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GREETINGS

Editor's Message

Jo Appleton, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

Hi & welcome to the Summer edition of FOLIO, Vol 12.2

I must begin by apologising for the late entrance of Volume 12.2. I have a few excuses but in the end it comes down to time. With my daughter Mia's 1st birthday just around the corner, she requires more of my time and energy, and so alas I seem to have less and less for FOLIO. Therefore, I feel it is only fair to pass the role of editor onto pastures new and so I would like to welcome our new editor, **Rod Bolitho**, who will be taking over from me as of now. Many thanks and Welcome Rod!

So, this issue is slightly smaller than previous editions but by no means any less. We've got some great articles for you to soak up and ponder upon. Our Chair, **Dave Allen** sends his apologies for a lack of Chairs Letter. He is currently in Brazil, attending various conferences and events.

Rama Meganathan from India starts off with some interesting individual perspectives regarding Materials Development in English as a second language in India. Another individual perspective comes from **Huda Al-Mansoob** in Nottingham called 'A Sub-World or not a Sub-World: Analysing Speech Presentation in Text World Theory. Next we have an article by **Johnathan Mason** in Tunisia about trialling CLIL materials on home turf. To complete this section, from Malaysia, **Jayakaran Mukundan** explores 'Agendas of the state in developing world English language Textbooks'.

Now we are lucky enough in this edition to have a research perspectives article entitled 'A Good Language Teacher' by our president, **Brian Tomlinson** which I hope makes up for the lack of a practical perspectives article. Next our man in Maine, **Chris Mares** gives us an interesting insight into the art of writing on the publishing front.

Then we have our computer whiz, **Barry Bakin** with useful tips about using a Wiki and new forms of online environments which provide easy-to-use writing platforms for students and teachers. **Carrie Steenburgh** sends her apologies, but for various reasons has been unable to send us her latest review. She'll have one for next time though. Finally, our spotlight author is the fabulous and always entertaining **Dorothy Zemach**.

Don't forget to check out our updated freelance register on the last few pages of this volume.

Thanks to all our authors in this edition and thanks to everyone for being incredibly patient with me.

If you have an article to offer, materials to demonstrate, a letter commenting on an article published in Folio or advertisement to place in Folio, please contact our new editor **Rod Bolitho** at *rod@nile-elt.com*

If on the other hand you would like us to review your ELT materials, then please contact **Carrie Steenburgh** at *steenburgh@ucc.edu*

The deadline for the **Autumn Edition will be October 4th.**

See you around

Jo

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES

Materials Development in English as a second language: An Indian Experience

Rama Meganathan, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi

This article presents the process of recent curricular revision and materials development in English at the national level in India in a limited way. Teacher's needs and wants, their participation in the development of materials, the dilemmas of teachers and their implications for classroom transactions are discussed from the experiences of one of the members of the materials development team. I will attempt to answer the following questions: (i) Should India need a textbook at the national level? (ii) Should methodology influence material or vice–versa? (iii) What material for textbooks should be used in countries like India? (iv) Can teachers make good materials? Is it possible to include materials development as part of the professional development of teachers?

Materials development for teaching of English as a second language has been witnessing significant changes during the last three decades in countries like India. The concerns informed by research on language learning and learning theories have impacted the methods that in turn have resulted in change of thinking in materials development. This along with other reasons which are mostly to achieve uniformity or commonality in the system resulted in making the teacher–learner / teaching-learning activities textbook centric. Though teachers are not really heard of in the process of textbook development, their participation is recognized as a positive trend. Teachers, on the one hand expect materials to do all wonders, on the other their needs and wants clash with each other and also with the needs of learners and learning. This creates many dilemmas for teachers and materials developers. The recent curricular revision undertaken in India made an attempt to address these issues and problems by brining in people from varied contexts to develop materials.

The Process

With the change of the government at the centre (national level), the National Council of Educational Research and Training[1] was directed to take up the revision of the school curriculum. The Education Secretary's letter to the Director of NCERT annexed with the National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF) makes it clear the agenda of the government, as it quotes the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 and its Programme of Action (POA) (1992) calling for a revision of the curriculum every five years. Major opposition to the textbooks developed as a follow up to the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE- 2000) was that the right wing ideas of the Hindutuva ideology have been brought into the textbooks, particularly in the textbooks of social sciences. Left wing academics and liberal forces opposed the NCFSE -2000 vehemently and it was lead as a movement.

Revision of national curriculum was initiated with the setting up of (i) The National Steering Committee[2] (ii.) National Focus Groups[3] (21 groups). The Steering committee has around 35 members from many fields as well as NGOs. The issues in language education were deliberated in the two National Focus Groups – Teaching of English and the Teaching of Indian Languages. The major issues in both the groups could be listed as: (i) Medium of learning – teaching /instruction (ii) Language policy in school education – three language formula (iii) Introduction of English as a language (iv) Language teacher education – teachers' professional development (v) Teacher's Language proficiency (vi) Methodologies of teaching (vii) Materials for teaching the language(s) (viii) Multilingualism as a strategy in classroom transactions

The syllabus committee in language(s) translated ideas of the position papers into reality. The syllabus listed themes and suggested varied ways for class transactions in a broader sense. After the syllabus committee, the textbook development committee plunged into action to design textbooks for various classes in a phased manner. In the first phase (2005-06) textbooks for classes I, III, VI, IX and XI and during the second phase (2006-07) textbooks for classes II, IV, VII, X and XII were brought out. The following sections describe the discussions, debates of one textbook development committees for (class X) on various occasions on the important issues and concern to develop materials

1. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is a national level apex organization which advises the govt. of India and the state (provinces) govts. on matters of school education. It is also a premier organization which develops textbooks at the national level and undertakes research and extension activities.

2. For details of the proceedings of the meeting of the Steering Committee please visit *www.ncert.nic.in*

3. To know more about the Focus Groups please visit *www.ncert.nic.in*

that would make an impact in the classroom to enable children in language learning.

Teachers' point of view (Teachers' Needs and Wants)

Teachers in various systems of schooling have varied needs and wants. The examination driven teaching can be seen everywhere in India, so teachers' worry about examinations even when they look at material or develop materials. The two members of our text book development committee were chosen from the schools in Delhi administration where most schools are run in regional medium, mostly Hindi or in some cases Punjabi or Urdu with a few English medium sections in the regional medium schools and students in these schools hail from lower socio-economics sections. The two teachers we chose from these schools were actually asking for a textbook their students would be able to understand and connect with their real life situations. We were happy that the teachers were in reality wanting to have what NCF- 2005 advocates as its one of the guiding principles, connecting life outside the classroom with the classroom experiences and recognizing the learner as a constructor of knowledge. What was not convincing us was that because their students did not have or posses the required proficiency in English, they want the textbook to be lighter in terms of context and language content. Teachers needs and wants clash here with their understanding of learners and their needs. Hitomi (1996) categorizes needs of teachers into two ways:

> *Teachers' needs would consist of two general areas: one deriving from personal traits such as their age, sex, cultural and educational background and the other from their professional traits such as areas and levels of expertise, length and types of teaching experience.*

Needs, Hitomi further classifies, (i) as self-perceived needs, (ii) needs perceived by others and (iii) objectively measured needs. One could sense the needs of the teachers here are self perceived needs, of course in their context and their understanding of the learner and language learning.

In our scrutiny and analysis of the 'texts' brought in by each member of the group and an analysis of the existing textbooks, the teachers were more apprehensive of relevance and use of almost each text saying, "This our children can not do" "The text is very tough." This made us look at how a typical English language classroom operates in these schools. We are well aware that the situation would not be much different in most of the vernacular medium (government run) schools. There is data to show (Nag-Arulmani 2005) that 40 percent of children in small towns, 80 per cent of children in tribal areas, and 18 percent of children in urban schools can not read in their own language at the primary stage. From the mouths of the teachers we came to understand, though not so shockingly, how the materials are taught / used in classroom.

> *"Our children are from very poor background. Lower caste, some are slum dwellers. They do not understand even a single sentence spoken by us. We need to translate most part of the story. More than eighty percent can not even read the lessons you prescribe."*
>
> *"I explain the whole text line by line and give answers to the question that follow the text and children memorize or some understand and write the answers."*
>
> *"Leave alone English, they read almost nothing in their mother tongue except the textbook. Some may read newspapers, or short novels, stories, etc.*

This tells us a lot; but mostly the belief, "Don't expose them to any materials as they can not read or understand" The irony is that the teachers who believe their students can not read and understand do not want their students to be troubled with anything above their level till they attain the level expected by the syllabus. Secondly, knowledge of the recent developments in language learning and second language acquisition and ELT, though they claim to have, is very limited. Teachers' views from the other two centrally administered school systems, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) are also the same. Most of the teachers' arguments on having or not having a text, for that matter any text in English textbook could be summarized as,

> *"Our children do not know English. They can not even read the texts you prescribe."*

There is a gap between teachers' needs and wants, results in a gap between them and the learners' needs. This, we sensed not only in our discussions during the development of the materials, but also in our attempt to design model question papers for class X for the CBSE as also in the training sessions, both face-to-face and through teleconferencing mode. Teachers believe that the textbook is a major instrument in terms of content, language input, methods and evaluation. What they fail to recognize is that the 'text' or materials are major inputs for exposing children to natural or authentic language or contexts. This creates tension and anxiety. It is not only learners but also teachers who are anxious and tense when it comes to English language learning in their situations. Krashen points out that -

> *"effects of various forms of anxiety on acquisition are seen in the learner." But "the less anxious the learner, the better language acquisition proceeds. Similarly, relaxed and comfortable students apparently can learn more in shorter*

periods of time." (Krashen, Dubey, Burt 1982)

This anxiety is triggered as teachers needs and wants don't seem to match the needs of the learner. Teachers are driven by their self perceived needs and though they seem to accept the learners' identity, they underestimate the learner in general as they can not learn, i.e. they cannot learn the language as it happens in an urban English medium school. This agrees with Jim Cummin's remark "poor kids get behaviourism and rich kids get social constructivism." In practice, that means skills for the poor and knowledge for the rich seem befitting to this situation. (Jim Cummins 2005) He was speaking in the context of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in the USA which could be translated in to the Indian situation as stress and burden for the poor and skills and knowledge for the rich.

Materials Question

The selection of texts was done by all members of the textbook development team individually and also during the workshop meetings. The major intensions behind the selections were (i) providing comprehensible inputs through variety of materials based on the themes listed in the syllabus (ii) the materials would facilitate learner to engage themselves with the language in contexts that they are with or familiar with (iii) exposing students to authentic / natural (language) text (iii) the tasks provided should enable learners to work individually, in groups or as a whole class and use the language and produce language in situations (iv) the materials would take the child from known to unknown (themes), from reading to writing and writing to reading, and also speaking and listening as part of the while reading as well as post reading of the text.

In the selected material, we had a good range of genres and themes that would suit our situations. We had translations from different Indian languages, travelogues; stories about animals, speeches, narratives that would enable learners to ponder over philosophy (like Buddha's Sermon at Benaras), and poems from William Blake to Ogden Nash and some other living poets. The dilemmas of teachers as well as by some of the textbook authors include:

- WE SHOULD HAVE TEXTS
  Classics - from Shakespeare, William Blake; romantic poets like William Wordsworth, Keats, Shelly; poets like Robert Frost are fine, but have longer poems too. Majority prose / fiction by writers belonging to that period.

- WE NEED TO HAVE
  A good introduction to the author, the poet and about the piece included in the textbook

Vs.

- WE HAVE TEXTS
  Have a variety of texts that include contemporary (themes) writing so that learners would be able to relate to their knowledge and thinking and with real life situations. We should have a mixed variety of materials from British, American, new literature and Indian literature (both Indian writing in English and translations from Indian languages).

- WE NEED
  No introduction or very sketchy introductions to the authors / poets. Let learners explore and find out. Moreover the poem or work of art matters more than the poet or the writer.

A Moral Question

The syllabus (NCERT 2006) lists fifteen major themes from where the ideas for the text could be drawn. It is only a guideline, not a restriction. One major question teachers wanted not only as teachers, but as also as parents and citizens is "We need to have texts or stories to teach morals explicitly to our children." This may also be the opinion of many 'adults' who visualize education as 'man making business by imbibing values', 'character building' and 'behaviourial change.' The curriculum in its aims and contents calls for education to act as an instrument in creating a citizen for a democratic society in the Indian context. What is expected by majority of the teachers from a textbook as 'adults' is that materials to act as didactic instrument to teach morals as morals so that our children get to learn them. In this regard the demand from the language textbook is more than other textbooks. Some responses and reflections by students during my visit to a school run by the NVS were:

> *"Please stop preaching through textbooks. We do not want direct morals like a sermon. Stories should interest us."*
>
> *"The textbook should have such stories and material of our interests, not simply life and works of people and their teaching."*

While the teachers, on the one hand feel that their students would not be able to read and understand textbook, they would expect the texts to be value laden. As students point out they expect texts to interest them so we need to think carefully before choosing a text.

Grammar or No Grammar?

This has taken much deliberation in and out of our workshops. A major change or reform that has taken place in this textbook revision is the integration of grammar activities with the textbook itself. Until this revision we had a textbook or a reader, an extensive reader (supplementary reader) and a work book, which presented grammar, most of them being sentence based exercises, somewhat contextualized. As a mark

of reducing burden- both physical as well as the burden of incomprehensiveness and to let children learn grammar in situations and contexts - the three books have now been made into two. Grammar has now become part of the textbook, the main text book. The dilemmas here are:

Teach formal grammar to some extent

- We need to teach grammar in a functional manner in contexts but also tell them the rules. Sentence based grammar is very useful.
- Each grammar item should be tested in the examination i.e test reported speech as one item. Do not do it like editing, or a cloze exercise, etc.
- Students should know the labels as well as rules so that they would become better users of the language.
- More grammar and correct grammar would make students use the language well.

Vs.

Teach grammar in contexts, situations

- Grammar is unnecessary at the initial years of learning.
- Let the learner discover rules of grammar and have grammar activities in the text and contextualized situations.
- Teach and test grammar in context and in an integrated manner.
- Knowing labels and rules will not make a good learner / user of the language. From the contexts learners will discover the rules and know the labels as they grow.
- Language is learnt when the learner is less anxious (Krasen 1982). Learning (Grammar) mechanically only makes learners stressed. Teaching of more grammar without any understanding of the language will only make the child stressed.

What methods and for whom?

Teachers can be obsessed with some method or another, and quite a large number of them feel that methods are the overarching principles on which a textbook needs to be written. Most teachers believe that the way they were taught would still be the best method. So structuralism and behaviorist models of teaching still holds good for them. The National Curriculum Framework – 2005 and the position paper on Teaching of English (2005) call for a method which in a way is the best of all the methods and approaches to language learning. A combination of the tenets of Choamskian mentalist, Piagetian cognitive and Vygotskian perspective of constructivism would do a lot for teachers to engage learners with situations connecting their life where they use the language. *Input-rich theoretical methodologies (such as the whole Language, the task-based, and the comprehensible input and balanced approaches) aim at exposure to the language in meaning-focused situation so as to trigger the formation of a language system by the mind (Position Paper –Teaching of English NCF 2005).* The task based methodologies, the position paper believes, would do justice in placing the learner to get engaged with peers, with the community and with the language to make meanings.

Teachers in their response have raised the following apprehensions:

1. Making students read the texts of the text book is a difficult task. We need to read out each line and explain.
2. So it is difficult to have pair / group work in the class. Students would not be able to speak in English.
3. What is wrong, if I teach grammar rules? Here they mean teaching of rules of grammar by giving illustrations in sentences.
4. Let us teach poem contrary to what the textbook says, "Teach poetry for enjoyment and sensitize learners to language use like rhymes, and ideas of the poem to reflect."
5. We have to keep examinations in mind.

One phenomenon could be noticed as we discuss the demands of teachers and their wants. Teachers expect some concrete 'content' to teach. i.e. teaching the material or text or the content of the textbook as an idea rather than using it as an input for learning the language. This may not be true with all teachers, however teachers who want to teach grammar rules and tell about the authors or poets, it seems, want to teach about the content by explaining and describing or supplying additional information about the author or the poet. This needs to be studied in depth before introducing into classroom processes. Activities and strategies to help in promoting peer learning and working with language like pair work, group work and reading with understanding are not of much importance for teachers who believe in and want to teach everything.

The format of a lesson or a unit

The new textbooks present a flexible format. A typical lesson in a English textbook includes: (i) Before You Read (the warming up activity to enter into the text) (ii) the text (Reading with while reading –oral comprehension checks) (iii) Thinking about the text (Comprehension and extrapolative questions to move beyond the texts) (iv) Thinking about language (Grammar & language activities rooted from the text) (v) Writing (vi) Listening, speaking activity. (vii) Some tips for teachers. This is what a typical lesson consists of not a prescription for all lessons or units. This flexible format breaks monotony and also gives scope for the teachers to design their own activities. The last item at the end of each lesson is some tips for

the teachers under the headings: **What we have done & What you can do**. This has been introduced based on the feedback from teachers in our interactions during the process of revision and during our training sessions. Teachers wanted to have some ideas how they can deal with the text in the class and also move beyond the book to enrich learning activities. 'What we have done' tells what the authors have provided in the lesson and their intensions for language learning while 'What you can do' gives clues for the teacher to go beyond the text and organize or design activities so as to help learners engage with the language with many more activities in contexts. Teachers have accepted the format and feel this would help them.

Materials Development as Professional Development of Teachers

Developing expertise among teachers and sensitizing them to develop and design materials is one major concern for textbook development organizations like the NCERT and state level textbook development corporations in India. Teacher training courses both pre service and in-service have not much to offer, except a few run by institutions like CIEFL. Most teacher training courses try to develop skills and competencies that would enable the teacher to deliver in the classroom. But they tend to often give them methodologies, approaches and strategies to transact in the classroom. In a teacher training approach teachers or trainee teachers are given procedures and advice to follow. Teacher training help institution and countries to achieve convergence and uniformity, but ultimately it is not very useful for learners, who need teachers who can respond to their divergent needs and wants.(Brian Tomlinson 1998)

Teachers are there as materials consumers and facilitators for students to use the materials and also as the ones who evaluate students' learning as a result of which and otherwise they evaluate the materials. This needs stronger base and understanding of the learner, nature of language learning and acquisition and the contexts in which the learner is placed, his / her identity, etc. Teachers who lack an understanding of all the above would not only find it difficult to develop materials but also they would find it much more difficult to deliver or transact any materials in an effective manner. They need to be central to materials development as Hitomi Masuhara (1998) argues

> *Teachers can even be said to be the central figures in materials development – for they are the ones who select materials (or, at least, have some influence in the selection process), who actually teach the materials and who sometimes have to rewrite materials. The students come and go and so do materials but large number of teachers tend to stay.*

All the arguments by teachers and for or against them reflecting on their needs and wants would not make it to justify that teachers' participation in materials development is ruled out or undermined.

To Conclude

Development of textbook at the national level in countries like India is not questioned as the textbooks developed by institutions like the NCERT are taken as model text-books. NCERT's textbooks claim themselves as model textbooks and cater to the needs of students studying in schools affiliated to national level boards. Any curricular revision percolates from the central level to the states and this is true in the case of textbooks. Teachers' needs or wants do not reflect this aspect. i.e. the idea of having one book in the schools affiliated to national level board in the name of having a common curriculum, (if not a uniform curriculum). We may be for or against having a single textbook for a class even in such systems like the KVS, NVS and schools affiliated to the central boards. Teachers in a particular system and who are on transferable basis from one region to another do not see this (having a single textbook) a problem. Our interactions with the teachers do not reveal that and they feel that they need to accept any textbook given to them. The textbook symbolizes the authority under which the teacher must accept. It also symbolizes the teacher's subservient status in the educational culture (Krishna Kumar (1992).

This, however, does not lead one to conclude that countries like India can not have national (level) textbooks as the present exercise made an attempt to bring in a large number of people from all areas of schooling, from practicing teachers to academics at the university. Brian Tomlinson's (1995) point to develop effective materials is of much relevance in today's context.

> *We need to find ways of bringing together researchers, teachers, writers and publishers so as to pool resources and to take advantage of different areas of expertise in order to produce materials of greater value to learners of languages.*

The gap between teachers' needs and wants is felt during the process of textbook development. Teachers' wants are determined by different concerns and their understanding of language learning and understanding of the child and her context. Even this needs to be questioned as the teachers needs and wants, we can argue, are not determined by their understanding of pedagogical aspects. So they expect the textbook do everything, to have content, language elements, a method which they feel suitable and an evaluation that would enable the learner to enrich their language. Teachers assume that students would not understand English even spoken in simple sentences so do not

provide them anything that they would not understand. In truism, teachers feel, "do not expose them with language input as they can not understand anything at all." One could conclude that the gap between what teachers want and their need impact the classroom transactions. The gap between teachers' needs and wants and students needs determines teacher's use of the textbook in the classroom. So to argue, teachers who believe his/ her students can not read and understand anything in English would not use the textbook as intended by the syllabus or textbook writers.

We need to think much more about methodologies and whether materials need to openly advocate or prescribe a method or some methods to the teacher to follow in his or her classroom teaching. This is not simply to undermine the textbook as a restricting mechanism, but by accepting it as a launching pad for teachers to facilitate language learning where comprehensible inputs are provided to students and tasks are designed to enable learners to engage with the language and with their peers and surroundings to use the language. Moving beyond the textbook to design tasks and activities which children would feel nearer to their lives or from their lives would be one of the purposes of teacher facilitating learning. Julian Edge and Sue Wharton (1995) feel 'in the ELT literature, views about course book seem to polarise'. Richards (1993) also supports the concern that a comprehensive, tightly structured course book encourages dependence on the part of the teachers, and fosters a situation where the teacher relies on the book to do the real work of teaching. Julian Edge and Sue Wharton (1995) while agreeing with Richards feel that many course books attempt themselves to do the work of decision making and pedagogical reasoning, and therefore do not encourage teachers to use them in a creative and personal way. An effective textbook would need to encourage teachers to move beyond it. The new generation books of NCERT (in India) have made an attempt to free the teacher from the shackles of tyranny of textbooks.

Biography

Rama Meganathan is currently a lecturer in language education in the Department of Languages, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), New Delhi, India. He has worked as a school teacher, teaching English as second language at secondary and senior secondary stage for a decade. He was part of the National Curriculum Group (NCERT) during the recent curricular revision and the development of National Curriculum Framework (NCF) – 2005. He is a member of textbook development team in English for class VI and member coordinator of textbook in English for class X, developed as follow up to NCF-2005. He has authored articles, research papers on ELT, classroom teaching, language policy and school management. He has also published a poetry collection titled, Sounds of Silence. He is currently working on a research programme on language policy in school education. His interests include material development, classroom processes, language policy in education, teacher training, teaching young learners and poetry writing.

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A Sub-World or not a Sub-World: Analysing Speech Presentation in Text World Theory

Dr. Huda Al-Mansoob, Nottingham

Text World theory (1999) is a new theory in that its techniques and strategies for the analysis of full discourses of literary fiction are still being tested. Hence, any research is likely to entail some theoretical modification. The theory was developed as a result of extensive work, over ten years, by the late Paul Werth, who began his work in Text World Theory through many published articles (1994, 1995a, 1995b and 1997a). Even though Werth (1995a, 1995b, 1997, 1999) sought to place emphasis on a holistic view of a discourse-based approach, his treatment of the mode of speech and thought presentation is demonstrated through a variety of made up examples. The main purpose of this article is to guide you as to how to approach a new theory and to focus your attention on the inconsistencies that impinge upon the validity of Werth's definitions of direct and indirect speech presentation; in particular to the issue of Werth's contradictory definitions of speech presentation. Also, the article will examine how it is theoretically inadequate for a teacher to restrict his/her teaching of the definitions of this mode of presentation from the perspective of a cognitive model like Text World Theory, without drawing on stylistic theories of speech and thought presentation.

What is a Text World Theory?

It is worth emphasizing that as my main argument focuses entirely on the definitions of speech presentation, I will only present a short account of the mechanisms of Werth's model. For the purposes of this article, in order for the reader to follow the argument he/she will have to be familiar with Text World Theory as well as with stylistic theories of speech presentation.

Werth's programme of how to build up a 'world' within the formed propositions of a text or discourse reflects the importance of having a close relationship between text producers (writers or speakers) and recipients (readers or listeners). Werth proposes three different levels as part of his approach that have different functions: the **discourse world**; the **text world** and **sub-worlds**. The discourse world is defined as 'the situational context surrounding the speech itself' (Werth 1995a: 50-51). It includes what the participants can perceive of the immediate situation as well as their remembering, feeling, or imagination of the same object. But how can these different types of information be controlled and managed while processing a discourse world? Werth (1999: 119) finds the solution in the notion of **Common Ground** (henceforth CG) which is defined as 'the totality of information which the speaker(s) and hearer(s) have agreed to accept as relevant for their discourse'.

The participants, author and reader, within the discourse world collaborate to create the text world in which the CG is constructed. Text world is first defined by the **world-building elements** (henceforth WB), which give a reader a mental representation of the setting of the text, and the **function-advancing propositions** (henceforth FA), which 'consist of the descriptions and events which propel the story forward, and are made up of language denoting states, actions and processes' (Werth 1995a: 185). While the text world is defined by world-building elements, further worlds may be constructed by the characters who inhabit that text world. These conceptual layers are called sub-worlds, and they are of three types:

a. Deictic sub-worlds of flashback, direct speech and 'windows' on to other scenes.

b. Attitudinal sub-worlds of conceptual activity; desire (want worlds), belief (believe worlds) and purpose (intend worlds).

c. Epistemic sub-worlds of modalised propositions, if in conditional, reported speech, tentativeness, politeness and narrative.

In terms of the point of view from which a story is being told, Werth makes a clear distinction between **character-accessible** and **participant-accessible sub-worlds** (Werth 1999: 214-15).

Werth's definitions of Presentation

In the following sections, I will investigate Werth's position with regard to the mode of direct and indirect speech and thought presentation within TWT, asking the reader to focus on the linguistic characteristics of Werth's conflicting definitions of the mode of speech presentation, drawing on the taxonomy proposed and developed by Leech and Short (1981). The following study, then, is significant not only as it draws the

readers' attention to such inconsistencies, which throw the reliability of his definitions into question, but also as it expands the number of insights that can be gleaned from such scrutiny.

First Observation and Comments (Indirect Speech Worlds)

Werth presents two conflicting definitions of indirect speech. He first argues that indirect speech "is not sub-world forming at all, since it is speech which has been 'narrativised', and therefore fits into its deictic environment" (Werth 1999: 221). Then, while discussing the notion of epistemic sub-worlds, Werth 'contradicts' himself by claiming that "indirect speech will regularly 'shift one tense back'" and 'shows that the shift is in all cases one of remoteness rather than temporality' (Werth 1999: 241). Significantly such a contradiction implies that Werth is unable to give a clear cut definition of indirect speech, hence he is not able to clearly define indirect speech as sub-world forming or not. The following two examples are typical of how Werth presents his definition (taken from Werth 1999: 240):

Sam said, 'I like nouvelle cuisine.' (Direct Speech)

Sam said he liked nouvelle cuisine. (Indirect Speech)

Why It All Went Wrong?

Werth's conflict seems to emanate from the fact that he deals with typical, made-up examples of indirect speech at sentence level and does not explore the various features and uses of this mode of speech within the context of an entire story. He also fails to examine this mode in modern short fiction where the narrative jumps from present tense to past tense and vice versa without apparent reason. Similarly, there can be as few as only one to three characters. More importantly, Werth may be quite aware of the controversial ground associated with indirect speech and its free form.

On the other hand, recent work such as that carried out by Gavins (2000, 2001, 2003) has identified the same observation about indirect speech; however, she (2001: 114) argues, "I would agree with the later of these conflicting positions, which holds that the 'tense shift' in indirect speech signifies a greater degree of epistemic distance than that of direct speech". This definition is also partially flawed. Leech and Short (1981) point out that it is more accurate to say the selection of pronoun and tense has to be appropriate to the form of narration in which the FIS occurs. Moreover, (Semino et al. 2004: 11) add that third-person pronouns and backshift of tense are 'effectively neutralized in first-person narrations and present-tense narration respectively, and so could not be criterial in all cases'. In short, Gavins's categorisation of speech presentation, which is centred on the idea that the 'tense shift' in the indirect version implies 'epistemic distance' rather than temporal setting, appears to bring up a core set of concerns. Consider the following examples in which she initially supports her claim (taken from Gavins 2001: 110, 115):

Direct: *I like playing golf on Saturdays', said Jack.*

Indirect: *Jack said he liked playing golf on Saturdays.*

Evidently, she is in agreement with Werth, who tends to focus on relatively uncontroversial aspects, the typical "unnatural" examples of speech presentation, and to exclude other free forms of this mode of presentation. Semino et al. explain that:

> *Effectively, FIS is a 'mix' of the deictic and other features associated with IS on the hand and DS on the other, and as a consequence is ambiguous with respect to the 'words and structures' faithfulness claim. It is often difficult to know, for particular words, whether they 'belong' to the character or the narrator/reporter.*
>
> *(Semino et al. 2004)*

In the context of the above discussion, an ordinary linguist would say that if we take indirect speech as sub-world forming, then the following hypothesis might be considered: **if we can precisely identify indirect speech then it is a sub-world, but if we can not, then it is not a sub-world.** This hypothesis does not sound robust. It is not only questionable but also poses the danger of dragging the issue of indirect speech as sub-world forming to the current conflicting ground of indirect speech in general.

Second Observation and Comments (direct Speech Worlds)

Now let us review the three definitions of direct speech presentation as presented by Werth (1995a, 1997b, 1999).

Werth defines direct speech as:

> *not normally thought of as a temporal variation at all, but its main effect is to change the basic time-signature of the text world,* **for example by injecting some present tense utterance into a past tense narrative.** *This takes us, as it were, directly into the character's discourse world: the tenses used are then regrouped around the ST of this discourse world, rather that that of the participants.*
>
> *(Werth 1999: 221, emphasis added)*

The following example from the story 'Fever' by Raymond Carver demonstrates a typical illustration of the above definition:

> **'Don't explain,'** *Carlyle said.* **'Get the hell out of here. All of you. Before I throw you out.'** *He tightened his grip on the children.*
>
> *(Carver 1989: 305, emphasis added)*

Considering the above, it is clear that the main narrative is in the past tense while the direct speech (in italics) is in the present simple tense, which relates 'deictically' to the time of the speaker's utterance. In other words, Werth claims that direct speech "changes the temporal and personal deixis of the surrounding text world (Werth 1997b: 257). In crude terms, if the definitions provided by Werth about direct speech are relied upon, a reader might perceive it problematic if the following point is considered: it is not necessarily always the case that direct speech changes the 'temporal and personal deixis' of the surrounding text world. If we look at first person narration where a narrator can also be a main character, we can find that the narrator is reporting his/her speech and therefore personal deixis does not occur. This is the case in the following example from the story 'Fat' by Raymond Carver:

> *Anyway, I am so keyed up or something, I knock over his glass of water.*
>
> **I'm so sorry,** *I say.* **It always happens when you get into a hurry. I'm very sorry, I say. Are you all right? I'll get the boy to clean up right away,** *I say.*
>
> *(Carver 1989: 65, emphasis added)*

The story 'Fat' is a first person narration in which the narrator is also the main character. If we consider the second paragraph of this example, it is clear that the narrator is reporting her speech, in the form of free speech, so that the pronoun 'I' in the reporting clause, 'I say', and in the reported clause (in italics) refers to the same person (the narrator). Likewise, a temporal deixis alteration may not occur if, for example, a whole narration in a story including utterances of direct speech worlds are in the same tense, for example in present simple tense such as the short story 'Fat'.

To summarise, it is obvious that Werth's examples when demonstrating his definitions of speech presentation are limited to more typical, made-up examples; therefore they tend to be partially insufficient. Nonetheless, it is clear that temporal deixis alteration can either be revealed explicitly, at a linguistic level, for instance, by inserting some present tense into a past tense narrative, or implicitly, as in the case of present-tense narrative.

Werth finally claims that:

> *direct speech is always sub-world forming* **(except in the limiting case when the whole text is in direct speech)**, *because it alters the given parameters for tense and person....*
>
> *(Werth 1995a: 62, emphasis added)*

This definition, by and large, can arguably be perceived as contradictory and ambiguous, for it involves the fact that direct speech may ultimately come to be determined as not sub-world forming. Furthermore, the definition seems impractical and grossly misleading when an analysis focused on examining the text worlds of full stories is undertaken. The problems, as mentioned above, stem from the fact that Werth's own illustrations within his model are limited to short fictional and made-up examples, and in also that there is a clumsy oversight of his definition of discourse-level analysis, that is the reliance on full stories. Let us look at the following extract from the story 'Are You a Doctor?' by Carver, and examine to what extent Werth's definition can be practically applied:

> *'Hello, dear,' he said. 'Hello,' he said again.*
>
> *'Who is this?' a woman asked.*
>
> *'Well, who is* **this***? he said. 'What number do you want?*
>
> *'Just a minute,' the woman said. 'It's 273-8063.'*
>
> *'That's my number,' he said. ''How did you get it?'*
>
> *'I don't know. It was written down on a piece of paper when I got in from work,' the woman said.*
>
> *'Who wrote it down?'*
>
> *'I don't know,' the woman said. 'The sitter, I guess. It must be her.'*
>
> *'well, I don't know how she got it,' he said, 'but it's my telephone number, and it's unlisted. I'd appreciate it if you'd just toss it away. Hello? Did you hear me?'*
>
> *'Yes, I heard,' the woman said.*
>
> *'Is there anything else?' he said. 'It's late and I'm busy.'*
>
> *(Carver 1993: 23, original emphasis)*

This is a fairly long fragment of the main narrative in the story based on the direct speech worlds created by the characters. In view of the above definition, a number of questions could be raised; do we have to characterize this long part of direct speech narrative according to Werth's third definition? Or do we have to regard it as a series of direct speech sub-worlds built within the main narrative of the whole story? Ultimately, answering these questions is the responsibility of the reader.

Third Observation and Comments (The Information-Content of Speech Worlds)

While Werth (1997b: 261-62) pays some attention in his article to the usefulness of examining the **content** of speech and thought worlds, he (1999), by comparison, overlooks such an issue in his monograph, which is due to the minimal discussion of these two modes of presentation. The following section will discuss this issue.

Within the terms of Text World Theory, the examination of the content of direct speech worlds, even those which last for only one sentence, is crucial in terms of accessibility and in determining the type of world being viewed. My argument will be based on the following questions; direct speech is deictic sub-world forming, but what about its contents? What kind of **information-content** is being reported directly to us, the participants? In other words, does the characters' speech define further conceptual spaces that depict hypothetical, unreal, less unreal, etc. situations? Is there more than one world the speaker creates when uttering the speech? How does Text World Theory deal with what is inside the quotation marks? How does Text World Theory differentiate between one sub-world and another sub-world? Does the information-content of the direct speech affect the whole interpretation of the quotation? To answer these questions, it is best to address them on the basis of different extracts from different stories. Let us first look at the following two made up examples (taken from Al-Mansoob 2006: 165):

1. 'I have one million pounds,' Ali said.

2. 'I hope I have one million pounds,' Ali said.

In terms of Text World Theory, these sentences are direct speech sub-world forming; yet the information-content in each quotation differs. Within the discourse world of the speaker Ali, Ali in the first utterance is defining a fact about himself: that he has one million pounds. However, in the second utterance, Ali is describing a state of affairs built on a 'desire' world, by using the predicate 'hope'. Hence, it is inadequate that both direct speech worlds should be treated in the same way. It is obvious here that the information-content of the second utterance creates a conceptual 'distance', which is a further embedded world. It is twice removed from the text world; therefore it becomes more remote from the reader's here and now. The reliability and truth of such utterance is then completely inaccessible and unverifiable by the reader (see Werth 1999: 185, 219).

Let us examine the following examples, in which indirect speech is used as a means to report an utterence that contains a further sub-world speech (taken from Al-Mansoob: 199-200)

1. *She said if Ali was busy, she would go to the movie by herself.*

2. *She says she believes that Ali is a liar.*

These examples are problematic because if the reporting clause, '*she said'* is removed, then the rest of the first sentence, the reported clause *'if Ali was busy, she would to go to the movie by herself*', is simply a hypothetical sub-world, the 'if-clause' in the conditional sentence. However, the rest of the second sentence, 'she believes that Ali is a liar', is an attitudinal belief sub-world. The information-content of the two reports contain a different set of world-builders, and their reliability is inaccessible and cannot be assessed for truth as they represent hypothetical and unconfirmed situations (see Werth 1999: 185, 219). Let us now examine this point differently:

3. *She said that the house was very nice.*

Here in sentence (3), the matter is different because if the reporting clause, *'she said'* is removed, then the rest of the sentence, *'the house was very nice'*, is merely part of a speech which does not fit the criteria set out by Text World Theory as being sub-world forming. Moreover, to solidify my argument, this utterance might be treated differently if it is being analysed with the whole context of a story, and in particular if the issue of point of view is considered. In short, Text World Theory lacks the answer to how we can differentiate between one sub-world and another sub-world. Emmott has already expressed such concern in her review on Werth's book:

> *There were a few occasions when I found the details a little under-specified. In particular, Werth did not seem to have an adequate explanation of how the analyst can distinguish between one sub-world and several sub-worlds.*
>
> *(Emmott 2000: 375)*

To conclude, the overall objective of my present study was to show you how to point out the inconsistencies in the definitions of the mode of speech and presentation in the new Text World Theory. My aim was to put Werth's definitions in a clear frame and pave the way for any further research in this area.

Biography

Huda Al-Mansoob is a lecturer at Ibb University, Yemen. She recently obtained her M.A and PhD in Discourse Analysis from the University of Nottingham. She currently lives in the UK and is doing further research in stylistics, in particular in developing stylistic analysis for the work of Raymond Carver. She is also a regular research visitor to MLA convention in the USA.

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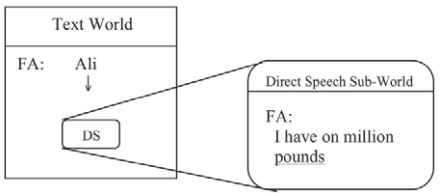

Figure: 1. The Conceptual Structure for Example 1

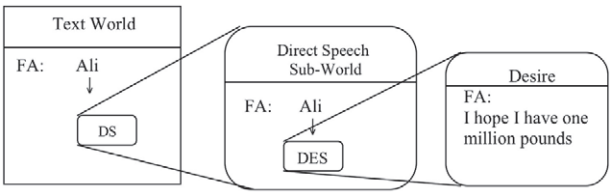

Figure: 2. The Conceptual Structure for Example 2

Trialling CLIL Materials in Tunisia

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Introduction

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) was first defined by UNICOM in 1996 as where 'subjects are taught through a foreign language with dual-focussed aims, namely the learning of content, and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language.' (Darn, 2006) Although it is currently a hot topic across Europe it is yet to make much of an impact in Tunisia. Tunisian arts faculties teach both literature and cultural studies as content courses in their English degrees, but to date the language and content components are generally taught separately rather than in an integrated way. British Studies, the content area I am involved in, has generally followed the French 'civilisation' model, which focuses attention on British institutions and history, and although students are expected to improve their language through studying in English, specific language teaching aims are not normally included.

Over the next few years I will be carrying out research in this area, seeking to discover principles that will help develop materials which, among other things, will strengthen students' language competency as well as teaching them content. In this article I will first summarise some of the background issues to teaching British Studies at Tunisian faculties. Then I will briefly look at the relevance to the Tunisian context of each of the five dimensions highlighted in the CLIL Compendium (2001) – culture, environment, language, content and learning. Finally, I will outline some CLIL oriented materials that I have developed in one of my British Studies classes.

Background Issues

In 'The Language Situation in Tunisia', Daoud (2001) gives a thorough account of language use in the country. Two of the main issues he highlights are the diversity of languages, which include Tunisian Arabic, Standard Arabic, French and English, and the increase in the number of years that students study English at school, from 4 years a decade ago to 8 years today.

When students arrive at university, during the first two years over half the curriculum focuses on language learning and some time is also given to literature and cultural studies. However, in the third and fourth years the majority of time is devoted to literature and cultural studies, and the rest to linguistics, and there is often no specific focus on language skills. This will change in the coming years, as a new degree course is being gradually implemented which includes language courses in the third year. The cultural studies have been divided equally between British and American Studies, though this will be broadened to include a more international focus on culture with the new degree.

To date Tunisian British Studies courses' main aim is the teaching of content, the instructional format is like a content course, and the students are examined on their mastery of content. As such it fits into the 'sheltered' type of instruction as highlighted by Brinton, Snow and Wesche (2003) in Content-Based Second Language Instruction (CBI), the American 'equivalent' of CLIL. This means that there is no specific focus on language but the content is taught in a simplified manner because the students are not native speakers.

The Five CLIL Dimensions

Moving on, the CLIL Compendium (2001) proposes five dimensions to CLIL: culture, environment, language, content and learning. In 'Dimensions of Content and Language Integrated Learning', Marsh and Hartiala (2001) look at each of these, describing how each one plays an important role in the learning process. Although they were devised with primary and secondary education in view, I find the principles very relevant for Tunisian universities. As we shall see, CLIL has the potential not just to improve language but also many other aspects too.

Under 'culture' they look at the difference between cultural knowledge (information about a culture) and cultural understanding (seeing things from other peoples' perspectives), a key issue for developing better intercultural relationships. They say 'transforming knowledge into understanding often needs to be realised through experiential methods. CLIL has been identified as one way to achieve positive results in this respect.' (19) In 'Developing Cultural Awareness' Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) look at a similar distinction between cultural knowledge and cultural awareness, which they define as 'consist(ing) of perceptions of our own and other people's cultures' (6). They go on to say 'Such awareness can broaden the mind, increase tolerance and facilitate international communication.' (7) With the present international climate of tension between Western and Muslim worlds this is a crucial area to cover in teaching. It is particularly relevant because of

the next dimension, 'environment', which highlights the increasing effects of internationalisation in both education and work - an environment that requires better intercultural understanding.

Coming to 'language' Marsh and Hartiala look at the need to 'improve overall target language competence' saying 'This is one of the most common reasons... ...for the introduction of CLIL. This focus stresses language competence in general and therefore includes reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.' (33) Language competence is also an aim at Tunisian faculties, but, as Brinton, Snow and Wesche (2003) point out, sheltered courses often 'include greater emphasis on receptive skills and less on speaking and writing.' (16) Given that third and fourth year Tunisian students are examined solely in writing, and the job market requires competence in speaking, how can these skills also be developed in the British Studies courses?

Under 'content' Marsh and Hartiala say 'Languages, and the cultures associated with them, sometimes reveal differing world-views' (43). This is an understatement when it comes to teaching about Anglophone culture in an Arab context! Real and deep issues of stereotyping and hegemony have affected and continue to affect this relationship and cannot be ignored. Teaching content which includes this aspect, but which also seeks to overcome these differences, and thus develops better intercultural understanding is a challenge that faces us all in Tunisia.

Finally we come to the last dimension, 'learning' in which Marsh and Hartiala suggest that the introduction of CLIL '...can act as a catalyst for change.' (51) One aspect they highlight is the scope for 'interactional' student centred learning, which contrasts with the common 'transactional' style used in teaching British Studies in Tunisia. Another aspect they highlight is the potential CLIL has to increase learner motivation which is a subject often raised by my colleagues.

All these aspects can be included in British Studies materials, which we now turn to.

CLIL British Studies Materials

One of the courses I teach at my faculty is on Contemporary British Identity – a difficult subject to pin down! Because this is a third year course, where courses are supposed to focus on content, and that is what students will be tested on, I have decided not to focus the language part of my teaching on language itself, but on language skills which I seek to develop in a more proactive way through the way I exploit my materials. From an EFL context, this is nothing startling, but when compared to traditional methods of teaching 'civilisation' it is quite different.

One of the issues I tackle is the effect of Britain's relationship with Europe on British identity today. After a lecture in which I highlight many of the issues involved, we have a more interactive class session (or two), using four sets of materials I have adapted from the BBC. (There isn't space to show all the materials in this article, but by using the URLs provided you can look up the material yourself.)

First of all I give them a handout called "Whose gang are you in?" which looks at four 'stereotypical' cartoon images of British attitudes to Europe. The aim of this is simply to highlight the diversity of views in Britain.

Then I give them a more serious article 'Britain and the EU' which presents the views of ten panellists, who took part in the television programme 'How Euro are you?' in 2005 hosted by Andrew Marr, the former BBC political editor. Rather than simply explaining the views, I ask students to scan the pictures and names for initial impressions (they are a very culturally diverse range of people) and then ask them to read the comments in more depth and to work in groups to rank them in order of most pro-European to least pro-European. As well as having to read, students have to speak and listen as they negotiate with each other, and, in this case, they also need to focus on specific language in the article in order to justify why they think one person is more pro-European than another.

Thirdly, in order to illustrate the eurosceptic side of things (and because the stories are fun!) I give them an article called 'Guide to the best Euromyths' containing five different stories about European Union 'barminess'. The five stories are 'decimal diktat', 'the straight banana', the 'eurosausage' 'fireman's poles' and 'no more yoghurt'. Although most of the stories have some truth in them, they describe the fictitious elaborations which have occurred. After pre-teaching some vocabulary, rather than just give all the stories to each student, I divide them into groups of 5, giving each student one story and a grid with space to make notes on the other stories. The information they need includes subject, key facts, relevant dates and which parts are true and which are myth. The groups of 5 work together, each student reading his story, then telling it to the others, and making notes on her/his sheet when listening to the other stories. This gives intensive practice of reading, speaking, listening and note taking.

Fourthly, I show clips from the television series ''Yes Minister' about the eurosausage which they have just read about – the one entirely fictitious story. Apart from being hilariously funny, which students love, this also develops students' listening skills, understanding of British humour, and illustrates one of the aspects of the content – British reservations about Europe – in a way that is impossible to 'explain' in class.

And finally, in case you are wondering what happened to the writing, I ask each student to write a short essay

for homework, where they can choose to justify either why Britain should, or shouldn't, remain part of the European Union.

Through this process, the focus is firmly on the content, which is what students will be examined on, but the materials are prepared and presented in a way which maximises students' practise of language skills, and also requires some attention to language details. My experience from doing this is that students' interest is considerably higher than receptively reading and listening to the explanation of texts, which is the traditional methodology, and consequently they are more likely to retain and better understand the content they are interacting with.

Conclusion

To sum up, although CLIL materials have not yet been widely used in Tunisia, I believe they have a lot of potential to improve students' learning experience. Over the next few years I will be exploring this subject further, and if anyone else is interested in this field, please do contact me at *J.Mason8426@student.leedsmet.ac.uk*

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Biography

Jonathan Mason has been teaching English Language and British Studies in Tunisia for 12 years, first at the British Council, Tunis, then the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Kairouan, and for the last three years at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Sousse. He is also currently studying for a PhD at Leeds Metropolitan University.

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Agendas of the state in developing world English language textbooks

Jayakaran Mukundan

The textbook has often been regarded as "rubbish skillfully marketed" (Brumfit, 1979), and a lot of other things, and much of the criticism comes as a result of the fact that textbooks cannot move lessons, teachers do and the acceptance of textbooks seem to be but for all the wrong reasons, two of which are that they help teachers control large classes and their existence on a mass scale is due an unfortunate situation in the learning-teaching environment – the production of teacher prepared DIY (Do-it-yourself) materials is not economical as they cost a lot more and use up a lot of teacher's time.

But the textbook is under a lot of scrutiny in present time, especially in developing countries (which usually are in The Third World) due to other reasons. Textbooks in the developing world, especially in newly independent countries like Malaysia (which is only 50 years old) seem to have other problems as well, problems which contribute to triviality in learning-teaching materials. Triviality makes materials somewhat worthless and if this is the case they neither create impact nor are a source for learner motivation in language classrooms (Tomlinson, 1998). This triviality in materials in developing world English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms usually comes about because of the pressures put on the education system by the state, which believes that nation-building effort must involve all aspects of life, and that education must be an element contributing to make it a success.

Agendas of the state in education: The Malaysian situation

Malaysia which became an independent country in 1957 is only 50 years old. She is multi-cultural and peninsular Malaysia has three distinct races with two being immigrant races (Chinese and Indian). East Malaysia which comprise the states of Sabah and Sarawak is made up of numerous ethnic groups.

The race riots of 1969 led to some fundamental changes within the country. The indigenous Malay population which had been left out of the economic activities during British occupation demanded a new economic order, one which would elevate them to a higher status, hence having greater equity in the country's resources and economy. The government then introduced the New Economic Policy which was basically a social re-engineering strategy to increase the wealth of the Malays. Other ways in which social re-engineering was carried out included:

a) changing the medium of instruction in schools from English to Bahasa Melayu or Malay, which is the language of the indigenous population. This was done so as to offset the large differences in achievement and social mobility amongst the different races. Most Malays went to Malay-medium schools while the immigrant Chinese and Indians went to English-medium schools. The Chinese and Indians did better in English-medium schools and because of their superior proficiency in English found better jobs.

b) providing the Malays with numerous advantages like the provision of a large share of opportunities for higher study, scholarships and jobs in the public sector.

Not every citizen of the country was happy with the New Economic Policy. It became obvious that while the Malays were jubilant as they thought they finally had a stake in their country, the immigrant races now felt they were disadvantaged. This soon became evident in the increasing trends towards polarization of the different races in the country. In Peninsular Malaysia, there were tendencies towards racial divisions and the racial divides between the Malays, Chinese and Indians became wider. On the other hand, there were also emerging problems in East Malaysia which was made up of different indigenous ethnic groups. The East Malaysians soon resisted excessive centralized controls from West Malaysia and exerted pressure on the West and the central government so as to have a greater stake in politics and economics.

There are other state-inspired agendas that work within the textbooks. As Malaysia is a country trying really hard to become fully developed by the year 2020, very little time is wasted by the government in mobilizing all sectors of the population to work towards this grand vision. The education sector is not spared in this national campaign and textbooks soon reflected the agendas rather explicitly. There is an abundance of emphasis on science and the use of computers and learners are bombarded with situations that depict young people constantly connected to science – either they are visiting a science exposition or having a conversation on careers which have an almost total bias on science and technology related areas.

Agendas in textbooks

There are so many state agendas embedded into the curriculums of schools in developing countries. These agendas seemed for a long time to work in unifying at least the thoughts of learners of what national aspirations should be. The success of this state propaganda immersion through textbooks will most likely succeed as a large number of learners especially in countries like Malaysia, China and India can be considered "dependent" and these learners are for the most hugely dependent on the teacher and the book. While there could be many agendas commissioned into school curriculums, the main ones are explicit in textbooks and would demand the attention of educators so as to address issues such as the impact of these agendas on learning-teaching and most importantly, the affect of the learner.

Agenda No. 1: Forging unity amongst the races

Faced with the challenges of keeping the different races happy and united, the think tank in education played with the various possibilities that would involve education in nation-building. There had to be changes and this effort would be monumental. The country when it gained independence was divided. The major races were segregated. In West or Peninsular Malaysia, the indigenous Malays although having the monopoly of the politics of the land were disadvantaged in economics which was monopolized by the immigrant Chinese who had exclusive control over the lucrative mining industry. They also controlled much of the retail businesses in the country to such an extent that no one could buy anything from a shop during major Chinese festivals like the Lunar New Year. The immigrant Indian population, on the other hand, were generally poor as well as most of them worked on British owned rubber plantations or in government departments like the railways or the public works. They were brought in by the British as indentured labour from India. Only a small percentage of Indians were in middle or upper management, and the children of these people soon got their higher education in India. A large majority became doctors. Like the economic segregation of the races, the existence of vernacular schools like the Tamil (Indian) and Chinese schools further hampered efforts to unify the races.

The differences were so pronounced that if one opened a Geography or History textbook in the 1960s, the racial divides in the country were so clearly illustrated. In a geography textbook for instance, Ahmad (Malay) was a farmer or fisherman, Ah Kow (Chinese) was a provision shop owner or tin miner and Ramasamy (Indian) was a rubber taper.

Soon after the May 13th race riots of 1969, the policy makers and implementers in education had to start initiatives to hide differences and make similarities pave the way for a unified Malaysia. Soon a utopia developed – although unreal, it was seen as way to lead the way out of the stereotypical depiction of Malaysians, especially those who are disadvantaged. The urge to develop utopias soon became a strategy to combat racial divide from the late 1960's right through to present time. Some of these developments within English language textbooks were good and it would probably have helped with the self esteem of the rural Malays for instance when the doctors and engineers depicted within textbooks were Malays.

While breaking away from racial stereotyping was seen as positive the horrors of distortion of reality that came about as a result of over-emphasis soon made textbook materials seem trivial. Triviality in textbooks is serious from the point of pedagogy, especially if these books are meant for a young adult audience, usually those in secondary schools where materials which overly stress order and righteousness and that distort reality can be regarded as insulting their intelligence. Some of the instances where unity is over-emphasized is in the following ways:

i) Most textbooks feature the icons of nationalism – the Malaysian flag, and other traditional costumes, dances and other aspects of national culture are common and recur throughout textbooks.

ii) There seems to be a predictable cast in most situations presented in textbooks. Dialogues have casts which include people from all ethnic groups even those from East Malaysia which is detached from the Peninsular by the South China Sea!

iii) Stories in the textbooks constantly show the different races coming together to resolve a crisis. When someone is sick, he is attended to by many people (helping in a variety of ways – from calling for the nurse, phoning the ambulance to looking after the house of the sick person!). Also, every race is represented in the entire situation.

Agenda No. 2: The propagation of science and technology so as to support the drive towards industrialization and modernization and developed-nation status.

Science and technology is heavily emphasized in Malaysia after the government pledged that by 2020 the country would have to achieve developed nation status. This emphasis on science is also reflected in English language textbooks. As the units in the textbook are developed along themes, there is one entire theme in the book English Form One (Abdullah, K.I. et al, 2002) that has an information technology (IT) bias, and a rather clichéd title, "Deep Impact". However even common topics in that same book which discuss "family" incorporate aspects of this science and technology agenda. In one particular situation (page 16), a young 13 year old boy is given his birthday treat at the National Science Centre. And along with him went the entire family, extended one included! Even the mere suggestion of having a birthday party at the National Science Centre is bizarre. Most teenagers will consider this absurd.

Agenda No. 3: The propagation of values prescribed by the state

The propagation of values is emphasized in the curriculum as this is also reflected in the five principles in the "Rukunegara" or "National principles" which

have come about from the National Ideology and Philosophy. The five principles which are the de facto pledge of allegiance required of Malaysians are:

i) Belief in God; ii) Loyalty to King and country, iii) the supremacy of the constitution; iv) the rule of law; v) courtesy and morality.

The education curriculums have embraced the Rukunegara in total and as a result books throughout the school system have positive values depicted throughout. Although one must not argue too much about the preference for the positive, we however, as teachers, must guard ourselves and our teaching from the absurdity of extremes. The inculcation of positive values in ELT textbooks is much like force-fitting extreme positivism in the imperfect world of adolescents, something which they seem to prefer anyway. Young adolescents can be taught to be polite, and sometimes explicitly, but aspects of their imperfect condition must take precedence in textbooks so that these learners can relate to characters within them. In short, adolescents in textbooks must behave like they normally do!

The horror of explicit niceness in adolescent characters in Malaysian ELT textbooks comes in many ways and forms some of which include; i) niceness amongst friends in almost every situation, conversations devoid of conflict; ii) niceness to parents and siblings at home, situations which depict total harmony – children helping parents to prepare meals in the kitchen and having meals together, entire families playing in the park together and later at night watching television together. All these are in direct contrast to the lives of adolescents and any form of inculcation of values must not be at the expense of the rich array of conflict-oriented situations that can be produced in textbooks which will not only engage adolescent learners but even help accelerate their language development.

Agenda No. 4: The emphasis on environmental and conservation issues

While environmental and conservation issues must be given emphasis, the development of entire teaching units based on these universal issues may take the fun out of adolescent learning environments. In ELT textbooks the reading on environmental and conservation are almost always that which is commonly shown on the news and in features on television or articles that commonly appear in news magazines. The disturbing aspect of issues such as these appearing in textbooks is that adolescents are presented as role models all the time. They seem to do everything right within their environment and are aware of such complex conservation issues that even adults do not know. In addition to this young adolescents are seen as initiators of environmental and conservation programmes where they organize community clean-up programmes, work on replanting trees and assist with animal rehabilitation. All these again would be too overwhelming for the young adult in the classroom. These learners may feel that the book is being extremely prescriptive. When the teacher uses the book for teaching, the prescriptive demands of situations in the textbook will be reinforced by the teacher making the lesson dense with issues that do not come under the usual categories of topics adolescents normally engage with.

Conclusion

We cannot run away from the fact that the book is an artifact that can be manipulated to suit specific needs of a curriculum. And we cannot run away from the fact that curriculums come under numerous influences, some of which come from the state. Greenall (1984) complained of a "coursebook credibility gap" and voiced his fear that commercial exploitation will compromise pedagogical maneuvers. While this is true of situations in first world situations, the situation in the third world and the developing world is that state encroachment will allow textbooks to be manipulated by state agendas. While state agendas are fine if they are to foster nationhood and citizenship and good values, teachers must be aware of the negative impact that may come about when learning materials become uninteresting as they are not able to engage young adolescent learners.

It is no secret that young adults have limited attention spans in classrooms and that the teacher's task is a lot more challenging under these circumstances. The effects of state-sponsored agendas in textbooks will worsen the situation in classrooms where learners after exposure to repeated messages from the state will have less motivation towards lessons (Mukundan, 2003). What these restless adolescent learners need is lots of novelty in approaches and materials that create impact. This can only come about if textbooks seek to offer different situations, ones that are a contrast to those they are constantly exposed to.

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Biography

Jayakaran Mukundan teaches at Universiti Putra Malaysia. His research interest is in ELT Materials and he organizes an ELT Materials SIG every two years. Jaya is Visiting Fellow at Leeds Metropolitan Unversity, UK and a Director of the Extensive Reading Foundation.

The Good Language Teacher

Dr Brian Tomlinson

Introduction

Whilst conducting research into the role of inner speech in language use and language learning I gave a number of students at the National University of Singapore some poems to react to with inner speech. One of the poems was the following:

Where do all the teachers go?

Where do all the teachers go
When it's four o'clock?
Do they live in houses?
And do they wash their socks?

Do they wear pyjamas?
And do they watch tv?
And do they pick their noses
The same as you and me?

Peter Dixon – Grow Your Own Poems. 1988. Oxford: Macmillan.

One of the students recorded the following inner speech response:

"No. Maids do it."

This made me see the poem in a different light. As well as wondering whether teachers are ordinary human beings the poet could be wondering if they are the same the world over. And, of course, at four o'clock teachers in Vietnam would go to another school and start teaching again, teachers in Malaysia probably wouldn't wear socks, teachers in London probably wouldn't be able to afford to live in houses, and teachers in Japan are unlikely to wear pyjamas or pick their noses the same as you and me. But do teachers actually teach in completely different ways or are there approaches which are universally applied regardless of the context of the teaching? And are there universal criteria for deciding what a good teacher is or do they vary from country to country?

To find out answers to these questions with specific reference to language teaching I devised a research project with Hitomi Masuhara in which we have been using questionnaires, interviews and observations to find out whether pedagogic approaches can be successfully and universally applied regardless of culture. As part of this research I have been conducting a side study at conferences where I have been giving plenary presentations to find out what the concept is of The Good Language Teacher in different countries.

The Good Language Teacher

I greeted early arrivals to my plenaries in the Czech Republic, Germany. Malaysia and South Korea and asked them if they would help me by filling in a short questionnaire while waiting for my presentation to begin. I also e-mailed the same questionnaire to all EFL staff at Leeds Metropolitan University. *You might like to respond to the questionnaire below yourself before checking the results.*

Side 1 of the questionnaire was as follows:

THE GOOD LANGUAGE TEACHER

I would be very grateful if you would spend a few minutes responding to this questionnaire in order to help me with my research.

Brian Tomlinson

1. Please complete the following sentence with one of the choices below:

   I am a:

   primary teacher; secondary teacher; tertiary teacher; teacher trainer; academic; publisher; curriculum developer; administrator.

2. Please complete the following sentence with what you think is the main characteristic of the Good Language Teacher.

   The Good Language Teacher is

Now please turn over and answer the question on page 2.

The characteristics which received more than one mention in answers to Question 2 on page 1 were:

Characteristic	M	G	SK	CR	UK	Total
Motivates	3	5	4	2	4	18
Is enthusiastic	3	2	3	1	1	10
Is flexible	5	3	0	0	1	9
Well-versed	5	0	0	0	0	5
Communicates well	0	4	0	0	0	4
Innovates	3	0	0	0	0	3
Positive	3	0	0	0	0	3
Facilitates	0	0	3	0	0	3
Speaks well	0	1	1	1	0	3
Creative	2	0	1	0	0	3
Understands learners	1	0	2	0	0	2
Enjoyable	2	0	0	0	0	2
Inspires	1	1	0	0	0	2

N.B.

1. There were 65 other characteristic, each only receiving one mention. All of these 65 characteristics, except two, related to personal qualities (e.g. patience) rather than to language ability. None of them referred to methodological expertise and only one to organisational skills.

2. The number of respondents were as follows:
   M = Malaysia (47 respondents)
   G = Germany (24 respondents)
   SK = South Korea (32 respondents)
   CR = Czech Republic (11 respondents)
   UK = UK (18 respondents)

Total = 132 respondents

Side 2 of the questionnaire was:

3. Which of the following do you think are important characteristics of the Good Language Teacher? For each one give a grade from 1-5 where 1 means you don't agree that this is an important characteristic and 5 means that you completely agree that this is a very important characteristic.

The Good Language Teacher

CHARACTERISTIC	GRADE
1. is patient	
2. has a good sense of humour	
3. has authority	
4. has positive self-esteem	
5. is creative	
6. is well-organised	
7. is flexible	
8. takes initiative	
9. times their lessons well	
10. bases their teaching on the needs, wants and responses of their learners	
11. is able to cover the coursebook in the time allocated	
12. provides thorough preparation for examinations	
13. has a large and varied repertoire of pedagogical procedures	
14. makes principled selections from their repertoire in relation to their own personality, beliefs and teaching style preferences	
15. is an expert on the target language	

Many thanks for helping me with my research.
Brian Tomlinson
Leeds Metropolitan University

The respondents answered as follows:

The Good Language Teacher

UK	SK	M	CR	Total
Characteristic				
Patience				
4.8 (1)	4.6 (1)	4.4 (4)	4.1 (9)	4.5 (1)
Flexibility				
4.6 (2)	4.6 (1)	4.4 (4)	4.4 (3)	4.5 (1)
Positive self-esteem				
4.1 (6)	4.4 (6)	4.6 (1)	4.3 (5)	4.4 (3)
Responding to needs and wants				
4.2 (5)	4.5 (3)	4.6 (1)	4.5 (1)	4.4 (3)
Creativity				
4.4 (3)	4.1 (7)	4.4 (4)	4.5 (1)	4.4 (3)
Good sense of humour				
4.4 (3)	4.1 (7)	4.2 (7)	4.1 (9)	4.2 (7)
Teaches according to own beliefs etc				
4.0 (8)	4.0 (9)	3.6 (11)	4.3 (5)	4.2 (7)
Takes initiative				
3.8 (11)	3.5 (12)	4.6 (1)	4.4 (3)	4.2 (7)
Large and varied repertoire				
4.1 (6)	3.9 (10)	4.0 (10)	4.2 (7)	4.1 (10)
Expert on target language				
4.0 (8)	4.5 (3)	4.2 (7)	3.9 (11)	4.1 (10)
Times lessons well				
3.3 (13)	3.8 (11)	3.5 (12)	4.2 (7)	3.7 (12)
Has authority				
3.4 (12)	3.2 (13)	3.4 (14)	3.9 (11)	3.5 (13)
Thorough preparation for examinations				
3.1 (14)	3.2 (13	3.5 (12)	3.7 (13)	3.4 (14)
Covers the coursebook in the allocated time				
2.0 (15)	3.2 (13)	2.6 (15)	2.7 (15)	2.9 (15)

Notice that:

- The characteristics rated as most important in all the countries were personal qualities rather than expert skills
- The ratings were very similar regardless of the culture of the teachers (with the exception of "takes initiative" and "expert on target language")
- The qualities often rated as very important by headteachers and inspectors were rated of low importance in all the countries (i.e. "Covers the coursebook in the allocated time"; "Thorough preparation for examinations"; "Has authority"; "Times lessons well")
- None of the highly related characteristics relate to materials development, although it could be

argued that the highly rated personal attributes, such as flexibility, creativity, good sense of humour etc, would help teachers to adapt and to develop materials in ways which engage learners.

Conclusions

This research is still on-going and I hope to continue asking these questions at plenaries I am giving in other countries in the near future. This research so far has been restricted to a small and unrepresentative sampling of conference participants but its results do suggest that we might have got our priorities wrong when designing training courses for language teachers (and maybe for teachers of other subjects too). Should we not be including in our courses activities for both trainee and in-service teachers which are designed to develop such highly rated personal qualities as patience, flexibility, creativity, empathy and humour, as well as activities devised to increase their linguistic knowledge, their pedagogic skills and their ability to develop engaging materials?

In conclusion, I would like to ask:

What do all good teachers do?

What do all good teachers do?
That makes us all to gain.
Is it being good to us,
That helps us in the main?

Biography

Brian Tomlinson is Visiting Professor at Leeds Metropolitan University. He has worked in Japan, Indonesia, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, UK, Vanuatu and Zambia and has given presentations in over fifty countries. He is Founder and President of MATSDA and has published many articles and books (e.g. Discover English, Openings, Superbird, Materials Development in Language Teaching, Developing Materials for Language Teaching, Developing Language Course Materials, Language Acquisition and Development: Studies of Learners of First And Other Languages and English Language Learning Materials). He is currently working on a book reporting the results of longitudinal research into materials development, on World Wide Readers (a series of web readers he is editing with Alan Maley) and on Score with English, an English through football course. Brian has also worked as a football coach and loves to travel, to listen to jazz, to read and write fiction and to experience 'new' food and drink. He now works freelance from his home in Langkawi, Malaysia.

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Language Learner Literature Writers Group

Hi,

This is Rob Waring. Please consider joining the all new *Language Learner Literature Writers Group*. We'll discuss issues related to the writing of graded readers and other Language Learner Literature.

This is a place to ask questions about the writing of graded readers, ask if a title has already been published, suggest ideas for readers, ask about markets, availability, simplification issues, gradings etc. Note this is a group independent of any particular publisher.

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At the moment (till the spammers find us) we'll be an open group.

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Tell all and sundry please.

Rob

The Art of Writing

Chris Mares, The University of Maine, USA

When I began writing materials I was blissfully naïve. Writing materials simply meant writing better materials than the ones I was currently using with my students. The point of reference was the materials I was using, not the principles underlying them nor the possibility of other materials derived from different principles. To make materials that are more interesting or that can be used more efficiently is not a bad thing. However, the end result is simply materials that are perceived, at least by the author, as 'better'. 'Better' in this sense means nominally better, for example more interesting or clearer, not 'better' in a principled sense. To me this would mean materials that result in efficient acquisition of language, which is to say robust learning, rather than short term memory dabbling. With a little digging it doesn't take long to realize that classroom materials will reflect a view of language learning. Simply speaking, is the point of reference comprehensible input or the systematic and incremental presentation of apparently more complex units of language? In the former case activities depend on schema raising, engagement, and task all of which occur within the context of language. In the latter case, activities are designed to focus on the discrete practice of particular language structures or lexis.

For the moment I shall put aside market demands, publisher needs, institutional restraints, and learners' expectations and discuss my thoughts on the art of writing. First I will claim it's an art by which I mean a complex tension between many variables, and a creative process. If we accept that effective acquisition requires student interest and engagement then it becomes clear that schema raising is a vital component in the process.

A skillful teacher will think carefully about segueing into activities by raising student interest through visualization, personal reflection, or other more kinesthetic activities. Materials writers also need to be able to layer in schema raising activities to engage learners and inspire teachers. The art lies in using a variety of techniques so that learners don't always know what to expect and so activities don't become repetitive and predictable and therefore boring. Managing this tension is not easy and requires a battery of schema raising activity types that appeal to differing learner styles and intelligences.

When I began writing materials my reference point, as I have said, was the materials I was already using. I tried to improve on them through adaptation, personalization, and my increased understanding of how language is actually used, rather than how it has traditionally been presented for teaching and learning purposes. Like many of us I was excited and liberated by this shift in perspective. It allowed for change and the possibility of different activity types. For me it seemed like a humanizing trend. Reading with interest for a purpose other than answering comprehension questions.

There is a great pleasure to be gained from observing a great teacher, story teller, or presenter in action. The best all share a magical quality that creates a connection

and involvement on the part of the learner or listener. It is this quality that we need to aim for in materials. I don't think this is easy to achieve and clearly most classroom

materials need to be mediated by teachers who understand and value the principles of engagement and interest and are adept at fostering these states in their learners.

If teaching is an art and being a good presenter or story teller is an art, then it seems reasonable to claim that writing good materials is also an art. By this I mean that materials should never be mechanical and therefore distant from the learner. Materials should exist to interact with real learners in real time. They should foster interest and engagement, and take into account the learners whole being including their own creativity. I don't think this is an easy task and it is certainly one I feel I'm very much still learning to do.

Engagement to me means that students should relate to activities or topics because they are close to their interests, life experience, or expected future activities. Topic and activity type, are therefore vital in the writing process. A phase that is also important and not always present is the schema raising stage. Perhaps this is because it is often seen as the role of the teacher to skillfully segue into activities. Let me illustrate what I mean by presenting two ways to begin a class. I'm sure they are familiar, or at least believable.

Teacher: Today, we're going to look at Unit 8, on page 96. Everyone turn to page 96 and look at activity #1 about your childhood.

Or, for the same class, a teacher could say.

Teacher: Hi everyone. You know, yesterday I was thinking about my life when I was a child. Do you ever do that? Yes? Yes, you do?

OK, I want everyone to close their eyes. Listen to me. Use your imagination. You are ten years old and you are walking down a street near your house.

If we take the second example as being the preferred way to engage learners, then I believe that materials themselves can be designed to focus more on this type of visualization or engagement phase. It is the type of creativity required to develop materials in this way that makes materials writing an art.

Biography

Chris Mares is the Director of the Intensive English Institute at the University of Maine. He is a teacher, teacher trainer, and moderately successful writer. He is particularly interested in activities and techniques that foster second language acquisition, especially story telling. He can be contacted at Chris.Mares@umit.maine.edu

Is there a Wiki in your future?

New forms of online environments provide easy-to-use writing platforms for students and teachers

Barry Bakin, Los Angeles Unified School District, USA

Motivate your students to write or publish your own educational materials online using a new form of web publishing site called a Wiki. Simply put, a Wiki is an easy to edit webpage that can be authored by an individual or open to alteration by a larger group of collaborators. Anyone with creative privileges (as determined by the Wiki creator) can add information, additional pages, links to websites, and audio or video to an original Wiki page. Editing tools found on most Wikis make it easy to monitor the additions and changes, and if necessary revert back to earlier versions of the Wiki page to eliminate undesirable changes.

Perhaps the most well-known example of a Wiki page is the online encyclopedia known as Wikipedia. Wikipedia, having just passed the milestone of 2 million articles, is a collaborative effort to create an authentic source of accurate information about a wide range of topics. Anyone can submit an article or change information already found in an article. Other users and "administrators" are notified of the change and then have the opportunity to accept or reject the revision.

The same ability to revise and publish information on the Internet can also be a tool for material writers, teachers publishing material for themselves or their classes, and students practicing reading and writing in English. As an example, the Wiki page that I've created for my own classroom allows me to post web accessible assignments in minutes that include text, images, and even audio or video selections. The entire process is done with a web-based interface so alterations can be done from any computer with an Internet connection. The changes and data are stored online.

Wikis have been used by teachers as a place for their students to create, and publish to the Internet, individual or group writings on various topics. You can see an example of a teacher who has done so at http://unsolvedmysteries.wikispaces.com/. In this example, Nancy Bosch has her students do research, write and present the results of their research directly on the wiki. Click on the links at the left side of the wikispace to see the students' contributions. Because of the ease with which a Wiki web page can be edited from any location, they're great for collaborative projects between groups of students who are even continents apart. I'm currently setting up a collaborative Wiki with a colleague who moved across the continent to the east coast of the United States. I'm in California on the west coast! She's in Vermont. Her students will write and publish information about the town and state where they live. My students will write and publish information about our area and state. Together, they'll work on pages describing places to visit in the United States and places to visit in their home countries. Our role as teachers will be to encourage them to write and develop the pages. The content, other than the introduction to the project, will be solely developed by the students themselves.

There are several places you can go to start developing your own Wiki. Most of the providers offer a free version and a version that you pay for on a monthly basis. After you sign up and have named your Wiki page, you are given the choice of making it public or private and whether or not you want anybody to be able to change it or only those to whom a password is given. Once you've done that, you can go right ahead and start changing your page as you see fit. Click on the appropriate buttons to add pages, upload files and photos, create links to other pages on your Wiki or on the Internet in general. It's a great place for experimentation too since anytime you don't like what you've done, you can click on a link and go back to an earlier version of your Wiki page. If you change your mind, click on the later version and you've undone your change.

Some popular Wiki page providers for educators are Peanut Butter Wiki, Wikispaces and Wetpaint. Find them at http://wwwpbwiki.com, http://www.wikispaces.com/ and http://www.wetpaint.com. All three feature an easy signup procedure and easy editing features of the WYSIWYG type (What you see is what you get!). Wetpaint even has a "classroom" template. If you choose the classroom template, it's already formatted with an assignment page, a syllabus page and other pages of possible interest to educators. Keep them if you want and delete any features you don't want. Pick one of the three Wiki providers and get started publishing your own materials or materials your students have created on your own webpage. Don't forget to give the students the opportunity to create the pages themselves!

See the Wiki that I use to post lessons for my ESL class at *http://mrbakinsesl.pbwiki.com/.*

See the Wiki that students from Vermont are creating together with my students from California at *http://coasttocoast.pbwiki.com.*

See Nancy Bosch's "Unsolved Mysteries" Wiki at *http://unsolvedmysteries.wikispaces.com/*

See the classroom template at Wetpaint in action at *http://eslwiki.wetpaint.com/*

Biography

Barry Bakin is an ESL instructor and ESL Teacher Advisor for the Division of Adult and Career Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District. He has taught in classrooms with one computer, multiple computers, laptop computers, and as an ESL computer lab instructor. He also writes the monthly column 'Lessons for the One-Computer Classroom' for Language Magazine: The Journal of Communication & Education.

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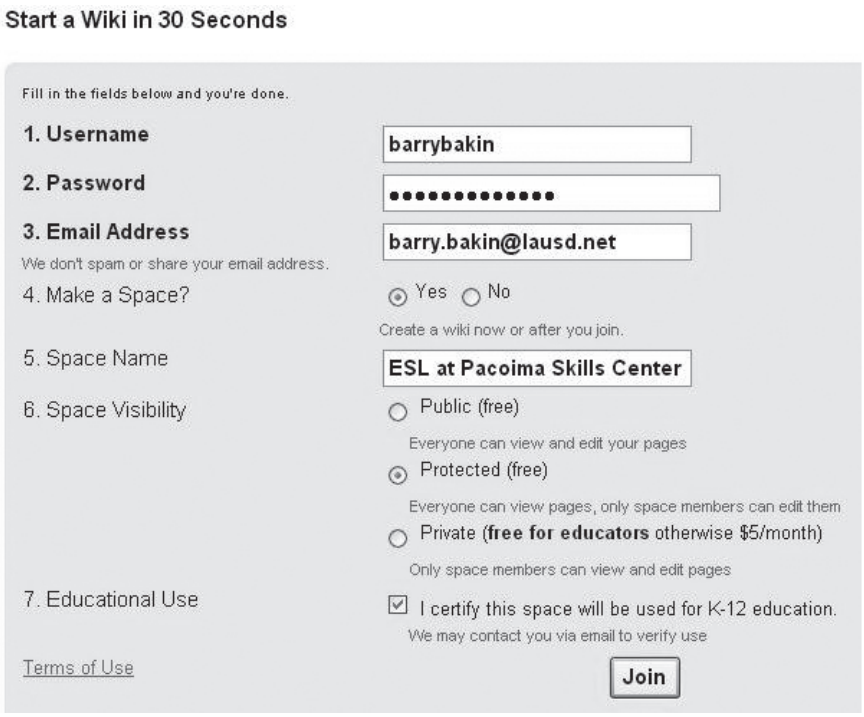

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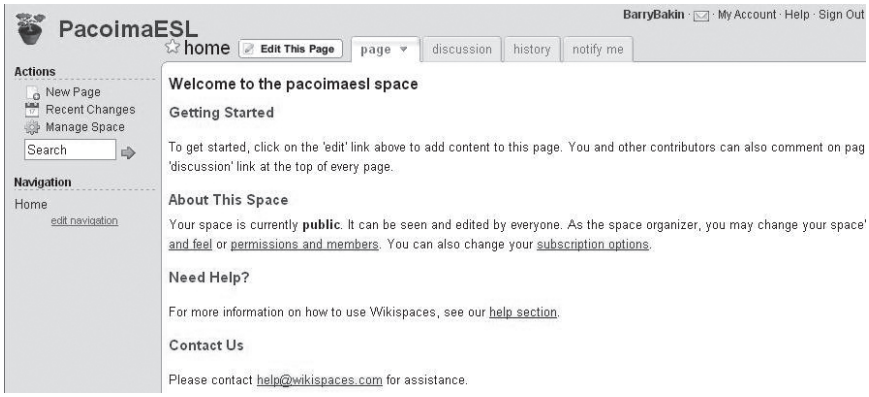

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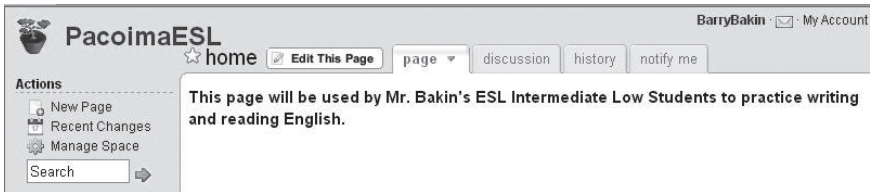

SPOTLIGHT ON A MATERIALS WRITER

Featured Writer:

Dorothy E. Zemach

1. When were you born, or born again, as a materials writer?

It's pretty hard to teach without creating your own materials, so I feel I've been doing that since the late 1980's, but I was born as a published materials writer in 2001, in Japan. I was teaching out of OUP's Business Venture, and the sales rep asked if I'd be willing to discuss it with the commissioning editor who was setting up the second edition. Apparently she found my comments useful, so I was asked if I'd like to write the accompanying teacher's guides. After that, I wrote books pretty steadily, and then extended into freelance editing. I worked in-house with Cambridge University Press in the U.S. as an editor for three years, but left in 2007 for a full-time freelance life. It's ideal for me because I can both edit and author now, and have the flexibility in my schedule to take short-term teaching assignments and to travel to present at conferences.

2. Which materials writing project are you proud of the most/least?

The "least" is easy—it was an English (not ESL) book that was supposed to cover all of English grammar and writing in 80 very small pages, and it was the second book I wrote. At that time, any opportunity seemed to be one I should jump at—never the right attitude! My co-author and I dealt with a packager who paid us a (small) flat fee, and we had no communication with the publisher. Our packager, who also served as our editor, didn't actually have a background in grammar or composition. The manuscript was sent out to only one reviewer, a poet who believed that grammar should not be taught as a discrete course. The review was so negative that we were not allowed to see it, but we were told we had to respond to all of his complaints. I hope you're going "Huh? How would that work?" just as we did. We looked into suing to get the manuscript back, but it would have been too expensive, and so it went to press, with such howlers as "there is the possessive form of they." But I keep it on my shelf as a reminder of why one should be picky about both projects and editors.

The "most" changes all the time, because I always love the book I'm currently working on. But if I had to choose one, I'd pick Get Ready for Business (with Andrew Vaughan, Macmillan 2008). That book contains one page in each unit that guides students to create their own content, which they keep in a portfolio and that builds throughout the course. They use their original content to review the language taught in the lessons, to interact with other class members, and extend their learning in any direction they choose. I think it's a fantastic motivator for students, and I'm so pleased that Macmillan was willing to let us put this in the main student text and not in the teacher's guide or on a Web site somewhere. It's an idea I'd been trying to work with for years, but I'd been told by other publishers that teachers would never be able to handle the unpredictability of what students might come up with. Part of what made it possible this time, I'm sure, is that I'd matured as a writer to the point where I could present the idea in a more practical way, but I think another important element was that Macmillan sent me out to Japan with the commissioning editor so that we could research together. We observed the same classes, interviewed the same teachers, and had plenty of time to discuss ideas. When the time came to submit a proposal, I could send in something that the publisher actually wanted to see, and I didn't have to worry about selling my idea in a few paragraphs because I knew the person reading it first already got my idea. I don't know how many publishers invite prospective authors to assist with classroom research, but I think it's a terrific idea for both sides.

3. Who or what has had the greatest influence on your materials writing?

Not surprisingly, some of the first people I worked with. From Roger Barnard, one of the co-authors of Business Venture, I learned how very low-level materials can still be interesting, engaging, and useful. He's great at sequencing exercises, too. The editor on Business Venture, Antoinette Meehan, taught me a lot about the publishing process, and was the first person who suggested to me that I might enjoy working as an editor as well as a writer. I've learned a lot from Marc Helgesen as well, both from his materials and his presentations; he's someone who passionately believes in the possibility of interesting materials and a positive classroom environment. I love the humour in Curtis Kelly & Arlen Gargagliano's writing textbooks. Why not have some fun in the classroom?

4. What do you regard as your Achilles heel as a materials writer?

I know what it used to be—the inability to say no to any project that sounded interesting, even when I didn't really have enough time in my schedule. I didn't miss any deadlines (by much, anyway!), but I did miss a lot of sleep. I like to think I'm better now at picking and choosing, and that I'm willing to let some good

projects go if I really don't have time for them.

5. *What do you regard as your strongest attribute as a materials writer?*

I think I'm pretty well-rounded. I taught for 18 years full-time, and still teach part-time occasionally, substitute classes, and mentor MA students. I'm a better author for working as an editor, and a better editor for working as an author. That's not to say I can't be stubborn in each role, but at least I understand both sides. Recently, my husband did some of the illustrations for one of my textbooks—which taught me a lot about the need for clarity in writing art specs!

6. *What is your pet peeve concerning ELT materials?*

I was about to say I didn't have one, but my husband was reading over my shoulder, and said, "Well, I have one—why is every project always in crisis?" And it's a good point. I understand that deadline crises can arise for all sorts of reasons, but I'm not fond of projects that start off in crisis or heading inevitably towards one because the publisher is trying to rush something out. I think it's better to take an extra year and get it right than to create bad feelings all around and be left with a book that won't ever really be successful. I also think time needs to be spent at the very beginning of a project to really match the author, project, and editor to get a good fit. If the editor doesn't get the project from the beginning, then she can't act as its representative to the publisher, and the author is left without an advocate. I've been very fortunate to have only worked with very good editors (I'm not counting that packager), but I've witnessed a few mismatches that derailed some books that should have been quite good.

7. *What is the strangest, funniest or most embarrassing thing you have seen in ELT materials?*

Oh, I have a whole collection! I browse garage sales and used bookstores for old and peculiar foreign language phrase books and ELT materials. Some have sentences that are offbeat (Do not smear your clothes with blood) or offensive (Look, I want to be with a woman. Can you get me one?), but my favourites are the ones with inept dialogues (A: Is this a cigarette? B: No, it isn't. It's a horse, or A: What are you? B: I am a man). Readers who believe they have a book that would fit into my collection are more than welcome to contact me.

8. *What one thing would you like to tell the world of publishing?*

I only get one? OK, then, I'd like to encourage publishers and authors to work directly with each other. At least in the U.S., there's a growing trend for publishers to contact packagers and agencies and order up, say, a 3-level listening series. Some of these agencies don't even have an ESL or linguistics background, and they often try to hire the cheapest writers they can find. I don't think it's in the writer's or the publisher's best interest to work through an intermediary. That can't help but complicate communication, and with a middleperson taking a cut, the writer isn't as well paid either.

Biography

Dorothy E. Zemach is an ESL materials writer, editor, and teacher trainer from Eugene, Oregon. She taught for nearly 20 years in language schools and universities in the US, Japan, and Morocco. She is a frequent plenary presenter and featured speaker at TESOL and is a founding columnist for TESOL's Essential Teacher magazine. Dorothy is the author and co-author of over 15 ESL textbooks, including Sentence Writing, Paragraph Writing, and College Writing (Macmillan ELT); Writing for the Real World 1 (Oxford University Press), and Writers at Work: The Essay, the workbooks for Connect, and the Interchange 3e Video Activity Book and Teachers Guide, level 3 (Cambridge University Press). Current interests include the teaching of writing, EAP, business English, testing, and humor in ESL materials and the profession.

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