing blogging in the classroom. As an example of the latter, see Aaron Campbell's article at <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Campbell-Weblogs.html> for a discussion of three types of weblogs one can experiment with. One of my own early attempts at blogging for my students is at <http://pacoimaesl.blogspot.com/>. Intended for my beginning-level students, it features "assignments" and some student responses as well as some links to the blogs some students created by themselves. For a much more developed ESL blog that also incorporates video and audio produced by the students see Teresa Almeida d'Eca's "Fun with English" blog at <http://64.71.48.37/teresadeca/sitemap.htm>. Also worth taking a look at is Rosa Ochoa's blog for her adult immigrant students in Sydney, Australia. See it at <http://ourenghlishclass2.blogspot.com/>.

There are some concerns that one should be aware of when working with blogs, just as there are for any Internet-based activity. Blogs contain links and are viewable for the most part by anyone. Some of the links can lead to blogs with undesirable content. Teachers need to be aware of this and plan for it, by warning students of that possibility and instructing them on what to do if they click on a link which brings them to such content, or by choosing a blog provider that features filters and other tools that can help limit such exposure. Class Blogmeister, the work of educator David Warlick, is an example of a blogging site intended for use by teachers with tools for giving the teacher more control over the posted messages. It can be found at <http://classblogmeister.com/>. A new development in blogging is "blog spam."

Marketers and others have also jumped into blogging. They use “robotic” programs to post messages to blogs with generic messages like “I found your blog very interesting. Please visit mine at” In response, blogging providers started to provide ways to block “blog spam” so you’ll want to be familiar with those as well.

If, after reading about some of the concerns, you’re still eager to try blogging out for yourself or as a tool for English language practice for your students, there are several places to get started. An easy to use site is Blogger at <http://www.blogger.com>. LiveJournal

and Xanga are two other sites that offer free blogs. They can be found at <http://www.livejournal.com/> and <http://www.xanga.com/> respectively.

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Reviews

Carrie Steenburgh, Union County College, USA

Breaking English News

www.BreakingEnglishNews.com

For many material writers, the joy is not only in the creation of fantastic resources but also in the cashing of the royalty check. What material writer doesn't dream of being signed by a big name publisher and living happily off royalties? If we're not successful in getting published, perhaps we use some of the lessons in our classes or, if we're feeling generous, share it with a few colleagues. However, probably not all of us are as unselfish with our lesson plans as Sean Banville. Banville's site, *www.BreakingEnglishNews.com* promises a new lesson plan each day based on a current news story. Sure, Banville does ask for donations and he is promoting his own book, but other than that, the site is curiously free of advertisements - no annoying pop up windows or banners that might distract you from what you're after - namely, quick and easy downloadable lessons to get you through a class. Plus, it's free, always an advantage for the underpaid, overworked language teacher.

BreakingEnglishNews.com is a densely packed resource for teachers. Besides offering a variety of student friendly articles, re-written for either an 'easy' or 'difficult' level, Banville also provides a listening mp3 file of the article, perfect for students who are working on their listening skills. Accompanying this is a multitude of communicative and listening activities that teachers can choose to do with their classes. Banville has grouped these activities according to four categories with the intent, I assume, of activating background knowledge (Warm up activities), working on reading/listening strategies (Before Reading/Listening) encouraging lexical noticing (While Listening, Reading) and recycling language (After Reading/Listening). In addition to the in-class activities, he also gives discussion questions, speaking activities and homework suggestions for further activities. There are far more activities than can be done in just a single class, so teachers can pick and choose the ones that they know would be successful in their classroom.

In my field testing of the materials, I found that my intermediate level students were quite engaged with the topics. We did the lessons "Friends Help You Live Longer" and "Toddlers Mimic Smoking Parents" and on the whole, students were interested in the readings and speaking activities. However, I would recommend a few changes to the placement of some of the activities. In my experience, my students struggled with the

Synonym Match and Phrase Match activities when I used them in the suggested "Before Reading/Listening". When I used these after the reading, they were much more successful as they had already seen these words in context.

For the overworked or inexperienced teacher, Banville's site is a good resource to get a quick, ready to use lesson plan based on the current news of the day. However, since many novice teachers might be using this site, I would encourage Banville to design an "Introductory" page for teachers, almost like a "Teacher's Edition" which would explain the pedagogical theory underlying the four categories. Why is it important to do the warm up activities? Why might teachers do the activity to encourage lexical noticing? How should teachers use his resources and where did he get the information for his news stories? Since this site is more designed for teachers to access than students, I think this would be a helpful resource in addition to the exhaustive list of links he provides for teachers to explore, including sites for current events, listening activities and general ESL topics. Additionally, teacher might want to provide some visual examples to prompt or facilitate discussion, as there are no illustrations to accompany any of the articles. For lower levels, this might be especially helpful.

Despite these recommendations, *www.BreakingEnglishNews.com* has to be admired for Banville's sheer determination in sharing his ideas, on a daily basis, with teachers. Pick and choose what you may, but thank Banville for not hoarding his lessons and holding out for a lucrative deal from a publishing house.

World Link

Authors: Susan Stempleski, Nancy Douglas, James Morgan

Publisher: Thompson Heinle, 2004

What do we expect from integrated skills course books? Good readings, authentic listenings, engaging writing and speaking prompts, and topics which are practical but of high interest. In my experience, most series are very similar in design and content. In fact, when comparing the introductory books of *Interchange*, *Headways* and *Touchstone*, I found little difference in their scope and sequence. They all seem to cover the basic themes: greetings, family, home, food, work, food, clothing and the standard structures: present continuous, possessives, simple present questions,

count/noncount nouns, and so on. Most series are packaged with CDs for listening practice, workbooks for reinforcing grammar and vocabulary acquisition, teacher's books filled with extension activities, and more and more are emerging with videos and websites. With all these similarities, how does a teacher or administrator decide which series to use in class? What makes one course book better than another?

Teachers now have another choice to consider when choosing a textbook. *World Link* is Thompson Heinle's newest addition to the integrated skills series selection. *World Link* has all the bells and whistles of their competitors packaged with a dizzying array of ancillary components to keep students using English beyond the classroom.

The series is designed for beginning to high intermediate students who are learning the language and wish to acquire a solid foundation and fluency in English. Each book has twelve units divided into two lessons based on the same overall theme. For example, in Book 3, the highest level, unit twelve's theme is "Our Earth". Lesson A deals with the natural world (glaciers, caves, harbors) and Lesson B brings up the man-made world (dams, bridges, landmarks). The first exercise is a vocabulary link introducing essential vocabulary through visuals. The rest of Lesson A recycles that vocabulary through listening and speaking activities. Lesson B introduces more vocabulary but builds upon that with listenings, short readings, and writing tasks. By the end of the course book unit, students have had plenty of opportunities to practice the target structures in all the skill areas. Yet, what about using language outside the course book and the classroom? What about really authentic exercises?

World Link's answer to this is the website, <http://worldlink.heinle.com>, a wonderful resource for internet savvy students. Instructors can assign a variety of interactive exercises, such as dictations, crossword puzzles, and quizzes which students can do and then submit online to their instructors. However, it is their addition of a link called 'Internet Exercise' which connects students to other websites where they can learn more about the topic they're studying that really caught my eye. For example, unit six (Book 2) on family, connects students to a family tree activity by the British Council. Another website link allows students to view famous celebrities' family trees, such as U.S. President George Bush. Students have the opportunity to practice their language in real situations, reinforcing what they've already covered and introducing new concepts.

Their video course, also accompanying the series, is another useful teaching tool which builds upon the structures presented in each unit. The video introduces a 'Friends' type series, followed by interviews with various students, which helps to introduce or recycle language. In my opinion, teachers could promote language noticing by showing the video first, followed by a closer look at structures and vocabulary in the course book.

Inexperienced or uninspired teachers will find the teacher's editions especially helpful. Besides offering useful pedagogical suggestions, such as how to adapt exercises to fit various learning styles or classroom situations, there are extension activities and cultural information, and a wonderful professional development section designed by Dr. Andy Curtis of Queen's University. Although most educators understand the benefits of reflective teaching, many don't make it a conscious part of their practice. However, Curtis' survey offers some practical exercises that can be done individually or as a part of faculty workshops which may help promote professional development. He also encourages teachers to think about the reasons for using the *World Link* series and how to best adapt it to their individual classrooms. For me, this is a highlight of this series, as it promotes an engaged consideration of why and how the textbook should best be used. I would strongly recommend teachers of all levels to read through Curtis' section as it can only help strengthen their teaching practice.

For me, this series strikes me as a great choice for both students and teachers. Whatever the students' learning style, they can easily acquire a solid foundation and fluency in English. Teachers, too, can learn a great deal by using the teacher's guide and completing Curtis' professional development section. If teachers are looking for a useful, engaging, dynamic and creative course book, *World Links* would be a solid choice.

Crossing the Curriculum: Multilingual Learners in College Classrooms

Editors: Vivian Zamel and Ruth Spack

Publisher: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004

There are many publications available that give voice to the experiences of the ESOL professional in the college classroom. Although insightful and valuable to our field, these texts typically present a narrow view of the classroom situation. Vivian Zamel and Ruth Spack in their edited book, *Crossing the Curriculum*, offer a refreshing multi-dimensional perspective by giving space to the voices of students and non-ESOL faculty in the university setting. Material writers who are developing language materials for content level courses and those working on language skill development will find this book informative and engaging.

Crossing the Curriculum is a collection of thirteen essays that variously address issues of multilingual learners in the college classroom. These are divided into three parts, all of which fundamentally speak to the experiences of ESOL students and educators across the curriculum.

Part one discusses students' experience through the lens of the ESOL classroom researcher and provides a

rich reflection on the importance that faculty across the curriculum play in promoting learning. Time and time again, the authors speak of course specific factors that promote language and learning (i.e. structuring activities that encourage expressive writing as an entry point for other writing, promoting students to embrace the spectator role of language.) This emphasis on using language to construct knowledge, and to draw upon students' lived experiences, rather than on simply using language to complete a task becomes a key to creating a successful classroom.

Part two is comprised of essays written by two of Zamel's former ELL students who detail the trials and tribulations of their own academic journey through higher education. I particularly loved this section because it gives students the freedom to actually speak to their own experience. The students' voices sing out in authenticity and emotion instead of being dryly examined, evaluated, appropriated and discussed by ESOL professionals. These reflections offer an insightful first hand account at how specific pedagogical approaches can alienate or encourage language and learning. For the material writer, this provides some useful ideas on what works and doesn't work in the structuring of rubrics and activities or in the planning of teacher's editions. For example, we read how a faculty comment directed towards ESL students to not worry about grammar in a writing assignment is actually interpreted as a stereotype by one of the students- that all ESL students struggle with grammar. We learn how faculty created comfortable classroom environment (i.e. by learning the pronunciation of names, questionnaires about the students' own expectations and goals, teaching the language of the new discipline, commentary on student writing). We also read about how faculty alienated students (i.e. lectures that were never connected to real life experiences, complex language, ambiguous blackboard notes). These stories are powerful reminders for all educators and material writers to be cognizant of their role in the classroom and how their teaching practices or materials might embrace or exclude learners.

The final section examines the experiences of non-ESOL faculty as they first struggle and then celebrate the inclusion of multilingual learners in their classrooms. Contributors from the disciplines of Sociology, Philosophy, Nursing, Anthropology, Asian American studies, and English reveal that teaching multilingual learners challenged them to become more responsive to the needs of all of their learners. Besides being thoughtful reflections, these essays provide practical exercises that writers could adapt for their materials. One faculty mentions writing to learn strategies combined with meaningful classroom

dialogue such as letter exchanges among students, and student generated questions for discussions and exams. Another teacher talks of his success in using drama and read alouds. Another describes a lesson about names and the connections they have to language, culture, power and identity. My only suggestion would be to have included some essays from the 'hard' sciences such as biology, physics, engineering, chemistry or math fields as many ELL do major in these disciplines. Traditionally, these classes have seen large enrollments of ELL and it would have been interesting to read what these disciplines are doing to address multilingual concerns.

As Zamel notes in her essay "Strangers in Academia", teaching multilingual learners is not just the domain of the ESOL educator. As our classrooms become more linguistically and culturally diverse, educators from across the disciplines must acknowledge the role that they play in language learning and teaching. However, ELL material writers do have the opportunity to help guide and inform non ESOL educators by creating resources that acknowledges the complexity of teaching multilingual learners. Each classroom, whether in the sciences or humanities, has its own particular discourse in which students must be apprenticed. By not addressing this fact and not providing multiple opportunities to acquire the course specific discourse, faculty and material writers disadvantage all students, whether multilingual or not. *Crossing the Curriculum* provides a richly nuanced model of inquiry and reflection that addresses this issue and encourages other institutions of higher educators to adapt their own.

Zamel, Vivian "Strangers in Academia" (1998) in V. Zamel and R. Spack (eds) *Negotiating Academic Literacies*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

A version of this review was first published by Carrie Steenburgh in *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 57, no 1, September 2005. Copyright 2005 by the National Council of Teachers of English. Adapted and reprinted with permission.

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There has been a flurry of interest in joining MATSDA's freelance register in the last few months and this has prompted me to check that our current details are up-to-date. I have been trying to contact register members but inevitably, with people moving on and email addresses changing, I have been unable to reach some on our list. So, if you are on the list, and have not already confirmed that the current details we have are accurate, or if you wish to withdraw from the list altogether, please could you get in touch with me at the email address below.

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Steve O'Sullivan
MATSDA Web Coordinator

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Qualifications: BA Psychology; Advanced Cert. TESOL (Leicester)

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Materials: destructive testing

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