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FOLIO 15/2

From the Editor

Freda Mishan, University of Limerick

Welcome to Folio 15.2, my second as editor of the journal.

The concerns of a number of the articles in this issue have important implications for the global aspirations of ELT publishing. Seyyed Asadollah Asadi's article on 'The distorted global village' and Anas Hajar's research, evaluating the 'humanistic' claims of a very popular course book, give us frank and challenging perspectives from across the globe, from Iran and Syria respectively. The discontent with the published *status quo* is implicit in all of the articles in this issue, in fact, as they each puts forward original alternatives to the course book or to approaches course books traditionally use. These range from the fascinating diglot-weave technique described for us by Sima Modirkhameneh and Masoumeh Samadi, one of their recommendations for bridging the gap between traditional textbooks used in Iran and the Communicative approach; the value of the visual in assisting language learning, from Sasan Baleghizadeh and Amir Kardoust (Iran); an innovative 'Intercomprehension' approach for learning a number of related languages 'in tandem', described by the co-director of the project, Patricia Lauría de Gentile (Argentina); and from the UK, the use of authentic dialogue in a text-driven approach to teaching Business English, by Marie McCullagh.

I am very pleased to be able to bring you reviews of two new editions of important works in the area of materials development; a second edition of Brian Tomlinson's seminal *Materials Development for Language Teaching* (2011) and a third edition of McDonough, Shaw and Masuhara's *Materials and Methods in ELT* (2013). The first review offers the perspective of course book users, two academics from Urmia University in Iran, and the second of well-known course book author and editor, Philip Prowse.

I am also delighted to introduce a new **Materials Spot** which I hope will take off! In this issue, we have a short story from Scottish author D.S. Mackenzie accompanied by a commentary on how to use it in the language / literacy classroom.

Folio continues to attract provocative, thought-provoking and quality articles from around the world and this issue is no exception. I would like thank the authors of the current issue for their generosity and, perhaps in some cases, their courage, in sharing experimental approaches and sincerely-held beliefs. I would also like to reach out to Folio's readers in the interests of continuing its work as the voice of international practitioners and materials developers, in anticipation of receiving submissions for coming issues.

Perhaps, before then, we might meet at one or both of the ELT events taking place this year; at IATEFL in Liverpool, UK, on April 8-12th, at the Liverpool MATSDA seminar following it, on April 13th, or at the MATSDA conference, also in Liverpool, on July 13th and 14th (see advertisements in this issue).

Freda Mishan, March 2013

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The MATSDA / University of Liverpool 2013 Conference

New Ideas for L2 Materials

Saturday April 13th, at the University of Liverpool

If you are going to be in Liverpool for the IATEFL Conference why not come and join us for discussion and demonstration of new ideas for L2 materials.

Invited speakers include:

Dave Allan Rod Bolitho Michael Hoey Annie Hughes
Alan Maley Hitomi Masuhara Freda Mishan Jaya Mukundan
Philip Prowse Ivor Timmis Brian Tomlinson

Venue:

Eleanor Rathbone Building, University of Liverpool
74 Bedford Street South, Liverpool, L69 7ZQ

Times:

Registration: 08.30

Conference: 09.00-17.30

Fees

Students: £30
MATSDA members: £35
Non-members: £50

MATSDA Membership:

Contact Susie Pearson at <matsdamembershipsec@nile-elt.com>

Booking and Payment:

Contact Filomena Saltao <Filomena.Saltao@liverpool.ac.uk>; Tel - (44) 0151 7953129

See you in Liverpool

Greetings from the President

Brian Tomlinson, MATSDA President

Welcome to the first issue of Folio in the twentieth year of MATSDA. It was in 1993 that MATSDA was formed with myself as Chair and Hitomi Masuhara as Secretary. We're both still with MATSDA but the original idea of gaining sponsorship from MAZDA (because of the equivalence in pronunciation in Japanese) has long been forgotten. It was also in 1993 that we had our first Conference (at the University of Luton), that we ran our first materials writing workshop (in Totnes) and we published the first issue of Folio. Since then we've held Conferences in England, Ireland, Argentina, Japan, Singapore, South Africa and the USA and we've run materials development workshops in inns in beautiful locations all over England. We've also inspired the development of materials development associations and Conferences in a number of different countries, for example the newly formed ELTeaM in Indonesia and the very popular ICELT Conferences in Malaysia. Also Folio has become recognised as the leading materials development journal and past copies are in great demand from libraries and from MA and PhD students around the world.

Following on from our very successful conference at the University of Limerick in 2012 we'll be celebrating our twentieth year by holding two conferences with the University of Liverpool in 2013. The first will be a one day conference on April 13th (the day after the end of the IATEFL conference in Liverpool) and the second will be a two day conference on July 13th and 14th. The theme of the one day conference is New Ideas for L2 Materials and the theme for the two day conference is Enjoying to Learn: the Best Way to Acquire a Language? As usual a number of well know experts from the fields of applied linguistics and materials development will be giving informal presentations and at the two day conference there will be opportunities for both new and experienced materials developers and academics to present their research and ideas.

To celebrate our twentieth year here are some recent endorsements from well know experts in the field:

"MATSDA is unusual in taking seriously the academic underpinning of materials development and its journal and conferences provide a wealth of insights into the ways a teacher can assist the L2 learning process."

Professor Michael Hoey
Vice-Chancellor International, University of Liverpool

"There are very few organisations concerned with language and applied linguistics that support and develop, as successfully as MATSDA does, the interfaces between theory and classroom practice".

Prof Ron Carter, School of English, University of Nottingham

"For many years, MATSDA has led the ELT field in promoting understanding of what makes for quality materials for English language learning and teaching. Attending a MATSDA event means engaging in enlightening and collegial discussions with professionals from all over the world who want to ensure teachers and learners get the best materials they can."

Professor Anne Burns
University of Aston and University of New South Wales

"MATSDA is unique as an association in focussing the attention of the profession on the key role materials play in the teaching/learning equation. Since its inception, it has trained a critical eye on the kind of materials produced by publishers, and exercised a healthy influence on innovative trends."

Professor Alan Maley
Visiting Professor, Leeds Metropolitan University

"My own involvement with MATSDA was in the 1990s. I find it remarkable that it is still going strong and am delighted to see it is. It serves as an invaluable resource for innovative ideas about language teaching materials and, as such, is a welcome antidote to the monotony of the language teaching materials emanating from the leading publishers."

Professor Rod Ellis, University of Auckland

"The MATSDA conferences are unique in the interaction between speaker and audience in sessions and the incredibly positive vibe outside sessions. I've been a member since the association started and regard the (tax-deductible) cost of membership as money well spent!"

Philip Prowse, Coursebook Author
and Editor of the Cambridge Readers Series

"Since its inception MATSDA has provided a valuable forum for the discussion of practical teaching methods and coursebooks that fills a void other associations have neglected. It provides friendly and participative events that have been highly useful for participants."

Professor Vivian Cook – University of Newcastle

See you in Liverpool for one of, or hopefully both, our 2013 conferences.

All the best for 2013.

Brian Tomlinson
President of MATSDA

FOLIO 15/2

A Distorted Image of the Global Village: Revisiting Kachru's Model in International EFL Textbooks

Seyyed Asadollah Asadi

Introduction

One of the heated debates particularly associated with language pedagogy concentrates on the rapid and worldwide spread of English and its multifaceted concomitants (Seidlhofer, 2003). This diffusion led experts to view the issue from political, pedagogical, and socio-economic perspectives. Probably the most outstanding work has been put forward by Kachru (1985) who proposed a triadic category of the inner circle (IC), the outer circle (OC), and the expanding circle (EC), separated from one another on the basis of the kinds of spread of English, patterns of acquisition, and the status of English in the language policy. While the IC is composed of the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia and New Zealand where English is acquired and spoken as a native language, the OC encompasses those countries including Singapore, India, and Nigeria where English is considered as an additional language and has been institutionalized as a formal language of commerce, law, etc. These countries were at some time colonized by Britain. Finally, the EC represents countries, such as China and Russia, Iran and Japan, where English is treated as a foreign language and people conceive it as an international language.

Although the prevalent assumption among EFL practitioners especially teachers and students is that English belongs to native speakers, Kachru's triadic distinction is informed by the opposite understanding. Kachru (2005) argues that in its journey from native lands to the rest of the world, English is reinvented by local sociolinguistic, ideological and literary forces, resulting in the formation of world Englishes, such as Chinese, Indian and Nigerian English. Likewise, in his attempt to track down the 'owner' of English, Widdowson (1994) maintains that in spite of the fact that native speakers of English are proud of their language as an international means of communication, 'the point is that it is only international to the extent that it is not their language [...] Other people actually own it' (p. 385). Altogether, the point is that the English language goes through two processes of globalization and localization. On the one hand, English, regardless of why and how, travels from home countries to different corners of the world. It has become global, in other words. On the other hand, an inextricable chain of contextual variables transform the imported standard English, leading to the emergence of various versions of English, for example Indian and Chinese English. It has become localized, in other words. In sum, these two processes might best come under the heading of 'glocalization'.

The political dimension of the worldwide spread of English is specifically dealt with by critical language pedagogy which questions already-acknowledged but taken-for-granted assumptions feeding applied linguistics in general and the ELT industry and practice in particular. Critical applied linguistics, in other words, assumes that these aspects of ELT cannot be detached from values, policies, and ideologies of the privileged community. So it is critical applied linguistics that questions the long-lasting fallacy of the monolingual tenet of the ELT industry and practice resulting in the marginalization of non-native speakers (NNSs) and their culture and context. An example of such dissenting voices is heard from Kumaravadivelu (2003) who calls for taking action to materialize his notion of decolonization, a process through which NNSs no longer consume native speakers' (NSs') theoretical and practical products. Rather, they take control of conceptualization and operationalization of their own ELT enterprise. In order to accomplish this wish, Kumaravadivelu goes on to say, Western power and interest should be decentralized and the community of periphery needs to be empowered as agents of the ELT profession. And finally it is critical applied linguistics that questions the variables contributing to the current position of English in international scope. Reviewing Crystal's book (1997), Phillipson (1999) points to three feeding forces of World Bank policies, development aid and post-colonial education as underlying drives giving help to English dispersion throughout the globe.

In spite of all these debates, it would seem that many ELT practitioners are still unaware of the veiled variables feeding English proliferation. Cox and Assis-Peterson (1999), for instance, elicited 40 Brazilian EFL teachers' opinions about critical applied linguistics, especially the political dimension of ELT; the findings, however, revealed that the teachers were unaware to such underlying ideologies. Also,

Akbari (1999), agreeing with Kumaravadivelu (2003), argues that regarding the fact that English cannot be decoupled from its colonial history, ELT practitioners should be cognizant about the hidden agendas and fundamental operating ideologies leading language pedagogy. Culture, for example, has fueled the content of many EFL course books, and almost everyone agrees that it is an integral part of language teaching, but the question is whose culture should language learners be exposed to? What is the role of learners' culture and context? Such concerns were loudly echoed in Warschauer's (2000) study, quoting from a Taiwanese educator, 'Why is it that our students learn in their English classes to talk about the British parliament but not about our local government institutions? Why do they learn to talk about British media and cultural artifacts, but not about Chinese forms of media and cultural expression?' (p. 514).

Unfortunately, a thriving business of ELT materials development, especially textbook writing, funded by millions of dollars does not take such concerns into consideration (Akbari, 2008). This means that ELT course books act like a double-edged sword: not only are they promoted as lucrative trade by and for developers but they also act as a dominant medium to express the interested culture, pedagogy, and ideology of the centralized community. In fact, as Van Dijk (1993) pinpoints, in modern days the dominant groups sustain dominance through soft powers, especially text. Even though publishers have developed a set of practical guidelines for textbook writers to exclude marginal and controversial topics such as politics and religion, available EFL course books are mainly controlled by publishers from the IC, neglecting learners' contextual variables in the OC and the EC. That is, borrowing the term from Gray (2002), it is the hidden concept of 'one size fits all' which is held by course book writers. The industry owners express their perspectives of reality as the only possible one in EFL textbooks.

In his critical appraisal of textbooks, instead of language 'teaching' materials, Tomlinson (2008) intentionally employs the term language 'learning' materials to put explicit emphasis on language learners and their contexts. In spite of all these, even locally produced resources are informed by the common illusion that English belongs to native speakers. Matsuda (2002), for instance, examined the users of English in national textbooks written by the Japanese Ministry of Education and found that mainly English users from the IC were represented in the textbooks. However, few studies have examined the appearance of different countries from the IC, the OC, and the EC in EFL textbooks. Thus, the present study is an attempt to answer the following questions:

1. Are countries from the IC, the OC and the EC equally presented in international EFL textbooks?
2. Are IC, OC and EC countries equally distributed across different levels, from beginner to advanced, in international EFL textbooks?

Method

To answer the research questions, six EFL textbook series, a total of 31 EFL textbooks, were chosen from elementary to advanced levels, as defined by the publishers. They were all integrated skills textbooks. The specifications of these series are presented in Appendix A.

To specify the names of different cities, states, countries and continents as explicitly printed in the books, all units from all levels, i.e., from beginner to advanced, were painstakingly examined. The names of countries were extracted from all linguistic modules, including vocabulary and pronunciation, as well as illustrations incorporating pictures and maps. However, the names of lakes and seas, and islands and oceans, along with the historical figures and monuments were excluded from the study. Then the frequencies were tabulated. It is worth mentioning that the frequency of each country is split up into the frequency of its cities and states along with that of the country itself. Thus, in the remainder of the paper the frequency of each country is the aggregation of the frequency of cities, states and the country itself.

Results

Table 1 exhibits the descriptive statistics of the number of pages and units as well as the number of pages on which the names of different countries are represented.

Textbook series	No. of units	No. of Pages	No. of pages include countries	(%) of pages include countries
Attitude	72	798	327	41.0
Cutting Edge	77	750	320	42.7
Headway (American)	54	426	198	46.5
Interchange	64	452	156	34.5
Straightforward	60	619	304	49.1
Top Notch	59	678	203	29.9
Total	386	3723	1508	40.5

Table 1. *Descriptive statistics related to the units and pages of the textbook series*

Since this study does not aim to compare the frequency of countries across different books, it is not important whether the pages are the same or not. However, as the table displays, a total of 3723 pages with a mean of 120 were probed in the study. The numbers also report that the length of the textbooks does not vary significantly, ranging from 97 to 138 pages, with the exception of Top Notch with 61 pages. Likewise, the number of units covers a limited range from 10 to 16 units. The mean number of pages which include the names of countries is 40.5 in each textbook.

To answer the second research question, whether reference to countries are equally distributed across different levels, the total number of countries in each level was counted and the percentages illustrated in the following graph. The textbooks at Beginner and Elementary levels are replete with the names of countries, 16% and 47%, respectively. As the levels go up, language learners are less exposed to names of countries.

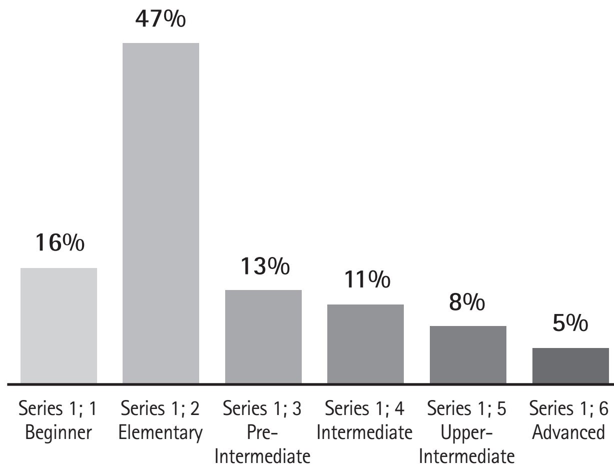

Figure 1. *Reference to countries in coursebooks across 6 different levels*

Initially, the total number and frequency of countries from different continents were counted. Worthy of mention is the fact that 'number' answers this question: how many countries from each continent appeared in the textbooks? But 'frequency' answers the question of how many times countries from different continents appear in the textbooks. The result is yielded in table 2.

As the figures in the table show, if we compare the number of countries with their associated frequency, a mismatch is uncovered between the two depicted in the following figure. In contrast with the great numbers yielded in America (5056), Europe (4655) and Australia (668) where the frequency outnumbers the number of countries, the opposite is true for Asia and specifically Africa, where a large gap exists between number (27%) and frequency (3%). America and Europe, however, with a number of 20% and 28% and a frequency of 39% and 36%, respectively exceed the rest of the world.

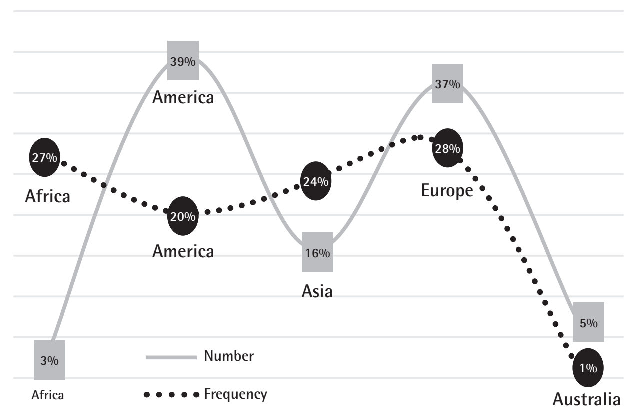

Figure 2. *Countries across continents*

This preliminary analysis encouraged the researcher to further examine the countries on the basis of Kachru's circles. As the pie chart displays, while the IC and the EC collectively hold an astonishing percentage, 96%, the OC with a percentage of 4% is almost neglected.

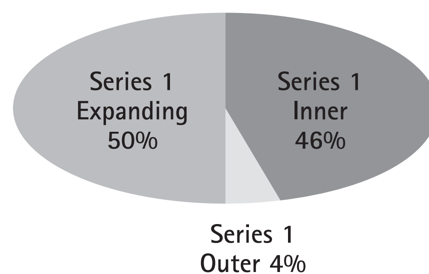

Figure 3. *Percentage representation in coursebooks from the IC, OC andEC*

Frequency	Total	No. of Countries EC	No. of Countries OC	No. of Countries IC	Continent
403	33	13	20	0	Africa
5056	25	20	3	2	America
2095	29	22	7	0	Asia
4655	36	35	0	1	Europe
668	2	0	0	2	Australia
13033	125	90	30	5	Total

Table 2. *Number and frequency of occurrence in coursebooks of names of countries from different continents*

The countries from the IC, the OC, and the EC were identified in different continents and the associated frequencies were compared with each other in Figure 4 below. The obtained figures illustrate that mainly the European (24%) and Asian (14%) members of the EC are reported in the textbooks.

A cursory glance at the bar chart below tells us that the United States and Canada from the IC hit a peak of 28% (percentage of the representation of the U.S. and Canada) surpassing 24%, the total percentage of all 36 European countries from the EC. Surprisingly, all 33 African countries, both from the OC and EC, with a poor percentage of 2.32% hit the floor of the chart, anchored to only one IC country, Australia (5%). In Africa, in the OC, 1.32%, exceeds the EC, 1%. In contrast with Europe where the EC, 24%, exceeds the IC, 13%, America has been represented mostly by its IC, 28%, and less by its EC, 11%. That is, the American EC countries were underrepresented in EFL textbooks in comparison with their IC counterparts. If we compare the EC across continents, the observed numbers indicate that the EC is mainly represented by Europe (24%) followed by a declining trend in Asia (14%), America (11%), and finally Africa (1%). Since IC countries are located in America, Australia and Europe, so the percentage of these countries is 0% in Asia and Africa. The same story holds true for OC countries in Australia and Europe.

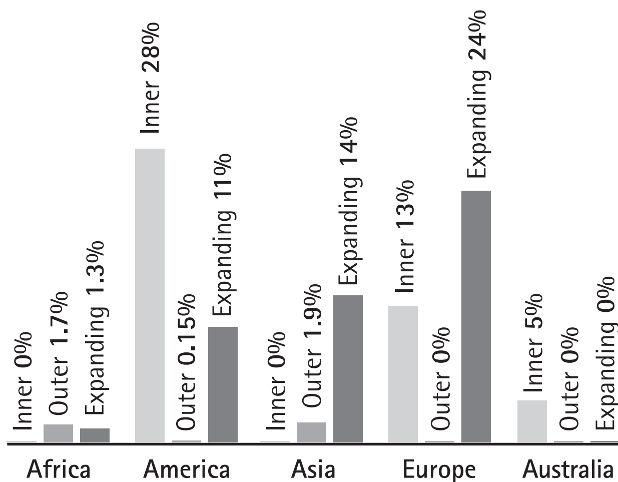

Figure 4. *Representation (%) of the circles from different continents*

On the basis of these results, it is logical to carry out a more focused analysis to compare IC countries with each other. The yielded results are reported in the following pie chart, showing that the United States with a percentage of 51% dominates the other IC countries. While New Zealand, Canada and Australia with a percentage of 2%, 9% and 10%, respectively, are under-represented, Britain occupies the second rank, 28%.

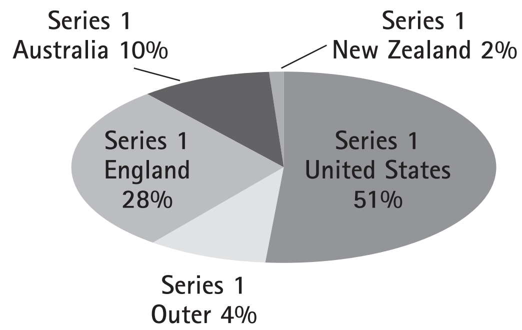

Figure 5. *IC countries compared with each*

To create a global picture of all the afore-cited analyses, a map was generated applying GIS (Global Imaging System) software.

Figure 6 exhibits the frequency of countries around the globe as they appeared in the textbooks; it should be noted that each dot represents only one occurrence. The illustration verifies the above-mentioned analyses indicating that the hot areas (red zones) are located in the IC, i.e., in North America, specifically the United States, Western Europe, and Australia. From the OC, India, Thailand and South Africa, and finally from the EC, China, Japan, France, Brazil were highly manifested in the textbooks much more frequently than the rest of the world. On the contrary, some parts can be entitled grey zones in the sense that they were scarcely touched by textbook writers; these include the Middle East, Eastern Europe and central and West Africa. The third region can come under the heading of white or pristine zones where countries are entirely non-existent in the pages; Afghanistan, Syria, Mongolia and North Korea are the instances.

In order to create a more objective picture, first the mean (99.78) and standard deviation (324.54) of the observed frequencies were estimated, released in Table 4.

Std. Deviation	Mean	Max.	Min.	N
324.54	99.78	2988	1.00	125

Table 3. D*escriptive statistics of the frequency of all countries*

If we calculate the number of countries falling below 1.2 standard deviation (SD), an odd number is obtained: only 10 countries were reported to have a frequency of at least 417, falling beyond 1.2 SD. Altogether, these countries account for 69.21% of the total percentage of the whole world. If we restrict the countries to the United States and Britain, the two top IC countries, the yielded figure explains more than one third of the total percentage, i.e., 35.46%. This finding is consistent with Matsuda's (2002) study who found that the IC still dominates EFL textbooks.

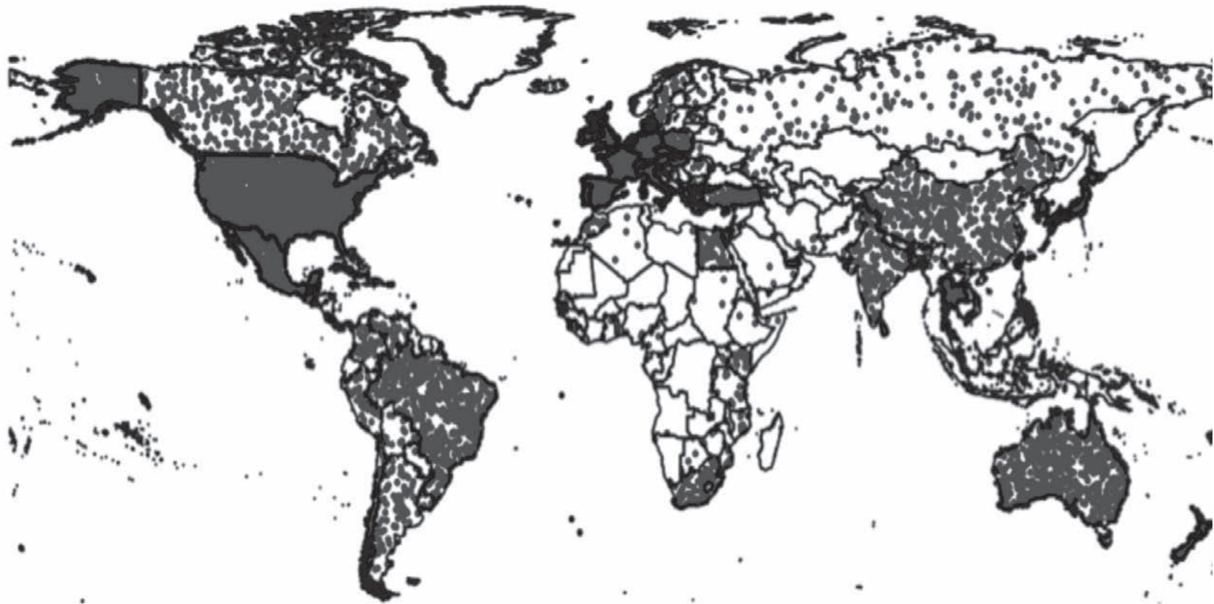

Figure 6. *Dispersion of countries in different continents*

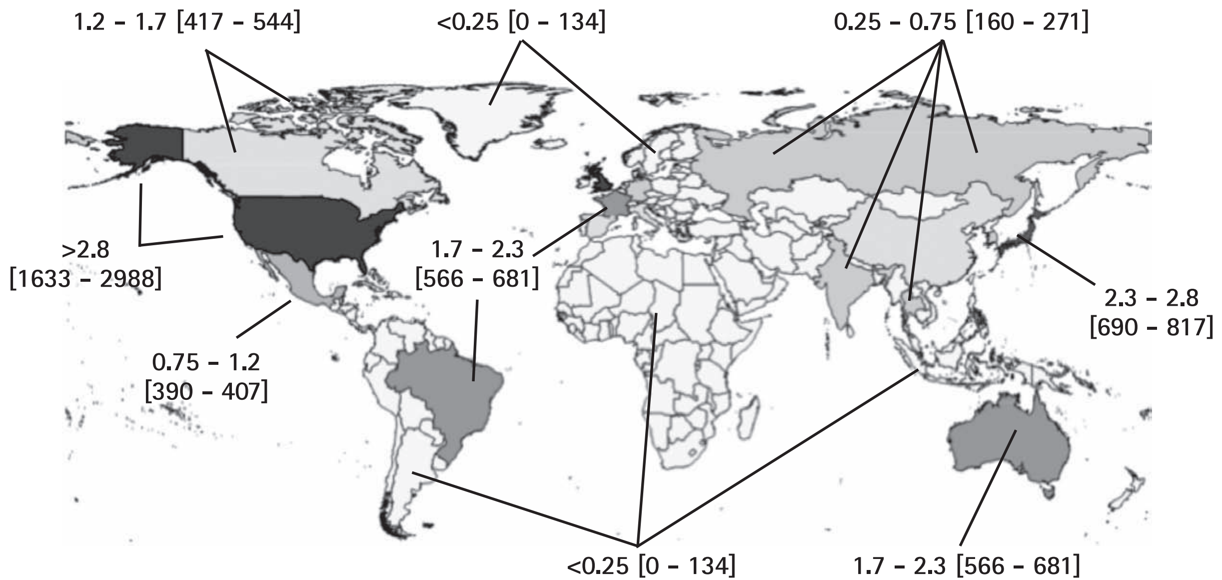

Figure 7. *Objective dispersion of countries in different continents*

Percentage	Frequency	Circles	Countries
22.93%	2988	IC	US
12.53%	1633	IC	Britain
5.29%	690	EC	Japan
4.78%	623	EC	France
4.42%	576	IC	Australia
4.34%	566	EC	Brazil
4.04%	527	EC	Italy
3.92%	511	IC	Canada
3.75%	489	EC	China
3.20%	417	EC	Spain
69.21%	9020		Total

Table 4. *Top ten countries represented in textbooks*

This analysis reveals that 115 countries are under-represented (30%) in EFL textbooks. Some might argue that the deca-nations consist of about one third of the world population. But if we exclude China from the list, again the remaining nine countries account for 65.46% of the observed frequency. So the immediate conclusion is that the frequency is not necessarily related to the countries' populations but most probably to other parameters including their sociopolitical and economic capabilities.

Discussion

Gaining insights from critical EFL education, this study scrutinized the explicit representation of the IC, the OC, and the EC in international EFL textbooks. The results indicate that the materials are extremely loaded by the

IC, especially the United States of America and Britain, shadowed by some but excluding a wide range of the EC and almost all of the OC. Such a polarized disclosure stimulates us to conclude that not globalization but a type of *Ameritainization* (Americanization and Britainization) is publicized by the EFL textbook industry. When learners are enormously exposed to sociopolitical and sociocultural agendas of one or two countries, for example, the U.S. and Britain, but not the marginalized regions, it would be a grave mistake to expect EFL learners to build up a pluralist vision of the global village as it is. The results reflect what was elicited from a Brazilian EFL teacher by Cox and Assis-Peterson (1999, p. 447): 'Usually, one adopts imported books from England or the United States, which, in turn, are informed by U.S. and British cultures. It is as if they were selling their culture … .' Further, not only are the findings consistent with Matsuda's (2002) study but it verifies the feedbacks Gray (2002) collected from EFL teachers who demanded for the development of glocal course books.

The findings shed light on ELT practice. If we believe that language teaching is inextricably a political enterprise, so are its feeding industries, especially materials development. As Gray (2002) and Kachru (2005) truly assert, publishers are uttering their sociopolitical and ideological view in the produced materials. This is tentatively true for language learners, for, whether consciously or subconsciously, they form a special image of the world through communicating with the textbooks. Therefore, what the trade owners need to reconsider is to stretch to the target countries, i.e., the OC, the EC, in order not to construct a distorted portrait of an international community restricted to the IC and a fragment of the EC but a more realistic picture of the world for language learners.

More importantly, we should seriously consider what might be called 'learner rights'. That is, EFL learners' immediate sociocultural and sociopolitical variables should gain prominence in international materials. Although pedagogically and sociolinguistically controversial, it might be true that materials developers, usually NSs, own the English language, but they do not retain the history, geography, politics, economy and above all the cultural identity of EFL learners. So it is the learner's right to choose what to talk about; it is the learner's right to express his/her own local identity in English; it is the learner's right to deal with his/her own economic, social, political, and cultural problems in EFL materials. Akbari (2008), for instance, provides an example of a context-specific subject in Iranian education. There are students who live around the bitter legacy of minefields left after eight-year war between Iran and Iraq. Having witnessed a substantial loss of children and adolescent life in the fields, Iran's Ministry of Education, in a joint project with the Red Crescent Society, decided to provide specific instruction for the students on how to take precautionary measures. He then suggested that the topic can be a relevant issue for Iranian EFL learners of which the international developers are hardly aware. A word of caution, however, must be added here. To take care of learners' contextual matters does not mean that international subjects and topics prone to discussion and examination should be entirely removed from the materials. In addition, there is a trade-off between the role of EFL textbooks as facilitators of the process of language learning and the total absence of local context in the materials. Such an absence would exert heavy pressures on both teachers and learners to manipulate these international materials to accommodate their contextual variables. They should adapt the imported materials, in other words.

Another crucial point that warrants serious consideration is the types of interaction between and among the circles. If we reckon that text books are invaluable mediums to engage EFL learners through capturing their contextual parameters, and if we surmise that the materials writers develop books for particular target consumers, so it would not be far from logical to deduce that these materials are primarily prepared for EFL learners in Western Europe and the Far East. The act of intense inclusion of the IC and exclusion of some specific countries reinforces our assumption that it is still misconceived that NNSs are mainly learning English to communicate with NSs. But as Kachru (1991) comments, to some extent this is correct. English is mainly utilized by NNSs to interact with each other. Ng c's illustration (2011) reveals that at least six possible pairs of interlocutors in international contexts can be imagined: IC-IC, IC-OC, IC-EC, OC-OC, OC-EC, and EC-EC. From these couples, it is evident that half of the feasible interactions do exclusively take place among NNSs. Indians, for example, communicate with Nigerians, Japanese, Sri Lankans, and so on. The population of English users, Kachru (2005) reports, in Asia exceeds the total number of NSs in the IC. Accordingly, these are astounding figures of NNSs employing their own local communication norms and strategies, not necessarily those of English.

Therefore, based on these results, we can reformulate the triadic circles in a quadratic sketch.

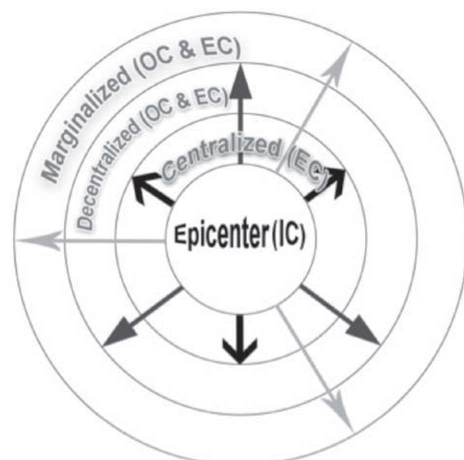

Figure 8. *Quadratic distinction between Kachru's circles as represented in EFL textbooks*

The epicenter is composed of countries from the IC, mainly the US and UK, who are both the trade owners of EFL materials and decision-makers in the sense that it is primarily these countries who categorize the world into different clusters. They are the headquarters, in other words. While these decision-makers have centralized a number of particular countries from the EC (China, Japan, Brazil, Italy, France, and Spain), they have decentralized other EC countries, e.g. Russia, and a few OC countries (South Africa and India, for instance). Finally, most EC and OC countries have been marginalized - countries such as North Korea and Syria, which have been totally discarded or faintly appear.

While Kachru's model is informed by the kind of dispersion and types of acquisition, this classification is formulated on the basis of the appearance of the countries in textbooks and their political power in the world of textbook production. Accordingly, the surrounding circles were given submissive labels as centralized, decentralized, and marginalized. On the other hand, some might rightly argue that this type of partitioning is analogous with Phillipson's dichotomy (1999) of center and periphery. But it should be emphasized that in contrast with Phillipson's dichotomy which treated all of the OC and the EC equally as periphery, this defragmentation puts heavy stress on the ramification of these countries implicitly conceptualized but explicitly operationalized by the centre.

Altogether, although discussions and debates, supported by empirical data, have been raised around the unequal position of the center and periphery, to alter the current status and achieve equilibrium represents far-fetched hopes and aspirations. Canagarajah (2002) argues that since the trade owners of applied linguistics, especially the U.S. and Britain, equipped with hi-tech capabilities enjoy a privileged status in generating products for EFL pedagogy, the periphery community acknowledges whatever the West, especially the Anglo-American community, releases. Beyond shortages of modern technology, the existing disequilibrium finds its roots basically in the governing discourse between the two camps. Quoting from Widdowson, Canagarajah (2002) provides us with an example of the dominant dialogue. The central community expects the periphery to change their context to adjust to the ideological, political, and cultural values of the imported textbooks and artifacts. So if such a position is the prevalent discourse, it might be said that these are the *materials of* the IC *written by* and *published in* the IC, but consumed by the OC and the EC. To support the consumers, then, the nature of the existing dialogue between the two should be fundamentally revisited.

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Appendix

Specifications of the textbook series examined in this study

No. of volume	Level	Publisher	Textbook Series
6	Beginner to Advanced	Macmillan	Attitude
6	Beginner to Advanced	Pearson	Cutting Edge
4	Beginner to intermediate	Oxford University Press	Headway (American)
4	Beginner to intermediate	Cambridge University Press	Interchange (3rd edition)
5	Beginner to Advanced	Macmillan	Straight forward
6	Beginner to Advanced	Pearson	Top Notch
31	Total		

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FOLIO 15/2

Personalizing the Teaching of Reading and Vocabulary through the Diglot Weave Technique

Sima Modirkhameneh and Masoumeh Samadi

Learning English, though an interesting task, might be somewhat tedious especially for low proficient learners. Confronting a boring and confusing situation of high school classes, where being in the class is compulsory for students, would be a burden on teachers' shoulders. Therefore, enthusiastic and creative teachers must always look for ways to clear the path of learning from confusion and boredom. This valuable sense of duty would not work unless a person accepts the realities of the classroom in different unique situations. This is to accept and confirm that 'searching for a generalized model of good teaching is unrealistic in a profession that is so diverse' (Hall, 2011, p.21-22). To make matters still more complex, the teachers, in addition, should cater for the undeniable fact that by and large it is the learner who will undergo the process of learning. Meanwhile, predicting whether a method will work or not, though a previously successful one, is uncertain, even for the best teachers. In fact, all a teacher can do and should do is to sharpen learners' intuitions and instincts (Hall, 2011). This will lead students in the process of learning and at the same time will give them the responsibility of learning on their own; thereby, making the classroom learner centered.

In this regard, the role of textbooks cannot be underestimated. A textbook packed with interesting and meaningful tasks would break the ice of a boring English classroom. Unfortunately, this is not the case with many high school textbooks including those used in the Iranian context. However, use of some creative suggestions would bridge the gap between 'learning because it is compulsory' and 'learning because it is interesting and enjoyable'. Here are some suggestions applied by the authors in some Iranian English classrooms which would make an English class more interesting even for those low proficiency students.

2. Classroom practice

The diglot-weave technique

Confirming the inevitability of using Persian to cope with students' lack of proficiency regarding the realities and demands of high school classes the authors suggest using the *diglot weave* technique. The *diglot weave*, from the Greek 'di' meaning 'two', and 'glot' meaning 'language' is related to code-switching which smoothly weaves the new language into the learners' own, helping them to move from the familiar to the unfamiliar (Bustamante, 2011). This is a useful technique for teaching reading which can be modified to teach vocabulary too. In what follows, a short account of what was experienced in this regard in the classroom is provided.

Teaching vocabulary

An English lesson inevitably contains some new words whose understanding is required for easier comprehension of the whole lesson, including reading, exercises, and so on. The usual trend in the Iranian EFL high school classes is to teach vocabulary using their Persian translation (the students' second language) except for the 'new words' part (not exceeding 6 or 7 words per lesson) which is sometimes taught through guessing from the context of some given sentences. To teach vocabulary through the diglot-weave technique, raising students' attention to the target word, the teacher constructed a sentence in Persian using the target word in English. Then, asked the students to guess the meaning. Here is an example of such sentences:

در فصل پاییز پرندگان *migrate* می کنند به مکانهای گرمتر.

Following is the original sentence in English:

In Autumn, birds migrate to warmer places.

This is a very interesting activity which will help not only the word but also its usage to stick in the mind. In fact, the idea behind the diglot weave technique is to heavily rely on the target language structure and use of words in those structures. Later, the teacher can alter the activity by asking the class to make two groups sitting opposite each other while each group has prepared to teach their share of vocabulary to the next group using this technique. In this process, each group will utter the sentence and the other will guess the meaning of the target words.

The practical experience with three distinct school grades (grade 1, 2, & 3) having 35, 24, and 20 students, respectively, resulted in interactive, motivated classes, indicating that it is a recommended technique for large classes with low proficiency students.

Teaching reading

The same technique can be used for teaching reading. In fact, it was originally devised for this end. The best

known practical promotion of this method is the work of Robinson Burling (as cited in Bustamante, 2011) who employed it in a French reading class. Heavily embodying English lexis and grammar within French syntax, yet understandable English sentences, Burling developed a diglot. Then, page by page, he added more but comprehensible French lexis and grammar.

In our case, to teach reading through this technique, we asked students to close their eyes and pay their whole attention to the sentences while visualizing what was being heard. The first few sentences were uttered in Persian with gradual transition into the target language (English). Here are some sample sentences used by the authors in teaching a reading passage from Iranian EFL grade 1 textbook:

*Bird*ها *map* ندارند تا نشان دهد به آنها *way* را. بنابر این چگونه آنها
می دانند *where they are going in the sky* ؟ چگونه آنها *find* می *way*
back خـود را بـه هـمان *place*؟ هیی دانـد *answers* را.چیزهـای زیادی
دربـاره ی *bird migration* هـنوز ی *mystery* اسـت. *Maybe* ی
discover ید *secret bird* ها را.

"Birds don't have map to show them the way. So how do they know where they are going in the sky? How do they find their way back to the same place? Nobody knows the answers for certain. Many things about bird migration are still a mystery. Maybe some day you will discover the birds' secrets."

(English textbook 1, 2010, p. 82)

This code-switching provided the schemata required for comprehension and provided the context for guessing the new target words. The results of students' answers to comprehension questions proved not only a successful practice but also an exciting one.

The next time, students were asked to prepare some parts of a passage using this technique in their groups. To this end, the passage was divided among the groups so that each group had only one part of the passage. Meanwhile, a modified version of an information gap activity was devised. Each group prepared their own part and in their turn they read their part while employing Persian words in English structures with some new target words in them. Others with closed eyes listened and visualized it. In order to be able to answer the provided comprehension questions, students were supposed to follow others' parts, and complete the gaps in the information. The practice, of course with the teacher's control and guidance, continued this way until the whole text was read.

It was observed that students could better differentiate between the structures of the two languages in this way, and at the same time they practised using more English words in their sentences when talking. They appreciated their learning of English and felt more at ease with speaking the language.

Use of games in teaching as a communicative task

Though not a new notion, the use of games is one of the ways to attract students' interest in learning. Johnson (as cited in Mehrabi, 2011) maintained that the use of language in games is task-oriented. Thus, it is also a way to create a task based language learning situation inside the classroom. However, the authors believe that care should be taken when using games in high school classes as this might impact on the serious, purposeful atmosphere of the classroom. Furthermore, at this age, high school students hate being treated as youngsters by being entertained by some simple, game-like activities. The following sections describe how the researchers employed modified games (i.e., personalized games) which were considered more like interesting tasks than games to teach reading, grammar, and vocabulary.

Teaching reading

In this activity, the teacher set the rules while grouping students. The materials were some envelopes (depending on the number of groups) including some scrambled sentences. The sentences were selected from a passage of each grades' books in each case. The text was new for the students and they had not read it before. Each group had all the sentences of one paragraph of that passage. They were supposed to unscramble the sentences contained in the envelope to make a paragraph. To address the value of the game as a task, students were asked to search through the comprehension questions of that passage and find the related questions to their paragraph and answer it. Then, they were supposed to walk around the class and send ambassadors to other groups to complete the whole passage. This part was an information gap activity to determine which group has the first, second... and last paragraph. The group to finish first was the winner.

Despite being time-consuming, this is a very practical activity when the teacher wants to avoid using translation in class. This is due to the fact that the students help each other in their groups and all the groups in the class work together to unscramble the sentences and the paragraphs and answer the comprehension questions without asking the teacher to give the exact translation of the words. In fact, it is also a vocabulary guessing game using the context of the words.

Teaching grammar

To suggest a supplement to the traditional exercises found in the Iranian EFL textbooks, the activity shown in Figure 1 is provided. The ingredients in the preparation of this game are an empty board (the continuous

square), targeted questions (of any type, i.e., multiple choice, fill in the blanks, etc.) dice and moving chips. The board is similar to that used in the games *Monopoly* and *Snakes and Ladders*. These board templates can be saved on the computer and modified for different purposes. Teachers can change the questions according to lesson objectives. For example, the board in Figure 1 (adapted from Chung, 2005) is divided to practice adverbs, tag question, and that-clauses (High school English textbook 1, Lesson 5, 6, & 7).

To run the game, the teacher arranges the class to make groups of four or five participants. Each group is given three envelopes regarding three types of questions (those related to adverbs, tag question, and that-clause). The first student throws the dice and, based on the number, he or she moves the chip on the board. The squares on the board determine what the person should do.

The activity focuses both on form and meaning. When playing the game, participants practice forms unconsciously in an attempt to win the game. It makes students enjoy what they are doing.

Teaching vocabulary

Crossword puzzles can be considered communicative tasks and are very interesting games in this regard. To make the best of this activity and in order to balance it with the students' proficiency level, the teacher asks the students to divide the new words of each lesson among themselves. Then they are asked to design a crossword puzzle for those words using simple English sentences. Then the copies are distributed among the students who are asked to complete them. Thus, all the new words are practiced by all of the students and since they have taken part in designing them, the sentences fit their level of proficiency. A by-product of this activity is students' conscious noticing of the spellings of the words.

Personalization

Textbook audiences are highly generalized. Indeed, as Cunningsworth (1995) suggests, adaptation and personalization of textbooks is necessary to meet the specific needs of students. Every classroom has a distinct situation and learners with distinct and unique characteristics and learning preferences. Accordingly, one of the teachers' most important roles is to cater for these differences and make a balance between specific and general needs considering the realities of the classroom situation.

The activities in this paper, each one to some extent, have considered this need for modification to cope with the realities of the classroom. Finally, for more adaptation and personalization of the activities of the textbook, the authors practised Chung's (2005) suggestion of role-play to teach language functions, as described in the following two sections.

Teaching language functions

Iranian EFL textbooks have a section named 'Language Function' which offers some formulaic structures used in simple conversations. Using these structures, the teacher motivated the students to take the topic of that lesson to role play the different situations in which they think they would need this language. To this end the teacher asked each student to walk around the class and find a partner for herself and role play an imaginary situation using their own words and what they have learned from the lesson.

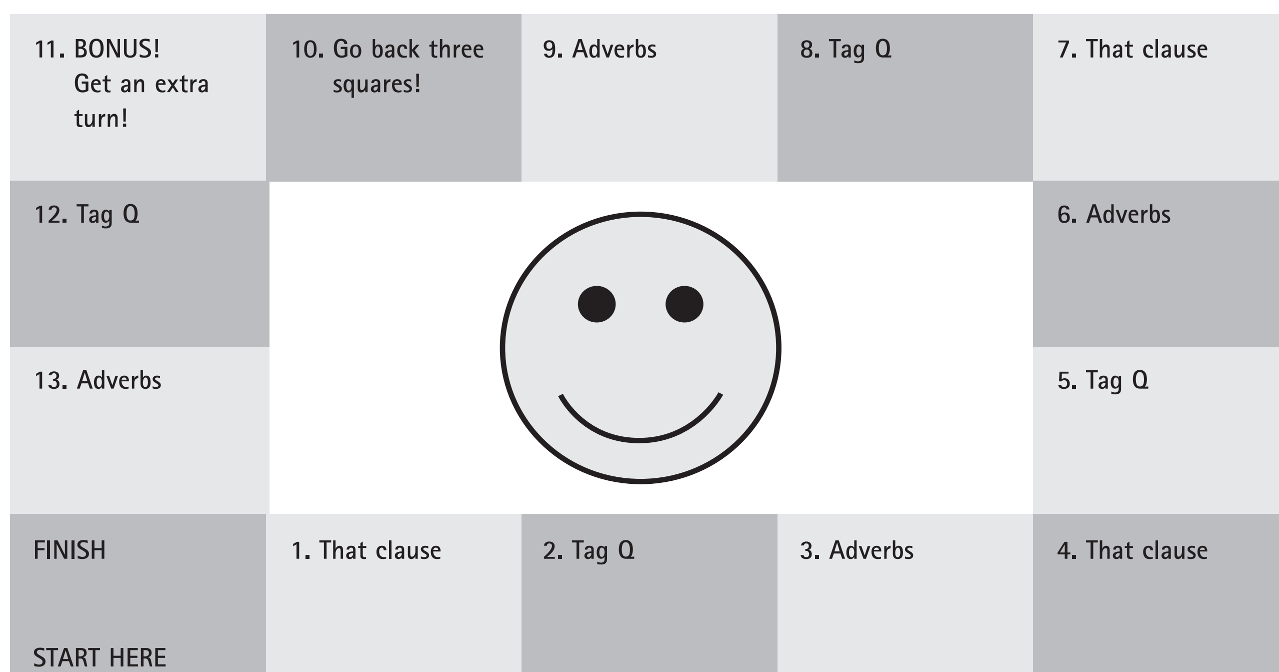

Figure1. *Board game (adapted from Chung, 2005)*

For instance, students in Grade 1 role played a situation offered by the textbook regarding traveling to foreign language countries without knowing that language of the country well. In other activities, they role-played buying and selling goods, ordering food in a restaurant, asking for directions, introducing where they lived (their town), etc.

Teaching reading

The next activity is also a very interesting one for teaching reading. To this end, before teaching a passage, the teacher asked one group of students to prepare a role play based on that passage and after the play asked the other students to answer some comprehension questions. The results were successful. The actions, movements, and objects that are used in the role play do the work for translation, thus improving and encouraging use of the target language.

To make the best of this activity, the teacher can assign each passage of the book to one group, so that all of the class will take part in the activity throughout the term. This is not only a practice for speaking but also for listening and comprehension. Last but not least, is its effect in raising students' motivation and interest in learning the language.

Concluding remarks

Among the contextual factors confining teachers' creativity and limiting their view is the shortcomings of textbooks which is an undeniable fact in the Iranian context. Without doubt Iranian high school English textbooks are not appropriate in terms of meeting students' communicative needs. So far, they have been critically evaluated in terms of their limiting view of language learning and teaching. They mostly emphasize the learning of language structure. This impedes Iranian high school language teachers from moving beyond the Grammar Translation Method and at best the Audio-lingual one. However, in our studies and through experience, we have learned and heard that material is one thing and its implementation is something else; that a structural textbook can be taught communicatively depending on the teacher's view and understanding of teaching and learning. This is in line with the previous studies emphasizing the importance of teachers' positive understanding of their practice. For instance, Feryok (2008) reports an Armenian English language teacher's practical theory of CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) and how her understanding and definition of language learning and teaching, though in some rare occasions inconsistent, helped her in conducting a communicative class. The study offered a fairly close look at how a teacher in a non-western state school is able to put her understanding of CLT into practice. Her perception of her success despite limited resources and limiting constraints showed how sensitivity to a particular context may provide knowledge about implementing and maintaining a balanced approach.

These and other studies motivate teachers to rethink their pedagogy and look for ways of coping with existing situations; thus, thinking a way out of the shortcomings of available textbooks. Accordingly, the overarching aim of this paper was to take a small step in combining 'new' with 'old' to align the communicative approach with traditional teaching structures and in Roa's (2006) term, to modernize not westernize.

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Designing Materials for the Development of Intercomprehension in Germanic Languages

Patricia Lauría de Gentile

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to describe the first stage of a research project aimed at designing materials for the simultaneous development of the ability to read texts in Dutch, German and English. This research project has been carried out at the School of Languages of Cordoba State University in Cordoba, Argentina since 2008. The target students of the Intercomprehension course are Spanish-speaking adults with basic knowledge of English (Common European Framework Levels A1 or A2). Employing English as a bridge language (Grzega, 2005), the course was expected to enable the acquisition of partial competences in English and the two other Germanic languages mentioned above. The paper describes the process of developing preliminary materials for a pilot course, as well as the implementation of such a course. It also provides an evaluation based on the analysis of qualitative data gathered through a survey, where the students were asked to assess the usefulness of the various types of language awareness activities, reading strategies, and text types and topics employed in the piloted materials.

Theoretical Framework

The research is grounded in studies on Intercomprehension, Receptive Multilingualism and European projects such as IGLO (Intercomprehension in Germanic Languages Online) and EuroComGerm (Hufeisen and Marx, 2007). Intercomprehension implies the ability to communicate in languages of the same linguistic family without the need for full mastery of all of them. Degache (2006) defines Intercomprehension as a special case of plurilingual-exolingual communication which is characterised by the asymmetry of the interlocutors' linguistic competences and the use of diverse codes in the interaction. Although this definition refers to both interlocutors and interaction, it also applies to reading comprehension, understood as a process of interaction between a reader, his/her linguistic and extralinguistic schemata and a text. Another definition of Intercomprehension is provided by Capucho and Oliveira (2005), who define the construct as a 'heuristic and interpretative competence in any communicative code' (Capucho and Oliveira 2005: 12). They see it as the development of 'the ability to co-construct meaning in the context of the encounter of different languages and to make pragmatic use of this in a concrete communicative situation' (Capucho and Oliveira, 2005, p.14).

Research on Intercomprehension has demonstrated how receptive knowledge of one language can be developed on the basis of knowledge of another language belonging to the same linguistic family (Stoye, 2000). The European project EuroComGerm (Hufeisen and Marx, 2007), as part of the EuroCom project, focuses on the development of reading comprehension in one or more typologically-related languages, by making learners aware of their existing linguistic capital, which accounts for what they need not learn when embarking on the process. The process is based on the human ability to transfer previous experiences and known structures and lexis into new contexts and is called optimised deduction (Jessner, 2008). This deduction process can be organised by employing the so-called 'Seven Sieves' construct which was first developed and applied by Klein and Stegmann (2000) for Intercomprehension in the Romance languages. The concept is based on the metaphor of the learner seeking and extracting 'gold' (i.e. knowledge of the language) from the new language(s).

The focus of EuroCom is simultaneous, i.e. all the languages of the same linguistic family are presented together from the angle of systematic contrastivity, while the focus of IGLO is on one language at a time, using students' prior knowledge as a reference point. Such pre-existing knowledge can be classed into five categories defined by Doyé (2005) as general knowledge, cultural knowledge, situational knowledge, behavioural knowledge and linguistic knowledge. The last category, in turn, involves pragmatic, graphic, phonological, grammatical and lexical knowledge.

An interactive model of reading constitutes another important angle of the theoretical underpinning of this materials development project. Bertele (in Hufeisen and Marx 2007), who presents one such conceptualization

of reading, describes the product of the reading process as a mental model which results from the interaction between and among the different stages of the bottom-up and the top-down processes involved in reading.

The Materials Design Process

Text selection

This stage involved the collection of authentic and updated texts of varied lengths and genres, on topics which were thought to appeal to our student population. The target students are adults with basic knowledge of English, who want to develop their reading comprehension ability in English, German and Dutch. Since subject specificity was not a relevant criterion in our context, as the groups were heterogeneous in terms of field of work or study, a set of general topic areas was compiled. Those issues were: arts (literature, films, painting, sculpture, etc.); cultural, geographical and historical facts related to the countries where the three target languages are spoken, and miscellaneous topics, such as the weather and horoscopes.

In order to build a text bank, we searched for genuine texts in varied sources, and collected them in a variety of lengths, text types and genres. A grid was designed for managing the text bank (see Appendix A), making the final selection of texts easier.

The criteria employed for the text selection process was grounded on McGrath's (2002) and Reissner's (2007). Authentic texts, as defined by Alderson and Urquhart (1984) were chosen on the basis of varied criteria, namely, their relevance as determined by needs analysis, the intrinsic interest of the topics, cultural appropriateness, the texts' level of cognitive and linguistic challenge, as well as practical considerations, such as length, legibility, quality (as a representative of a genre) and exploitability.

Such criteria were employed for collecting and pre-selecting texts that would go into the initial text bank. When the time came for actually using the texts in a task sheet - each worksheet needed at least three texts (one in each language) - we found the need to either grade the text by making some adaptations to it, or else grade the task, in order to adjust the task demands to the assumed comprehension level of the students. This is in line with McGrath's (2002) suggestion of two possible alternatives for dealing with the difficulties that genuine texts can pose to beginning readers in L2, namely, grading the text or grading the task. The first approach implies selecting texts that match students' linguistic, cultural, situational and behavioural schemata or making some adjustments to the original texts with the same objective. The second approach, grading the tasks, involves scaffolding students' processing of genuine texts by means of tasks that both match readers' linguistic, general and cultural knowledge and support their understanding.

The types of adjustments made to some of the genuine texts were the following:

a) **Shortening**: this constitutes one of the most common processes employed, since in general, it is impossible to include full texts due to the practical difficulties involved in using them for a pedagogical purpose in class, unless it is the case of texts chosen for extensive reading. In addition, it must be remembered that for our purposes each worksheet must have at least three texts, one in Dutch, one in German and one in English. Text length, then, is a variable that called for inevitable adjustments in this context.

b) **Word substitution:** This involves substituting transparent for non-transparent words, unknown for known terms, morphologically dissimilar for similar ones. The process is implemented with the purpose of facilitating automatic word recognition and, hence, comprehension. This type of text adaptation strategy was sometimes replaced by the technique of keeping the difficult term and adding its paraphrase in apposition (See Type D below).

c) **Syntax simplification:** Simplifying sentence structure was attained by devices such as parallelism, frequent use of canonical word order, use of full noun phrases instead of anaphors and matching order of mention to order of occurrence. These processes, which made for greater regularity in texts, were compounded by a greater explicitness, achieved by the use of overt marking of grammatical and semantic relations and the addition of inter- and intra-sentential linkers.

d) **Redundancy:** Adding redundant elements to texts was another strategy employed to adjust some of the genuine texts. The processes chosen were repetition, paraphrase and provision of synonyms of low frequency words in appositional phrases.

All these changes may be viewed as instances of *text elaboration*, rather than simplification, which Long (2007) considers a way of overcoming the shortcomings of both authentic and simplified texts for second / third Language Acquisition (SLA/ TLA) and of facilitating reading comprehension.

Texts such as table of contents and lists of varied sorts, which have been labeled colony texts (Hoey 1986), were selected for the first two task sheets due to their textual nature, which enabled us to gauge the degree of Intercomprehension at level one (Reissner 2007). Since their 'component parts do not derive their meaning from the sequence in which they are placed' (Hoey, 1986, p. 4), they allow for greater manipulation of the

elements without altering their nature. This permitted exposing our readers to some basic characteristics of the noun and the noun phrase in the three Germanic languages, as well as exploiting certain commonalities in terms of spelling, pronunciation and structure.

Development of the tasks

Once each set of texts was selected (one set per worksheet) the question of task design had to be tackled. On the basis of a pre- while- and post-reading framework, tasks were developed as a support for Intercomprehension development in Dutch, English and German. Tasks were designed for varied purposes. One of those purposes was to present new reading strategies or to promote the awareness and later application of strategies used in the reading of the mother tongue or of English, the bridge language. Through an awareness-raising activity about strategy use, this was brought to the forefront of the readers' attention in every task sheet.

Another purpose for the development of some of the tasks was the application of one or more of the multilingual didactic techniques in 'the Seven Sieves' concept, which can be considered language awareness tasks. These focus on what the reader with a basic knowledge of English already knows or can deduce, by means of the transfer process known as 'optimised deduction', about the other Germanic languages involved, due to the similarities found. The first of these multilingual didactic techniques involves using readers' knowledge of International Vocabulary (e.g. those derived from Latin, such as *democracy/ Demokratie/democratie or information/Information/ informatien*) and a focus on the words which are related in the Germanic languages family or PanGermanic vocabulary (e.g. *water* (English), *Wasser* (German) and water (Dutch), or *here* (English), *hier* (German), *hier* (Dutch). The second Sieve involves a focus on function words such as personal and possessive pronouns, negative adverbs, articles and demonstrative pronouns, interrogative pronouns, conjunctions and prepositions and modal and auxiliary verbs. The third Sieve uses the similarities that exist between the languages on the basis of sound–grapheme correspondences among the three languages (e.g. the use of *f/ff* after a vowel and a consonant in German (*offen*, *Schiff*), corresponds to *p* in English (*open*, *ship*) and Dutch (*open*, *schip*). The fourth of these language awareness tools focuses on spelling and pronunciation correspondences in each language, which can facilitate the recognition of the relationship between words and meanings. The fifth Sieve concentrates on the common syntactic structures in the Germanic languages, such as word order in the noun phrase or types of sentence structure depending on the position of the verb (initial position, second position and final position). The sixth of these instruments for Intercomprehension development in Germanic languages is the focus on the morphosyntactic elements which can enable the recognition of varied grammatical elements, such as comparative and superlative adjectives, the recognition of plurals, etc. The seventh and last Sieve includes a list of prefixes and suffixes which enable the readers to deduce the meaning of certain words (e.g. the prefix *mis-*, which is common to the three languages: *misunderstand* (Engl.), *misverstehen* (Ger.), *misverstaan* (Dutch)).

It seems clear that those multilingual didactic techniques involve a focus on language awareness. They are based mostly on what the languages have in common so that readers can cash in on what they already know, facilitating the process of learning. In addition to those language awareness tasks developed on the basis of '*the Seven Sieves*', we designed some other tasks to make readers conscious of some of the most important differences between and among the three Germanic languages. These tasks focus on noticing syntactic, lexical and phonological differences among Dutch, German and English.

Physical realization of the materials

Although this was a case of developing preliminary materials to be trialed during a pilot course, the issue of careful and attractive presentation of each worksheet was an important consideration. This was in line with two of the principles of second language acquisition that Tomlinson (1998, pp.5-22) suggests can be applied to materials development, namely 'Materials should achieve impact' and 'Materials should help learners to feel at ease'. We agreed on font type, use of white space to prevent clutter, use of illustrations and layout, and decided on the best wording for rubrics, which were to be written in the students' mother tongue.

By means of the use of an e-platform that the research team has in the **Moodle** virtual learning environment, the different drafts of every worksheet were reviewed, corrected and proofread by the whole team. This was certainly a time-consuming process, but it paid off in terms of actually spotting typos and other problems. Yet when the time came for the actual trial of the materials in class, further mistakes were still found, such as the clarity of some of the instructions or the need for more writing space. This was but one more illustration of Hutchinson and Waters' maxim: 'Materials can always be improved. Do what you can and try it out. Use what you learn from this experience to revise and expand the materials' (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, p.126).

Trialing of the materials: the pilot course

The course was taught in the months of October and November 2009 to a group of 17 students. Their ages ranged from 18 to 48, the only requisite for enrolment being their level of English, which could not exceed

the CEFR level A2. This was determined by means of a self assessment questionnaire sent by email to the prospective students who contacted us. A total of seven 80-minute classes were given and the six initial tasksheets which had been prepared were used.

Course evaluation

The evaluation of the course entailed the exploration of the results of a survey, which was implemented in Spanish, the students' L1. (The survey has been translated and included in Appendix B). This course evaluation instrument was completed by the eight students who attended the last class. The analysis shows that all of them considered that their expectations as regards the course had been met. Likewise, all expressed their adherence to the belief in the possibility of learning to read in English, Dutch and German simultaneously (see questions one and six in Appendix B). This aspect of the analysis is revealing in terms of students' motivations and self efficacy beliefs.

As to the type of activities that they had found useful, all of them agreed that the language awareness activities were considered helpful. Those activities are referred to in the first, fourth, fifth, ninth and tenth items of question three (See Appendix B). Reflecting on the grammar rules after observing portions of the texts in each language was marked as a useful language awareness task. However, judging from the comment made by fifty per cent of the respondents in the final open question, more grammatical information should have been provided. This limitation of the preliminary materials piloted in 2009 has been accounted for by the addition of 'mini-grammar descriptions' of each of the three languages, to the revised version of the materials, which is being currently piloted.

Also in relation to the type of activities used, those involving the use of the spoken word (See items two and three of the third question) were also assessed as useful by all but one of the respondents. Similarly, items seven and eight of the same question were judged as helpful by seven of the respondents.

The results of the evaluation survey have enabled the research team to make adjustments to the piloted materials, as well as to select the thematic areas of the texts that would be employed for a second batch of worksheets, which would be piloted as from September 2010. The materials development team took into account the suggestions made in the fourth survey question, such as including texts on the literature, history, current events, monuments, festivals and other cultural features of the countries where those Germanic languages are spoken, especially about the Netherlands. This resulted in the choice of a set of texts about the history of the Netherlands, another set of texts about Sinterklaas or Sint-Nicolaas, the Dutch equivalent of Santa Claus or St Nicholaus, and another one about the traditions associated with Easter in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. These constitute the main thematic areas of the text bank employed for the design of the tasksheets for the second stage of the project.

Conclusion

From the standpoint of psycholinguistics, Intercomprehension is a very satisfying and efficient process, in terms of reduced learning time and cognitive effort due to what the second language learner already possesses when s/he takes up the study of other languages. Language awareness activities seem to be especially relevant in this context, since one of the principal aims of an Intercomprehension course is to make readers aware of the wealth of knowledge they already bring with them as they embark on such a course. The preliminary results of the first stage of the materials writing project reported in this article suggest that language awareness tasks, together with the development of reading comprehension strategies, seem to facilitate the simultaneous development of reading comprehension in English, German and Dutch.

This article has attempted a description of the first stages of a materials development process that is still under way. The process started in 2008 with a thorough revision of the theoretical framework for Intercomprehension and materials development, the building of a text bank in English, German and Dutch, the design of preliminary materials that were piloted in 2009 and the evaluation of these materials. The materials design process is well into its third stage, having completed the design of a second batch of task sheets based on the results of the evaluation of the first pilot course, and having piloted the first and second batch of task sheets twice. The present stage of materials development involves a thorough revision and adjustment of the materials, as well as the design of consolidation units and the addition of activities based on vocabulary recognition activities. The third round of pilot courses will be held at the start of 2013 and such courses will involve the trialing of the full set of materials together with the use of a virtual classroom in Moodle, which will work as an environment supporting the regular classes with a question-answer forum and a glossary that the students will collaboratively construct in order to develop automatic word recognition in the three Germanic languages. Such a glossary will be called a Four-language Lexical Portfolio, since it will include the mother tongue (Spanish). The 2013 pilot courses will be followed by a final revision of the materials, which will lead to their publication. The present description is an indication of the varied and complex tasks involved in the fascinating and challenging job of developing materials.

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Appendix A

Grid for Management of the Text Bank

Topic

Text: topic, type of text and source	Number of words	Reading strategies	Transfer strategies	Possible language awareness focus	Possible activities and comments

Appendix B

Student's name: ____________________

Age: ____________________

Course of studies: ____________________

Email: ____________________

Phone number: ____________________

Please answer these questions about the course

1. Do you think that the course has met your expectations? Please justify your answer.

____

____

____

2. As regards the material, do you think that the rubrics were clear enough? Why (not)?

____

____

____

3. Please assess the tasks done as part of this course. Which activities in the task sheets and/ or the classes helped you to develop the ability to understand English, German and Dutch texts? Mark your answers with a cross on the following table:

Activities	Useful	Not Useful	Not Sure
a. Reflection tasks on the grammar rules	❏	❏	❏
b. Listening to the pronunciation of the words in class (using a CD).	❏	❏	❏
c. Listening to the pronunciation of the words in class (listening to the professor reading the words out loud).	❏	❏	❏
d. Comments on the origin of certain terms.	❏	❏	❏
e. Tasks that involved the transcription of phrases / terms in the three languages.	❏	❏	❏
f. Observing the texts and comparing them.	❏	❏	❏
g. Working in pairs/ groups.	❏	❏	❏
h. Working in silence (individual work)	❏	❏	❏
i. Analising similarities and differences in the spelling of the three languages.	❏	❏	❏
j. Analising similarities and differences in the pronunciation of the three languages.	❏	❏	❏

4. As regards the TOPICS of the texts we read, did you find them interesting? Please justify your answer and suggest further topics you would like to read about in second course next year.

____

____

____

5. As to the use of reading strategies to infer the meaning of terms on German, English and Dutch, which one(s) did you employ? You can mark more than one option in the following grid:

Strategies	I used it
I compare the forms of the terms and their similarity to the English term.	❏
I compare the forms of the terms and their similarity to the equivalent term in Spanish.	❏
I think about the topic about which I am reading, and think about what I know about it in order to guess the possible meaning of a term / phrase.	❏

Others. Please specify:

____

____

6. As a result of this experience, do you believe it is possible to learn to read in German, English and Dutch simultaneously? Please justify your answer on the basis of your experience in the course.

____

____

____

7. Please write here further suggestions to improve this course. And thank you for your time!

____

____

Thank you! Danke schön! Bedankt!

FOLIO 15/2

Graphs in the Classroom

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Introduction

Today language teachers try to use whatever is at their disposal to further engage the learners with the language and help comprehension. One of the devices which has enjoyed extensive use is visual images in the classroom which are used for illustrating meaning. They are believed to be an extremely useful framework for storage of words and can be used to highlight the relationships between items (Grain and Redman, 1986). One further advantage of them is that human memory is extremely viable and reliable for visual images and there is no doubt that these objects and pictures can facilitate memory. One of these widely used images is graphs. A well-designed and structured graph can be a vivid, memorable, and easy-to-understand depiction of quantitative information (Larkin and Simon, 1978; Shah, Freeman, and Vekiri, 2005; Smith, Best, Stubbs, Archibald, and Roberson-Nay, 2002; Tufte, 2001). In fact, there has been a dramatic rise in the prevalence of graphs depicting quantitative data. In one analysis, Zacks, Levy, Tversky and Schlano (2002) found that between 1984 and 1994 the mean number of graphs in 17 publications (seven academic journals, six magazines and four daily newspapers published in the US) nearly doubled.

Besides this, there have been some learning tenets advocating the use of graphs in language classes. These materials exploit the potential of non-verbal representations (pictures and graphics such as tables, charts, graphs, schedules, and maps) with linguistic input material, briefing learners on problems to be solved rather than on the language to be used. That is, instead of relying on more or less tightly scripted prompts to direct the speakers into particular grammatical and functional areas of talk, materials designers concentrated on providing a purpose for talk, with learners responsible for sorting out precisely what talk to produce, and to check that they were making sense. However, while the Communicative approach was revolutionary in pedagogical terms, it nonetheless remains poorly informed by views of the kinds of abilities which it aimed to stimulate, or of the ways in which they might develop (Bygate, 2009). In any case, choosing technology that supports text with images such as photos, graphs, or charts is highly advisable since it links text with its visual representation and acts equally as a mnemonic device (Erben, Ban, and Castaneda, 2009). According to Hegarty's (2005) model of display comprehension, top-down processes interact with bottom-up information in the comprehension of all external displays so we can claim that this type of interactive model applies to graph interpretation as it does for other less abstract visual displays (Freeman and Shah, 2002). Yet there is little empirical evidence demonstrating the interaction of top-down and bottom-up processes in the context of graphs. So as Welch rightly puts:

> *Print-imprinted intellectuals, including professors, must learn the world of the graphic, a word which derives from the Greek graphe and refers both to the written and the pictorial. The humanities/illiteracies must relinquish semiconscious resistance to pictorial communication and its technologies* (1978, p.20).

In this way, the present study investigates a lesson (see Appendix) which concentrated on the use of graphs with a group of EFL learners in Iran and tries to highlight the benefits of using graphs to teach vocabulary and to check their opinion about using graphs and its potential as a teaching device in the language classroom.

Methodology

A mixed group of 14 EFL learners in Iran took part in the present study. They were eight male and six female intermediate language learners studying the course book *Top-Notch 1b*. They took part in the study by first taking a pre-test of the vocabulary used in the lesson. They were asked to provide Persian equivalents for 8 vocabulary used in the lesson.

The materials used for the study were a copy of lessons from *Business Venture Work* Book 2, which can be found at the following *URL: http://www.bilingualmaths.com/2nd%20level/2ndFunctionsGRAPHS/unitIIIgraphsFUNCTIONSpdf/companygraphs.pdf.*

As the basic strategy of the lesson was to encourage the learners to rely on the resources, the teacher intruded minimally as students carried out the lesson.

A questionnaire and a recorded interview following the lesson checked students' opinions of the graph reading lesson. These were intended to elicit their opinion of the different parts of the lesson and the whole process. The questionnaire which had been prepared by the researchers was composed of seven items. In the questionnaire, the learners could choose

one of three responses which ranged from 'agree', 'no opinion' to 'disagree'.

The lesson

The lesson (see Appendix) was composed of three sections as follows:

1. Filling in the gaps using the graph and the given words

In the first part, the students were to work on a graph and use the words in the box to complete the following paragraph. By matching the data in horizontal and vertical axes they were able to work out the meaning of phrases to complete the paragraph. This first phase was somewhat time-consuming. The reason was that although the students knew the meaning of some of the words in isolation, the meanings of phrases were unusual for them. As the teacher (the second researcher of the present study) observed, the process of filling in the gaps was a trial and error activity on the part of some learners but eventually they were all able to successfully fill in the blanks.

2. Writing a paragraph using the graph

In this part the students were to write a paragraph using the graph. This part seemed easier because they were able to write it more quickly than the first part although they had to write something instead of filling in the gaps. The reason may be that they had the model and necessary phrases to interpret the different parts of the graph. They were also able to compare their writing with the model and repair it where necessary.

3. Converting the text to a graph

In this part, the students were presented with a report of the performance of a company and were asked to draw a graph of its performance. At first they had to read a paragraph about a car company and then draw other bars of the bar graph presented to them. This part seemed somewhat puzzling because they had no model to imitate and also they had to fully understand the text.

Findings

The learners first took a pre-test of the vocabulary they were to learn in the lesson. They had to provide Persian equivalent for the eight words which were to be used in the lesson. Their mean on the pre-test was 0.125. This mean score shows that they had nearly no knowledge of the words they were to study in the lesson.

After completing the lesson, a questionnaire was administered to gather the students' opinions toward the lesson. The students' responses to the questionnaire described in the methodology are given below.

1. Learning the meaning of words using graphs is easier and more understandable than learning them through dictionary definitions.

   a. Agree (100%) **b.** no opinion (0.0%) **c.** disagree (0.0%)

2. Using graphs makes it easier to understand nuances of meanings between the words.

   a. Agree (100%) **b.** no opinion (0.0%) **c.** disagree (0.0%)

3. In general graphs are more understandable than written information.

   a. Agree (81.25%) **b.** no opinion (18.75%) **c.** disagree (0.0%)

4. If a text is accompanied with graphs it is easier to understand.

   a. Agree (87.5%) **b.** no opinion (12.5%) **c.** disagree (0.0%)

5. To complete the graphs, it is not necessary to know the meaning of all the words.

   a. Agree (68.75%) **b.** no opinion (18.75%) **c.** disagree (12.5%)

6. To analyze graphs, extensive vocabulary and grammar is needed.

   a. Agree (56.25%) **b.** no opinion (37.5%) **c.** disagree (6.25%)

7. Using graphs makes it necessary to use special grammatical patterns.

   a. Agree (43.75%) **b.** no opinion (50%) **c.** disagree (6.25%)

As is shown in these findings, all the students found learning the words using graphs easier in terms of both understanding the definitions and grasping the nuances of meaning. More than 80% (12 learners) also found graphs more comprehensible than trying to learn the same material through written information. In parts where they were to convert the textual information into graphic form more than 40% (6 learners) found that they needed to use special grammatical patterns to write the paragraph. On the other hand 50% (7 learners) had no opinion in this regard and more than 50% believed that they did not need to have extensive knowledge of words and grammar to complete the writing task. More than 80% (12 learners) also believed that if a text were accompanied by a graphic illustration, it would be easier to understand and nearly 70% (10 learners) believed that to complete the information of the graphs and complete the texts using graphs, it is not necessary to know the meaning of all the words.

In the interview which followed the questionnaire, the students one by one gave their opinions about the different parts of the lesson. The first question was whether they liked the lesson or not. They all unanimously declared that the lesson had been enjoyable and that they would like to have more lessons like this in the future. The second question intended

to find out which part of the lesson was the easiest and which part was the most difficult. Nine found the first task (filling in the blanks in a text) the easiest and five found the second task (writing a report based on a model) the easiest. Despite their disagreement about the first two tasks, all except one of them found the third task (reading) the most difficult, proving the fact that reading was the most demanding task. This finding indicates that even knowing all the words used in a reading does not guarantee full understanding to the extent of enabling one to transfer the learned material to a new situation (in this case, plotting the information on a graph). For the third question, the students were asked to add anything they wanted about the lesson. They had differing views in this regard. Below, we include some of their comments. The discussion was originally in Persian and the researchers translated them into English.

One (male) student believed that 'although the words were nearly the same in meaning I was able to differentiate between them because I had the graph at my disposal. It acted like a blueprint for my work. Some of the words used in the graphs were very useful and practical. I was able to provide Persian equivalent for words I had never heard of before this lesson besides being able to understand the nuances of meanings between them. It was a good experience. Despite the fact that I had never heard about these kind of material [Business English] it was neither difficult nor easy.' One of the female learners believed that 'I learned the words better than if I were to learn them without the help of the graph. It was worth the time I put into it. I wish we would be able to spend more time on tasks like this. I would like to learn other words using this method.'

Another female student believed that 'The lesson was in general easy for me and I did it fairly easily. In general it was a good experience because learning in this way is more long lasting. I had never worked with graphs in English. This method of learning is far better than other methods. All parts were equally challenging and difficult for me. When I was writing I felt that I was completely able to work with the words.'

Discussion

Un-met words for an un-met task

Graphs and illustrations like these may rarely find their ways to intermediate or lower-intermediate classes, and phrases like the ones used in the lesson are somehow beyond the reach of students studying general English. The lesson may suit business classes well but it was proved successful in a general English class as well. As the pre-test showed, the learners had no knowledge of the phrases used in the lesson but in the end they were able to work with the words in different situations. The only data they had at their disposal were the graphs. They were able to work out the meanings by just matching the data on the horizontal and vertical axes of the graph and the incomplete paragraph. As the lesson went on, it was shown that the students were able to work with words more dexterously because they were able to use them in their own writings. This may be in line with many of the principles of learning vocabulary. Nation (1990) believes that knowing a word is defined as knowing its spelling, pronunciation, collocation and its appropriateness. The tasks demanded of them to use the words in appropriate places mandated by the graph. One further advantage of the lesson was that they had the chance to work with collocations like rise sharply, remain steady, and so on.

Good writing practice

Second language writing, the ability of the individual to encode his/her ideas through the grammar and vocabulary of the intended language, is the most difficult skill to master, as evident in the debates arising about it. One of the most challenging debates in the teaching of writing skills is the tension between process and product approaches, each with their own pros and cons. In the product-based approach to writing, the focus is on the tasks that the learner should perform in writing a piece of text, such as imitation, copying and transformation of models provided by the teacher or course book. This is what Nunan (2002) calls 'reproductive language work' (p.249). In process writing, on the other hand, the concentration is on the steps taken in the writing of a piece of text. These steps are prewriting, drafting, redrafting and reviewing and so on. As distinct from product-based approaches, here the emphasis is on quality rather than quantity. The teacher encourages the students to just put down their ideas on paper without worrying too much about the formal correctness. Although a very useful method in teaching writing in L2, process writing has not been without its critics. Martin (1985) believes that children left to themselves never produce any factual piece of written work they need to succeed in school. He also states that factual writing strengthens the development of critical thinking skills, which in turn encourages the pupils to explore and challenge social reality. Rodrigues (1985), as another critic of the process-based writing approach, believes that 'the boundless writing of the process approach is as artificial as the traditional high school research paper. Writing without structure accomplishes as little as writing a mock structure' (pp. 26-27). He adds that students need structure and models to practice, even the mechanical skills need to be improved and still students should be given time to explore their own ideas, revise and review them, have a real purpose and write for real audiences (Rodrigues, 1985). In line with these points, the writing part of the lesson described in this study sought to provide a

framework for inexperienced students with a balanced writing task. The writing task in the second phase of the lesson is an example of a product writing task in which the learners have a model at their disposal and some useful words to write a paragraph. Although this may not seem natural, given the level of students and the fact that they had never been asked to write something like this before rendered it plausible. It may have the further advantage of making students practice the newly-learned words, which is a precursor to mastering words.

Reading practice

Reading comprehension can be considered the ability of making meaning from a text and entails processes like 'decoding, word reading, and fluency along with integration of background knowledge and previous experiences' (Klinger and Geisler, 2008, p.65). The activity introduced in the third section of the lesson described in this study provides such an opportunity for the learners. First they had to decode the text itself, and then be able to transfer what they had learned through working with the graphs in the previous sections to complete the bar graph. Besides, as vocabulary knowledge has been found to be crucial for learners to understand a text (Klinger, Artiles, and Barletta, 2006), and lack of this knowledge may lead to failure to 'link new information with prior knowledge or monitor their comprehension of what they are reading' (Narkon and Wells, 2010, p. 2), the above-described activity may be helpful in this regard. The learners had ample opportunities to work with the necessary words to complete the task although the activity was still demanding. Due to the nature of the reading skill, there was no guarantee of a successful outcome.

Conclusion

Although it cannot be claimed that the activity described in this study was perfect, there are some interesting points about it. The first may be that the lesson was a bit beyond the level of the learners but they were still able to cope with the difficulty embedded in the parts of the lesson even though they were left to their own devices. Another point may be that even if lessons like these have shortcomings and some work is needed to make them perfect, the time put into them is worthwhile. The reason may be that this lesson took just thirty minutes to cover but at the same time the students learned nearly ten new words, which they were able to work with. Another point is the fact that the majority of them liked it. So it can be a worthwhile experience for teachers especially considering the fact that the ubiquity of web resources today makes it easy to download lessons like this from the Internet and adapt them to classrooms.

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Appendix

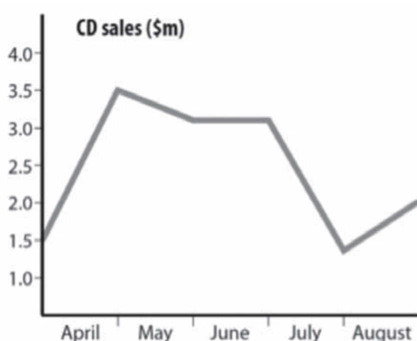
The Lesson

Describing graphs

1. Look at the graph and fill in the blanks in the report on CD sales at Save-O-Mart discount stores. Use the words in the box.

   rose slightly   *rose sharply*   *remained constant*

   fell slightly   *fell sharply*



   CD sales were very uneven last year. In April sales ______________ from $1.5 million to $3.5 million. In May they ______________ to just over $3 million. In June sales ______________ but ______________ in July to just under $1.5 million. In August they ______________ to $2 million.

2. Now use the graph below to write a short report on footwear sales. Use the report in Exercise 1 to help you.

   ____

   ____

   ____

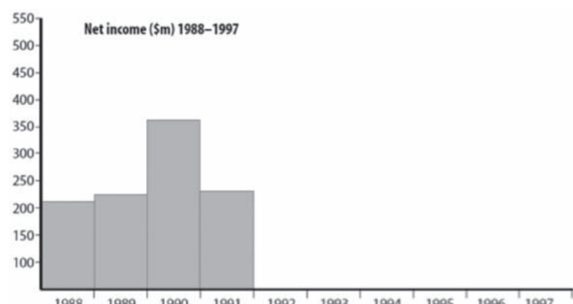
   ____

   ____

   ____

3. Koç (pronounced coach) is Turkey's largest group of companies. It produces cars, buses, trucks, and auto parts. Other businesses include household appliances, insurance, food production, construction, and tourism. Read this information about the company and use it to complete the graph below.

   "The company's net income increased from 1988 to 1997. However, growth was uneven and was greatly affected by the Turkish economy. After slow growth at the end of the 1980s, there was a large increase in 1990, but the following year income fell again. In 1992 there was a large increase to $320 million. Income rose sharply by $216 million to $536 million in 1993. In 1994 income fell to $330 million, but rose again by $95 million in 1995. There was a slight increase in 1996 to $438 million, but then income fell sharply by $281 million in 1997, finishing at $157 million. However, prospects in the next few years are good for Turkey's largest industrial company."



FOLIO 15/2

Authentic Video to (Appr)entice Learners: Developing Language for Working in Teams

Marie McCullagh

Introduction

This article presents a case study for the development of materials to help learners to develop interpersonal language for working in teams in a workplace setting. Working effectively in teams requires participants to be able to be able to balance the need to meet shared objectives with the need to build team identity and cohesion (Hargie, 2011). It requires both an understanding of theoretical approaches to working in teams, along with the use of appropriate language. While there are many resources which provide inputs on best practice for working in teams, there is a lack of materials which help to develop an awareness of the role language plays in this. As Nelson (2000) pointed out in relation to business, learning materials tend to focus on language about work, rather than the language used to carry it out, as in for example 'collaboratively negotiating tasks' (Koester 2010, p.150). There have been significant developments in providing insight into real life spoken workplace discourse in recent years, the most comprehensive of which is CANBEC (Cambridge and Nottingham Business English Corpus), Handford (2010). This is a collection of spoken business English in a variety of formal and informal settings, recorded in companies ranging in size from small companies to multinationals. Because of the size and representative nature of the corpus, it can provide significant insight into the way in which language is actually used in the workplace.

In addition to the knowledge about workplace language that CANBEC provides, there are also transcripts of authentic workplace discourse which illustrate specific linguistic features (eg Handford, 2010, Koester, 2004, 2011). While useful as learning materials in the classroom, extracts from corpora can be perceived by learners as decontextualised and despite their authenticity, as remote from the real world. In addition, as written transcripts of the language, they show only one dimension of the original interactions. This limitation of the data collected in standard corpora has been highlighted by O'Keeffe, McCarthy and Carter (2007, p.156). They point out the absence of broader contextualisation which is provided by paralinguistic and non-verbal aspects of discourse.

The use of video footage of authentic workplace interactions can provide the paralinguistic and non-verbal aspects of the discourse which are needed for learners to contextualise the language which is being used. However, access to authentic material for teaching purposes is not that straightforward. In his description of gathering material for CANBEC, Handford (2010) highlights the difficulties of gaining access to create recordings of meetings and discussions within companies, even when these were only voice recordings, and for research purposes. In creating this set of materials, the solution was to use material from a 'reality show' format on TV, a genre which though structured and edited as entertainment, has a documentary aspect. Shows set in the workplace are an increasingly popular TV genre, though they differ in the extent to which they reflect real workplace settings. As Mishan points out (2005, p.132), there is a risk that 'familiarity can breed contempt', but this is balanced to some extent by its 'compelling power in the classroom' (Sherman, 2003, p 2) and the availability of the programmes via media such as YouTube which gives learners more control over what they watch. However all feature some aspects of authentic workplace discourse, and some have been used in the past to provide data for linguistic analysis (eg Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann, 2003).

Learner Profile

The materials were part of a unit on professional communication and the learners were a mixed (L1 and L2) group of final year undergraduates at a UK university. They came from a range of degrees, with English language as a significant component. The aim of the unit was to provide learners with a theoretical understanding of how language is used in in professional settings, and to develop the skills to effectively use this language themselves. For both L1 and L2 speakers of English, the development of skills could be seen as one of the early 'stages of apprenticeship to approach the goal of becoming expert within their community of practice' (Handford, 2010, p. 248). Learners' levels of knowledge of workplace discourse was partially assessed though a shared task, where students worked together in small teams. The decision to develop materials to help build teamwork skills was influenced by research which showed that while these skills are highly rated by employers, it is an area in which all students needed

further development (Archer and Davison, 2008). For students with English as a significant component of their degree, there was evidence that teamwork was perceived by students as one of the weakest of the skill sets flagged up as desirable for employers (Treffers-Daller and Sakel, 2010).

The issue of work experience has been flagged up as important in informing the development of appropriate materials in ESP. For example, Ellis and Johnson (1994) identified a pre-experience – job experienced continuum for learners. In this case, the majority of learners had experience of the workplace, but not in graduate level roles. The materials therefore needed to bridge the gap between their current understanding of the workplace, and the differing requirements of graduate level roles, where they would be expected to solve problems, make decisions and provide direction for others. Part of this was also ensuring that they understood the importance of using language to build relationships, including recognising the role of small talk as an essential aspect of workplace interaction.

Methodological approach

Overall, there were two influences on the development of the materials. The first was what has been described by Koester (2010) as a discourse-based approach, centred around recordings of authentic workplace interactions. These are either used directly with learners as transcripts or recordings themselves, or the insights gained from analysing the type of language used in encounters which 'can inform the development of pedagogical tasks' (Koester, 2010, p.156). In focusing on the selection and use of video to provide some of the recordings of authentic workplace interactions, The second was Tomlinson's (1998, 2010) text-driven approach, which emphasises the collection of texts which engage the teacher / materials developer, and which are therefore also likely to engage the learner. Engagement has been defined by Tomlinson (2003, p.110) as 'a willing investment of energy and attention in experiencing the text in such a way as to achieve interaction between the text and the senses, feelings, views and intuitions of the reader / listener'. In assessing whether texts are likely to engage learners, he sets out a number of criteria. These include the extent to which the text connects to the lives of the learners; the extent to which it connects to the learner's knowledge of the world, and the extent to which it stimulates divergent personal responses in the target learners. In the context of these materials, by helping learners relate to the use of language in task completion and group building activities, they act as a stimulus for recognition and production, rather than giving learners language which they can reproduce.

Part of this process of recognition and production involves learners becoming aware of the distinction between relational and transactional language highlighted by O'Keeffe et al. (2007), in which '(R) elational language serves to create and maintain good relations between the speaker and hearer', whereas transactional language 'refers to the exchange of information between speakers' (2007, p.159). However, as Koester (2006, p.158) points out, 'relational talk cannot be neatly separated from transactional talk, but is found at all levels of workplace discourse'. In identifying relational aspects in workplace talk, a number of linguistic devices which function as interpersonal markers have been identified by Koester (2010, p.74). These are modals, vague language, hedges, intensifiers and idioms, and the relational effect can vary according to the context. However, some of the functions which can be expressed which are relevant to teamworking include, showing solidarity with fellow team members and expressing stance in relation to decisions or proposed decisions. By helping learners to recognise these linguistic devices and to observe the way in which they are used within specific contexts, they can begin to understand how they might use them in their team interactions. The table below shows some of the links between functions and language identified by Koester (2010, p.156)

Function	Language
Expressing stance	Modal verbs, conditionals, idioms, evaluative adjectives
Showing solidarity	Evaluative adjectives and idioms, emotive verbs, positive feedback signals, colloquialisms, idioms and humour

Selecting materials

From available texts within the identified TV reality workplace genre, the show 'The Apprentice' provides the most useful examples of team working in an authentic setting. The show has been running in the UK since 2005, and features 12 participants, one of whom has to leave each week, until the final two are left to compete for the prize, the chance of a high-profile, well-paid job as an apprentice to a high-profile entrepreneur. Each week, the participants compete on a task as two separate teams, with the objective of making the most money. At the end of the task the teams have to explain their success or failure, and the project manager of the losing team, along with two team members of their choice face being fired. The one who is judged to have contributed the least, or made the most significant mistakes, leaves the programme. It is very popular particularly with the age group of the target learners. The highly competitive nature of the programme, and the relatively artificial setting, means that it is different to the professional workplaces in which most graduates will find themselves. Nevertheless, it contains sufficiently

genuine interactions to illustrate the language outlined above. In each of the episodes various sub-types can be identified within a broader workplace genre, which include making decisions, problem solving, evaluating solutions and dealing with conflict.

Developing activities and exploiting the clip

Tomlinson's (2003) text-driven approach was useful in developing activities around the clips which were chosen (activity headings below, and their brief rationale, are based on Tomlinson's task categories in his text-driven framework, 2003, pp. 119-121). While the approach was developed in the context of general English, it can also work well in ESP, where the elements of readiness, intake response, development, and input response can help to encourage a personal response from the learners. The clip below was chosen to illustrate the sub-genre of making and evaluating suggestions. It provides a good illustration of different ways in which suggestions can be made, and of task orientation and group solidarity. The clip fits broadly into a problem-solving genre, in which the team need to find a suitable model to feature on the cover of product they have developed. A solution is put forward, to get the (female) project manager to act as the model, and is then put to the manager who rejects the suggestion. Learners were given a brief overview of the situation before watching the clip.

Readiness activity

(Prepares learners to experience the text)

- Ask learners to give an example of where they have made a suggestion in a workplace/group work context.
- How was their suggestion received?
- How did that make them feel?

Intake response activity

(Gets learners to think about what is being said or done in the text)

- Video clip to be played with the sound down.
- Ask learners where they think a suggestion is being made and responded to.
- Discuss with a partner, explaining their choice.
- Repeat the process with the sound up.
- Ask learners how well they think the suggestion is being made.

Input response task

(Encourages learners to make discoveries about the language used in the text)

- Evaluate the language used by speaker two to put forward his suggestion. What are the effects of the language he uses?
- Evaluate the language used by the group leader when rejecting the proposal. What effect is her choice of language likely to have on her relationship with the team member?
- Give one example each of idiomatic language and humour used in the text. What are the effects of this choice of language?

Development task

(Provides opportunities for meaningful language production based on representations of the text).

- Re-write what male speaker one has said so that it is more focused on the task
- Re-write speaker two's suggestion so that it is more assertive

Transcript

(Three males in taxi)

[Male Speaker One] I think because obviously we're pitching this to women, I don't how much she's going to love it but if we get Stella (the project manager) a nice bikini and bottoms.....I'm sure she'll take one for the team, to be honest I don't think its going to be too......[All laugh]. .. . that much

[Male Speaker Two] I'd like to see that

[Male Speaker One] I'll bet you would

[All three males laugh together]

Telephone rings

[Female speaker] Christopher, it's Stella

[Male Speaker Two] We're just on the way to pick up materials now, like the sand and the things that we need for the shoot

[Female speaker] Are you getting any outfits then?

[Male Speaker Two] [hheh] ... this emmm, yeah this is why we're glad you called actually, err basically what we were thinking... we're putting it across to you.... it's ladies like modelling these products yeah..and we were trying to sort of see how you felt about going to do that?

[Female speaker] I'm just worried that I have other things to do. If I'm put into that position, I'm going to effectively become a model, and I'm supposed to be leading you guys

[Male Speaker One] Oh go on mate, take one for the team

[Female speaker] I understand where you're coming from, but I just don't think it's feasible. Thanks very much.

Factors relating to learner response to activities

Informal feedback from learners regarding the use of the video material was largely positive, and for the most part they appreciated the way in which it helped to link their theoretical knowledge with workplace situations they were likely to encounter. However, it was clear that some students found it much easier to respond to the questions than others. This did not appear to be because of a lack of understanding of the linguistic concepts involved, but rather the ability to apply these to a 'real life' setting. Authentic video footage combined with activities like those described above can aid students in making the mental transition from the classroom, and also in shortcutting some of the apprenticeship stages of becoming a member of their eventual community of practice (Handford, 2010, p.250). For materials writers, the challenge is to use the ever-increasing range of workplace-related documentary material which is becoming available to help learners in this process.

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FOLIO 15/2

Investigating Humanistic Elements in Global Textbooks: The Case of *New Headway Intermediate (4th Edition) Student's Book*

Anas Hajar

Introduction

Santos (2008) and Tomlinson and Masuhara (2010) point out that an extensive literature on materials development has focused on the debate surrounding the value of using global textbooks (i.e. textbooks which come from British or American roots) in both English as second or foreign language contexts (e.g. Allwright, 1981; Harwood, 2005; O'Neill, 1982; Richards, 2001; Shawer, 2010). The table 1 summarises the principal pro- and anti-textbook arguments.

Although the theoretical discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of utilising global textbooks for language learning might illuminate some issues, there is a dearth of research on evaluating these textbooks in depth (Chapelle, 2008; Tomlinson, 2011). Therefore, more empirical investigations are needed to capture the actual use of global textbooks by both teachers and their learners inside the classroom, with suggesting some practical recommendations.

This paper reports on an inquiry that stressed the need for the humanisation of language-learning materials through evaluating the extent to which New *Headway Intermediate (4th Edition) Student's Book* (NHI4SB) enhances a humanistic approach. The research methodology involved classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with teachers at the Higher Institute of Languages (HIL) of Aleppo University, Syria.

Humanising Global Textbooks

Theoretically speaking, some researchers in the field of materials design and evaluation (e.g. Arnold, 1999; Maley, 2008; Masuhara, 2007; Tomlinson, 2008) have affirmed the potential of adopting a humanistic approach in language learning materials to help learners 'personalise, localise and make meaningful their experience of the target language' (Tomlinson, 2012, p.163). According to Tomlinson (2003, p.163), for example, a humanistic textbook is the one which 'respects its users as human beings and helps them to exploit their capacity for learning through meaning experience'. That is, learning textbooks need to satisfy learners' cognitive and affective needs through providing the latter, for example, with a library of texts, which are linguistically simple but cognitively and emotionally complex (Masuhara et al., 2008). Consequently, these tasks can encourage learners to engage intellectually and emotionally in the learning process.

More specifically, the following major characteristics

Pro-textbook view	Anti-textbook view
- *Textbooks give learners a chance to prepare or to review some ideas.* (O'Neill, 1993; Ur, 1996)	- *Most textbooks are 'non-humanistic' because they often present very simple tasks, with a non-sympathetic voice with learners.* (Beck, McKeown and Worthy, 1995)
- *Textbooks can be 'spurs to creativity' for language teachers (Harmer, 2001, p.8), through making changes and adaptations to textbooks to match their learners' learning goals* (McGrath, 2002).	- *Textbooks lead to the 'deskilling' of teachers, whose role is degenerated to that of 'a transmitter', who follows the procedures without a question.* (Richards, 1993; Shawer, 2010)
- *Textbooks encourage learners to make their minds up about the accuracy of a textbook's content.* (O'Neill, 1982)	- *Textbooks are unable to meet language learners' needs who are culturally and geographically diverse.* (Alptekin, 1993; Gray, 2002)

Table 1: *Pro- and anti-textbook views*

should be covered in any textbook described as humanistic:

> Language learning textbooks should involve 'the whole learner' through considering learners' affective and social sides rather than just focusing on their mental capabilities (Oxford, 2011; Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2012). This aim can be accomplished, as Tomlinson (2003) argues, through presenting a variety of learning tasks to meet learners' different preferred learning styles:

- **Analytical tasks** (e.g. drills and factual texts) draw scant attention to language learners' cognitive abilities or to personal feelings (Ellis, 2010).
- **Experiential tasks** invite learners to experience the target language in use through creating mental images whilst processing or producing that language (Tomlinson, 2011, p.xi), given that 'imagery is a remarkably effective mediator of cognitive performance, ranging from short-term memory to creativity' (Kaufman, 1996, p.77). Reading novels or poems and taking part in a project are experiential ways of learning language.
- **Kinaesthetic tasks** (e.g. drama, games and songs) encourage learners to use their body to express their ideas and to solve problems (Tomlinson, 2005). Accordingly, these tasks can make the target language both 'learnable' and 'enjoyable' through emphasising on implicit learning (Asher, 1988, p.3).
- The voice of textbooks should be informal and friendly, reinforcing spontaneous learning through giving the instructions in a way that illustrates that the author shares their experiences with the addressed learners (Beck, McKeown and Worthy, 1995; Tomlinson et al. 2001). Additionally, the features of orality (e.g. using the active voice, contracted forms, ellipsis and informal lexis) should be also included (Tomlinson, 2008). An example about a supportive voice in transmitting the instructions of learning tasks is *'Imagine you're visiting your town as a tourist. You want to send home a postcard saying what you think of the place.'*
- Textbooks should invite learners to work sufficiently in all patterns of communication, in accordance with the purpose of tasks (Harmer, 2001).

The Study

Liz and John Soars (2009, p.4), the authors of NHI4SB, claimed that NHI4SB promotes a 'humanistic' approach of language learning through giving tasks that help 'students reflect on, analyse, solidify, and build on what they already 'know''. Besides, NHI4SB presents 'an integrated, balanced syllabus', and 'challenges students to make a real progress and gain in confidence', using '[E]veryday language in everyday situations' (ibid: book cover).

This study investigates these claims, via an in-depth textbook evaluation that could be adopted and/or adapted in similar contexts. Addressing this inquiry, the following question with reference to NHI4SB is posed: To what extent does NHI4SB exploit humanistic elements?

The learners who took part in the observation sessions were 114 adult Syrian speakers of Arabic as their first language. 66 of them were males and 50 were females. They were at an intermediate level of English, with ages ranged between 18-24 years. In order to increase the reliability of the research results, two PhD graduates in English Language Teaching (ELT) from Essex and Warwick Universities, UK, assisted the researcher in observing nine classes taught by six teachers. The observers were familiar with NHI4SB because they are teaching that textbook in another Syrian state language institute at Damascus University. Additionally, retrospective semi-structured interviews were conducted with the six teachers of the nine observed classes. It is noteworthy that the total number of teachers of English in HIL is 28, and all of them are MA Syrian graduates from UK universities. Some of them teach first-year students of the English department at Aleppo University along with other teaching duties at HIL. However, the selection of the six observed teachers in this study was based on the fact that there were only six English classes assigned for teaching NHI4SB at the time of collecting the data of this study.

Littlejohn's checklist 'Task Analysis Sheet' (Littlejohn 2011, p.205, see Appendix A) was adopted in this study as an observation scheme to be completed by the researcher and two observers. In addition to examining in depth what the materials contain, the nature of Littlejohn's checklist helped to capture '*what is happening* [in the classroom] rather than *what is proposed*' (ibid.). It also provided a thorough basis for testing how far the humanistic elements were employed in NHI4SB. However, this checklist had one major problem in that some items may be prone to subjective judgment. Consequently, two experienced ELT teachers attended all observed classes with the researcher.

Littlejohn's checklist is based on analysing the tasks of the textbooks being evaluated. Drawing on Littlejohn's (2011, p.191) broad definition of a 'task' (i.e. any action taken by the learner to learn the target language), three central aspects of a 'task' were identified:

- How the learners accomplished the tasks
- The learner's mode of participation
- The nature of content of tasks

Following observation of the classes, semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with the six Syrian teachers at HIL in order to provide an opportunity for checking on the accuracy of previously obtained information, and help the interviewees express their own understandings in their own terms rather than 'fit their knowledge, experiences and feelings into the evaluator's categories' (Patton, 1990, p.290). The interview questions of the study, as shown in Appendix B, were derived from the research question and the literature review, and were asked in a way that is 'neither an open everyday conversation nor a closed questionnaire' (Kvale, 2007, p.11).

This study examines the claims of NHI4SB through analysing the tasks of two units (5-6) of NHI4SB. The analysis was limited to two units for two reasons. One was that the twelve units of NHI4SB are in the same format. The other reason has to do with practical considerations. If all tasks in NHI4SB were scrutinised, the checklists would be too long and exhausting to be rated by the two observers. Littlejohn (2011, p.186) argues that analysing 10 to 15 percent of the textbook 'ideally chosen around the midpoints' is usually sufficient to evaluate that textbook.

The Findings of the Study

The first aspect: How the learners accomplished the tasks

The first part of the observation scheme examined 'the role in classroom discourse that the learners are expected to take' (Littlejohn, 2011, p.190). The vast majority of the observed tasks of NHI4SB, as shown in Table 2, placed the target learners in a 'respond' position (61.6%), allowing them little or no control over what they had to say. Learner 'initiation', involving language expression without the use of any kind of script, was evident in only 26.3% of the observed tasks. Therefore, most learners were prevented from expressing their viewpoints freely or thinking cognitively. However, 12.1% of the observed tasks did not 'require' the learners to initiate or to respond. For instance, the teacher in one of the observed classes followed the instructions of some tasks through playing the CD player and then asking her learners to check their answers individually.

	Frequency	Percentage
Initiate	35	26.3%
Respond	82	61.6%
Not required	16	12.1%
Total	133	100%

Table 2: *The learners' role in the classroom*

This part of the observation scheme also described what the learners' attention was drawn to when participating in the learning tasks of NHI4SB. Table 3 suggested that the tasks that had 'meaning' as their focus (the message of the language being used) composed 65.4% of the observed tasks, whereas the percentage of tasks that drew the learners' attention to 'language form' and 'form-meaning relationship' was 15.1% and 19.5% respectively. Although a pure focusing on meaning can play a pivotal role in improving learners' fluency in language communication (e.g., Arnold, 1999; Little, 1999), a humanistic textbook encourages learning tasks that integrate the linguistic forms in meaning-based and communicative practice in the hope of achieving full native-like competence (e.g., Hedge, 2000; Lightbown and Spada, 2006). Accordingly, some doubt about the accuracy of the claim of NHI4SB of presenting 'an integrated, balanced syllabus' (Soars, 2009: book cover) is aroused.

	Frequency	Percentage
Language system (rules or form)	20	15.1%
Meaning	87	65.4%
Meaning/system relationship	26	19.5%
Total	133	100%

Table 3: *The learners' focus*

The second aspect: The learner's mode of participation

The second aspect of the observation scheme was 'the learner's mode of participation' which described classroom participation while performing the learning tasks of NHI4SB. Options in this regard were (a) 'learners working individually simultaneously', (b) 'learner to class' in which one selected learner interacted with the whole class, including the teacher, and (c) 'learners in pairs/groups'. Table 4 shows that a higher percentage was evident for features that involved the Syrian learners in 'working individually' (50.4%). However, the percentages of the tasks engaging the learners to 'work in pairs /groups' and 'work with the whole class' were respectively (23.3%) and (26.3%). Therefore, the learners could not find enough opportunities to receive comprehensible input, produce language at their level of ability, and receive feedback on their output.

	Frequency	Percentage
Learners in pairs/groups	31	23.3%
Learner to whole class	35	26.3%
Learners individually simultaneously	67	50.4%
Total	133	100%

Table 4. *Mode of participation*

The third aspect: The nature of content of tasks

The 'nature of tasks' discussed the type of content which the teachers and their learners were required to work with: analytical, experimental, or kinaesthetic. 53.4% of the observed tasks in NHI4SB were analytical, distributed into two types: 'non-fiction' (i.e. factual information) (31.6%) and 'linguistic items' (i.e. comments on language use, form or meaning) (21.8%) (see Table 5).

Concerning the experimental tasks in the observation classes, Table 5 shows that the percentage of the tasks which had 'personal opinions and ideas' of the Syrian learners as their focus was relatively high in NHI4SB (30.1%). However, there was a shortage of tasks whose content can be categorised under 'fiction' (11.2%), which implies that the learners reflected their viewpoints on factual texts and information, not imaginary ones. Although kinaesthetic tasks are important to expose learners to English language spontaneously through performing physical tasks such as playing games and miming stories, NHI4SB contained very few kinaesthetic tasks (5.3%) or experimental tasks (41.3%). These task types are considered fundamental in a humanistic textbook because they can prompt learners to personalise their language-learning experience through utilising their sensory and motor imagery in addition to their emotions and inner speech.

		Frequency	%
Analytical 53.4%	non-fiction	42	31.6%
	Metalinguistic comment	29	21.8%
Experimental 41.3%	fiction	15	11.2%
	Personal info /opinion	40	30.1%
kinaesthetic 5.3%	role-play	4	3%
	song	1	0.8%
	game	2	1.5%
Total		133	100%

Table 5. *Nature of tasks*

Concerning the voice of instructions, 94.7% of the instructions of the tasks of NHI4SB were transmitted to the learners in a 'non-humanistic' way, whereas only 5.3% of these instructions were conveyed in a friendly and informal way (see Table 6). Therefore, the writers of NHI4SB did not seriously underline the potential of making the voice of their textbook humanistic.

	Frequency	Percentage
Semi-formal or distant	7	94.7%
Informal and friendly	126	5.3%
Total	133	100%

Table 6: *Voice of instructions*

To provide an opportunity for checking on the accuracy of the quantitative results, semi-structured interviews with six Syrian teachers (A-F) at the HIL were carried out to collect qualitative data. Based on the literature review and the research purposes, some open-ended questions were asked (see Appendix B).

The findings from four interviewees (Teachers B, C, E and F) corroborated the quantitative findings that most NHI4SB tasks invite language learners to work individually, not co-operatively. Teachers (E and F), for example, indicated that

> *... learners have only a few chances to work together in some speaking tasks of the book. (Teacher E)*

> *... co-operative activities are not sufficient in this textbook although the output of good learners can turn to be input* [sic] *for their weaker fellows. (Teacher F)*

However, the other two interviewees (A and D) argued that NHI4SB entails many co-operative tasks, and the issue of increasing the number of these tasks is primarily the mission of teachers. Teacher A, for instance, said that

> *... It [NHI4SB] invites learners a lot to work together. Then it is the teacher's role to create these activities out of listening or speaking tasks.*

Considering the nature of the content of tasks in NHI4SB, three interviewees (Teachers A, C, D) criticised the overuse of the traditional methodology of Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) in NHI4SB because this methodology relies on an excessive focus on practice, which might limit learners' creativity and critical thinking. Consequently, there is a shortage of tasks that stimulate learning through experiencing things critically or physically (e.g. games, role-play, and poems). Teachers (C) and (D), for instance, respectively explained that

> *... I think the PPP method plays a role in reducing the different answers because most tasks are based on drills and repetition.*

> *...There is a lack of games, pictures or songs although they can aid students to generate opinions and expand their imagination.*

Conversely, teacher (E) favoured the use of the PPP method, claiming that tasks presented for controlled practice can increase learners' confidence because '*practice makes perfect*'. It is noteworthy that some interviewees such as (A) and (F) underlined that NHI4SB gives many tasks on guessing the meaning of new vocabulary and developing pronunciation skill.

Discussion

Having a humanistic textbook implies that the textbook

gives its instructions in an informal and friendly way (Tomlinson, 2003), encourages learners to make use of their own attitudes and feelings and engages them in different types of learning-tasks (Saraceni, 2003). NHI4SB encompasses many contradictions regarding its claims of enhancing a humanistic approach as shown in table 7.

Pedagogical implications

Although humanistic approaches to language learning can foster language learners' cognitive and emotional engagement in the process of language learning, most global English textbooks, including NHI4SB, are insufficiently humanistic. This paper, therefore, concludes by supporting Tomlinson's (2012) suggestion that the writers of global textbooks need to improve the humanisation of these textbooks through relying more on the principles of language teaching and acquisition, and trying to design flexible textbooks in order to help language learners connect tasks and texts to their real world. As for language teachers, they should be 'developers' rather than 'transmitters', using textbooks as bridges to develop students' thinking and as the basis for providing them with appropriate tasks that address their learning goals and needs.

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Claims of NHI4SB	Research results
'challenges students to make real progress and gain in confidence'	Most tasks invited the learners to work individually, and placed them in a predominantly 'respond' position while only a few tasks activated them to 'initiate' suggestions using the English language.
helps 'students reflect on, analyse, solidify, and build on what they already 'know''	NHI4SB mainly addresses the needs of the analytic learners because most tasks required analysing information consciously and working individually, whereas few experimental and kinaesthetic tasks were given (e.g. games, drama and novels).
presents 'an integrated, balanced syllabus'	There is overdependence on a PPP methodology and inadequate utilisation of games and pictures.
uses '[E]veryday language in everyday situations'	In addition to the lack of clarity of instructions, these are conveyed in a non-humanistic way through using the impersonal and imperative form.

Table 7: *Claims of NHI4SB and research results*

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Appendix A

See next page.

Appendix B

Interview Questions

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. Could you tell me about your professional background?
3. Do you think New Headway Student Book (4th edition) encourages pair or group work?
4. In the instructions of tasks, to what extent do you think the writers of New Headway Student Book (4th edition) usually talk with learners formally or friendly?
5. To what extent do you think it provides your learners with a variety of tasks such as games, poems or music?
6. Do you think the textbook enhances the implicit or explicit learning?

Appendix A

"Task Analysis Sheet" adapted from Littlejohn's (2011, p.205) evaluative checklist

1. How the learner accomplished the tasks	
Initiate	the learner is expected to express what s/he wishes to say without a script of any kind
Respond	the learner is expected to express him/herself through language which has been narrowly defined.
Not required	the learner is not expected to initiate or respond
2. The learner's mode of participation	
Learners individually simultaneously	learners are to perform an operation in the company of others but without immediate regard to the manner/pace with which others perform the same operation
Learners in pairs/groups	learners are to interact with each other in pairs/groups in the company of other pairs/groups
Learner to whole class	selected learner(s) are to interact with the whole class, including the teacher
3. The nature of content of tasks	
3.1 Nature of the tasks	
3.1.1 Analytical	
Non fiction	factual texts/information
Metalinguistic comment	comments on language use, structure, form or meaning.
3.1.2 experimental	
Fiction	
Personal information/opinion	
3.1.3 Kinaesthetic	
role-play	
song	
game	
3.2 Voice of instructions	
Informal and friendly	The writer shares their experiences with the learners
Semi-formal and distant	the instructions of tasks are often given to learners impersonally through the voice of an expert talking to a novice

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MATERIALS SPOT

Words, in general

A short story by David Shaw Mackenzie

He was travelling at 55,000 feet in an airliner which had lost most of its tail section and would crash within a few minutes. Around him some of the passengers were screaming, some were in tears, some praying. A few, including the man sitting next to Rafford, were scribbling furiously on notepads. 'But why?' Rafford asked. 'Message to my family,' the man next to him said, clearly annoyed at the interruption. 'Got a lot to tell them.' He carried on writing.

Rafford thought this was probably a good idea. He took out his pen and tore some pages from his pocket diary. But he found that he had nothing to say. He couldn't even begin. He asked himself how this could be. He reminded himself that he had a wife and three children whom he loved and he had over forty-five years' experience of this world that he was about to leave so abruptly. Yet he could say nothing about any of this. Nothing. He put the pen and paper away and tried hard to think of something he should be doing. After a few moments the man sitting next to him said, 'I know you, you're a survivor...'

'Me?' Rafford looked at him in amazement.

'Yes, you. You'll make it. I know these things. Take this.' He pushed the page containing his message into Rafford's hands. 'Make sure Bella and the kids get it. Right?'

'Right,' Rafford said, thinking, as he folded the note and put it into an inside pocket: We're sitting side by side in a crashing plane and he reckons I'll survive and him not. There's no end to the absurdity of human nature. He thought that perhaps this was something worth writing down but decided against it.

Everyone on the plane died. Except Rafford. He escaped almost unharmed. He returned to his family and everyone treated him as a hero. He found this difficult to understand. He described himself as a hero by omission. 'I omitted to die,' he said, wondering what was heroic in that.

For a few days he was besieged by reporters. 'What was it like?' they asked him and he found it almost impossible to say. He told them about the hysteria of some, the calmness of others, the activities that some of the passengers had suddenly found to be so desperately important. 'And you?' they asked. 'How did you feel? What did you do?'

'I was too frightened to do anything,' he said, lying. 'I thought of my family.' Another lie.

They turned their attention to his wife. 'What has he told you since he came back?' they asked. 'What has he said?'

'Very little,' she replied, and it was true. 'Almost nothing.'

Rafford still had the note written by the man next to him on the plane. Because it was just a folded piece of paper without an envelope he'd read it several times. He was appalled and embarrassed by it. It was little more than sentimental gibberish. Understandable, he thought, but he wondered if what this man had desperately wanted to say had been worth saying. He thought not. Was this what people wanted to hear? He hoped not. Two months after the crash, three months, and he still hadn't delivered the message.

He decided to visit the man's widow. He arrived at her house without warning and this was clearly a mistake. She wasn't shocked but slightly inconvenienced. Rafford sat in a spacious, well-furnished and comfortable living room with two other people – the widow herself and a man introduced as Michael. The dead man's message, now in an envelope, was in Rafford's inside pocket and it stayed there. Rafford looked round and saw nothing that was sad. The room was bright and cheerful, the widow clearly not too unhappy. Over coffee she told Rafford that she intended to remarry. She glanced at the man called Michael who contrived to look noble.

Rafford could see that his visit was a big mistake. He told them merely that he had sat next to a man in a plane, that they had promised to visit each other's family should either of them survive. He finished his coffee quickly and left.

When he got home he burned the envelope with the dead man's message. He decided that writing things down was a bad idea; words, in general, were suspect things. Sometimes people didn't want to hear what you had to say; they wanted other things which you were not prepared to tell them. The truth, it seemed, was of minor importance.

That night, in bed, Rafford's wife asked him for the tenth or twelfth time to tell her what had happened

during the last few minutes of the flight. Up to that point he had told her almost nothing. Now he explained to her that during those few minutes before the plane finally crashed he had written her a letter and given it to the man sitting next to him. 'If I survived, there'd be no need of the letter and if he survived, he could pass it on.'

'And what did it say?' she asked.

Rafford repeated the words of the dead man's message almost exactly, changing only the names, of course. His wife began to cry. Rafford now found that he had a great deal to say, a very great deal, but he couldn't possibly say any of it.

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FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

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FOLIO 15/2

Commentary on Words in General. Fabulous Fiction: Reading, Speaking and Listening, Writing – Fun?

Rachel Mackenzie

I am a teacher of English to students whose first language is English and those for whom it is a further language. I have used this story over the years with many different classes containing various levels of learners, but which always contain a mixture of native and non-native speakers within the one group.

For those still struggling with English, this story is a chance to veer away from the tedium of discussing verbs or punctuation. It enables this level of learner to enjoy what they can of a story without having to worry about why they are reading it. This does not mean I do not work over the story to some extent; for example I will always ask what they think the story is about – and get a large variety of responses. I also go over any vocabulary which is getting in the way of their understanding and enjoyment. For the beginner learner, this is often enough.

For higher levels of student I follow their reading up with a class discussion about the main themes, the title, the quality of language, specific words and phrases and how they rate it as a story. Unfortunately for them, I always then follow this up with a writing exercise of some kind.

A word on the reading. Depending upon group size and abilities I use one of a number of reading methods. Sometimes, I will read a paragraph and ask students in turn to read aloud to the whole group. At other times I use the echo reading approach which allows those with pronunciation difficulties to learn the correlation between writing and speech sound. Sometimes students pair up and take it in turn to read and critique each other's reading. In an advanced group, I may just leave them to read silently and know that this is adequate.

After reading, I ask them to produce one of a variety of texts in response: a review of the story; a summary; a character assessment (of the protagonist); or a letter they think the dead man would have written. It depends upon the level of the learner and how much complexity they are capable of. I frequently ask them to read their letters out to others. This is fun for the whole class and is also a very useful but discrete lesson in proof reading.

Reading, as research has proved over and over again, is such a valuable task but hugely underused within the classroom. Stories, articles and poems are a well of learning from which emerge better spelling, deeper understanding of grammar, insight into punctuation and a grasp of the complexities and subtleties of words themselves – which leads them back to this particular story. "Words In General" is, of course, a piece of literature in its own right and inherently valuable for that. I recommend that you with your students read more in class – and, I hope, beyond.

A late starter to the teaching profession (not beginning until I was in my late 30s) means that after 13 years I am only just beginning to get the hang of it. I am a qualified adult literacy teacher and began teaching in a college where I taught both daytime and night classes. There I also became involved in outreach work in a local library, a Sure Start Centre and a centre for people with complex disabilities. For over three years now I have worked for the Workers Educational Association, an educational charity who reach out into the community by teaching wherever there is a demand - so far I've experienced a variety of work settings, children's centres, army barracks and community centres. Wherever I teach, and whoever I teach, I always bring stories and poems into the classroom.

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BOOK REVIEW

Materials Development for Language Teaching (second ed.)

Edied by Brian Tomlinson. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press (2011). 451 pp., ISBN: 978-0-521-15704-9.

Reviewed by Sima Modirkhameneh and Maryam Soleimani

Materials Development for Language Teaching, an edited collection of chapters by Brian Tomlinson, encompasses current issues in materials development written by well-known contributors to the fields of applied linguistics and ELT. This new edition (second edition) is the expanded, revised and updated version of the book published in 1998 on materials development. The bonus with the second edition is the addition of new chapters on making use of new technologies in materials development, placement chapters on the use of corpora in published materials, pre-use evaluation of materials and post-use evaluation of tasks.

The book begins with a glossary of basic terms commonly used in materials development in language teaching. In addition to the introductory chapter by the editor, the book is prepared in five parts - each of which introduces two, three or four articles orienting on a particular issue. The parts encompass sixteen self-contained chapters ranging from using corpora and technology in the classroom to processes of materials writing and evaluation, each authored by a prominent researcher or a team of scholars. Conclusions, recommended readings and an index make an appropriate closing to the book.

In the introductory chapter, *Introduction: Principles and Procedures of Material Development*, the editor briefly discusses the terms and concepts frequently used in the book; moreover, some of the basic principles of second language acquisition relevant to the development of materials for language teaching are introduced.

Part A, *Data Collection and Materials Development*, is subdivided into three chapters which concentrate on how corpora have informed language learning materials, including, in Chapter three, how to create concordances without computers in the classroom which presents samples of concordance-based activities in five class sessions. All three chapters highlight the language awareness approach to help learners gain from the exposure to the reality of language use by discovering patterns and tendencies for themselves. The necessity of focusing on the analysis of real situations to create materials that best fit the students' needs is reinforced. In addition, all the chapters introduce different kinds of hands-on corpora used for different purposes. Readers with little or no prior knowledge of authentic materials use in the classroom will find these highly practical chapters, especially the first one, Chapter two, which gives a basic introduction to the use of corpora in the classroom and is a rich source of ideas and inspiration for their future teaching.

Part B, *The Process of Materials Design*, consists of three chapters. The first chapter, five, which equips readers with a very different perspective on the process of materials development looks basically at the dynamic nature of materials development and emphasizes the need for constant evaluation and revision of the materials. Furthermore, a methodological framework including processes to design materials (p. 113) is presented. The focus of Chapter six is on designing global textbooks which can be adapted and used in diverse situations; moreover, principles, pressures and compromised principles to this end are discussed. Chapter seven encompasses fascinating ideas on the processes of materials writing from the writers' perspectives by referring to two 'snapshots' of materials development experiences. The themes common to the three chapters in Part B are that of meeting the needs of all interested parties including students, teachers, writers, and sponsors in materials development and the necessity of cooperation between commercial designers, teachers and students in the process of materials development. Thus, materials are recommended to be chosen not only on the basis of their linguistic richness but also by their capacity to raise motivation and student interest.

The intended aim of the first chapter in Part C, *The Process of Material Evaluation*, is to dispel the myth that materials are a *closed box* by introducing a general framework with subcategories as a means of closely

analyzing materials for the purpose of taking more control over their design. In the second chapter, there is a clear pedagogical explanation of what a task in language teaching is. Furthermore, since task-based teaching constitutes an innovation in many teaching contexts and needs to be studied in context, the definitions and applications of macro- and micro-evaluations of task-based teaching are presented. Besides, various suggestions that may lead to probing teachers' needs and wants, improving communication between the material users and material producers, and providing opportunities for teacher involvement and empowerment in material production are put forward in the third chapter, Chapter ten. The focus of the last chapter is on the importance, purposes and methods of materials evaluation from the publishers' perspectives. It underscores hints and strategies outlined for analyzing materials and empowering teachers.

Part D entitled, *The Electronic Delivery of Materials*, which is totally new to the new edition deals with a hot topic in teaching. Obviously, technology, especially Web 2.0 applications have brought significant changes in language teaching and learning. This part focuses on the new technological possibilities offered to materials developers and teachers and introduces a plethora of digital resources available for language teachers and students and their roles in language learning along a continuum from 'most spoken' to 'most written' (p. 329). As Tomlinson says: 'new technologies in impressive action [...] [enhance] the learning experience of the students by offering increased exposure to language in use, increased engagement and increased activity' (p. 352). The authors introduce many novel ideas regarding recent technologies and how to put them to the service of teaching. There are suggestions for teaching all four language skills using new popular technologies such as computers, interactive whiteboards, and so on. Furthermore, for the purpose of analyzing the usefulness and applicability of a particular technology, Bates' ACTION model including access, cost, teaching and learning, interactivity and user-friendliness, organizational issues, novelty, and speed, is introduced with examples (p. 310). Although these technologies cannot be afforded in all contexts, due to various reasons, it seems obvious that with a little training and stimulus, teachers and material developers can make a very productive use of at least their own and their students' mobile phones (for more examples, see p. 352). Especially for teachers having teenage learners, the chapters in Part D would be an informative resource to add a spice of novelty to their teaching and create the up-to-date atmosphere which is highly appreciated by young people.

Chapters in Part E, *Ideas for Materials Development*, keep up with different views on materials development and provide the philosophy behind the creation of materials. This part pays special attention to two aspects: the learner's uniqueness and learning styles. It favors experiential learning, peripheral learning, and whole person approaches catering for different learning styles and offering responsibility and choice to the learners. A balanced development of sensorial learning experiences as opposed to the traditional visual focus is also stressed emphatically in this part. In fact, the traditional vision is criticized by Tomlinson who maintains: 'it is much easier to write and design a book which requires analytic responses and it is not easy to write and sell one which caters for the kinesthetically inclined' (pp. 433-434).

The first chapter in Part E, Chapter 14, mainly focuses on the strategy of visualization and how to help L2 readers visualize for achieving global understanding, deepening engagement with text, improving comprehension and retention skills and facilitating language acquisition. A comparison between L1 and L2 readers regarding the use of visualization strategies is carried out and the methods of improving this strategy among L2 readers are discussed. Moreover, the literature on the readers' use of the inner voice is presented. In the second chapter, Chapter 15, the author explains the relationships among teachers, materials and students and discusses the factors that affect these relationships. In addition, four ways of approaching material design, that is, coping strategies used by teachers, Prahbu's classification of materials including semi-materials and meta-materials, using IT as a resource, and content-based learning are discussed. In the third chapter, the author discusses Lozanov's *Suggestopedia*. She presents an example of the cycle of a lesson and explains how the language and the grammar are taught via this methodology. In the last chapter of this part, Chapter 17, Tomlinson talks about the design of self-access materials. He presents principles, features, texts and examples of what he terms 'access-self' materials and their role on the development of the students' autonomy. The reviewers found this part extremely fruitful regarding the ideas one needs to know to develop materials.

To conclude, this book shows a wide range of insightful ideas, procedures and guidelines to develop materials that support language learning and teaching. Furthermore, it is an invaluable resource for language teachers who want to use and design materials for different educational levels and a must for those who enroll in teacher education courses, those involved in designing materials, and even for some students in applied linguistics or specialized ESL/ELT courses. The authors of this book have eloquently articulated the current issues in materials development. Thus, those who are new to the realm of materials development should take this gold mine of tips and start the process of materials development with this knowledge. The reviewers found the book very well written and well-organized with an outstanding framework that employs an uncomplicated structure and highlights its excellent coverage of the key issues. The writing style

is clear and straightforward, making it easy for both practitioners as well as students to follow. It is worth noting that although some chapters have been added, for those who had the opportunity to read the first (1998) edition, the spirit remains somehow the same. All in all, this volume could be a valuable resource for prospective and current practitioners in the field of materials development.

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FOLIO 15/2

BOOK REVIEW

Materials and Methods in ELT: A Teacher's Guide (third edn.)

Jo McDonough, Christopher Shaw and Hitomi Masuhara
United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell (2013) 334pp,
ISBN: 978-1-4443-3692-4

Reviewed by Philip Prowse

Here is a new edition of a classic book, and it is fascinating to compare it with the first edition of 1993. Much has changed in the material(s) world since then, and this excellent updating proves it, despite Barbara Sinclair's valiant argument to the contrary at the ELTJ Debate at IATEFL Glasgow 2012 (Sinclair and Cook, 2013). The volume has gained a co-author, Jo McDonough and Christopher Shaw having been joined by Hitomi Masuhara, but it has hardly put on weight (only up from 318pp to 334 pp), despite adding a new chapter by Diane Slaouti on Technology in ELT.

The updating is clearly visible throughout the text, but nowhere more strikingly than in the extensive extracts from coursebooks and materials which were such a distinguishing feature of the original. To get a flavour, we have only to turn to Chapter two where the table of contents of *Kernel Lessons Intermediate* (1971) is replaced by *Straightforward* (2007), and that of *Functions of English* (1981) by *Speakout Intermediate* (2011).

Part One: Topics in the Design of Materials and Methods

The new edition retains the chapter structure of the original, except in Part one where Chapters two and three have been conflated 'taking a more historical perspective for the analysis of the impact of communicative approaches and exploring current approaches in more detail than before.' (p.x).

Chapter one, *The Framework of Methods and Materials*, while opening not with Richards (1985), but Graddol (2006) on English as a global language, sets out the authors' stall, as the title implies.

Chapter two, *Current Approaches to Materials and Methods*, as noted above covers the same ground as the first edition's Chapters two and three. Much of the material is new, but there is the same quiet, friendly, authorial voice explaining, questioning (through interpolated questions, in this edition better differentiated in tinted boxes) and prompting. My feeling is that by retaining the questions within the text, but not the block of questions and extra examples at the end of each chapter, the authors have made the book feel more interactive and user-friendly.

Chapter three, *Evaluating ELT Materials*, and Chapter four, *Adapting Materials*, are as relevant as ever, as is the useful **Further Reading** at the end of each chapter, replacing titles published in the 80s with ones from the last decade, including McGrath (2002), itself about to re-appear in a new edition.

Chapter five, *Technology in ELT*, is a welcome addition. However, it is hard to cover such a broad and rapidly-changing field satisfactorily, and this reviewer would have welcomed a discussion of, for example, the use of concordances and a treatment of blended learning. Further, a number of the references, while relevant, appear dated. The **Further Reading** section (p.105) lists very useful online resources, but could have been improved by the addition of more print texts such as Hockley and Clandfield (2010), and Lewis (2009).

Part Two: Teaching Language Skills

This section contains five chapters, one for each of the four skills and one for integrated skills. It is in many ways the heart of the book, and the treatment is masterly. Substantial extracts from current materials are offered for analysis and discussion, alongside a clear exposition of the relevant theory.

Chapter six, *Reading Skills*, contains not only a range of interesting up-to-date extracts, but the text has been improved by reference to more modern work, without losing the integrity of the original. I was particularly pleased to see (p.129) that the section detailing Christine Nuttall's five basic question types had been retained virtually unchanged.

Chapter seven, *Listening Skills*, faces up to the same

problem that the original edition had – without an audio component it is hard to use examples, and the treatment necessarily focuses on pre- and post-listening activity types, rather than the listening material itself. Nevertheless, the ground is covered well, and the new Further Reading suggestions point the reader in useful directions.

Chapter eight, *Speaking Skills*, has been substantially rewritten and feels very current, opening with discussion of spoken corpora and the ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) debate. There is a wide range of references to very recent publications, and the interspersed tasks in their tinted boxes encourage thoughtful engagement.

Chapter nine, *Writing Skills*, quite rightly opens, much as the original did, with reflection on reasons for writing, but then again takes us through much recent thought on approaches to writing (e.g. Chris Tribble's distinction between 'learning to write' and writing to learn' p.186).

Chapter ten, *Integrated Skills*, is a bit of a breathless dash through the field with nods to CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) and TBL (Task Based Learning), as well as a fuller treatment of EAP (English for Academic Purposes). This chapter is a bit of a catch-all, and while less satisfactory because of this, still contains (as elsewhere) lots of useful references for further reading.

Part Three: Aspects of Classroom Methods

Chapter 11, *Groupwork and Pairwork*, (mysteriously renamed from the original Group and Pair Work!) while retaining much of the original (e.g. the excellent diagram on p.234 showing Patterns of classroom organization) has been reworked well. In particular, the short section on Learning Styles has been usefully expanded to include reference to the work of Coffield and his research casting doubt over Gardner's theories.

Chapter 12, *Individualization, Self-access and Learner Training*, has similarly been reworked. I'm pleased to see that the section has been expanded to include ER (Extensive Reading) and Alan Maley's contribution to ER. There are again useful Further Reading suggestions including Griffiths (2008), which was also recommended at the end of the previous chapter.

Chapter 13, *Observing the Language Classroom*, retains much of the structure of the original, building on Dick Allwright's work. The illustrating extracts from three lesson transcripts in the original have been replaced with one longer one – both the new and the old are taken from teacher training videos and this reflects the core problem in observation: how do you observe the unobservable? There are excellent new tasks in the tint box to go with the transcription.

Chapter 14, the final chapter, *Views of the Teacher*, opens with a virtually unchanged (thank goodness) section on the Teacher's Role, and then comes bang up to date with a much revised *Change, materials and methods* section. There isn't space in this review to detail the interesting similarities and differences between the original and the third edition, but there is sustenance here for both Guy Cook and Barbara Sinclair!

As will be apparent from the above, I am enthusiastic about this new edition. However, the authors could have been better served by closer copy-editing, so that we wouldn't have mis-spelt references (Grave for Grabe p.134), missing references (Nation and Macalister 2010 appear on p.9, but not in the bibliography, ditto McGrath, I, 2002, p.78), or left-over editing instructions (Substitute: ... p.155). It is also unfortunate that the website and the back cover of the book refer to a non-existent new section on assessment. But these can be corrected in the fourth edition!

Revising a classic is not to be undertaken lightly. The risks are great, as is the labour. The original authors and their new co-author, Hitomi Masuhara, are to be congratulated on their achievement. I recommend this new edition highly as a unique contribution to the field and urge you to buy a copy.

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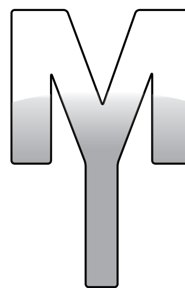

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