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folio

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FOLIO 16/1

From the Editor

Freda Mishan, University of Limerick

While obliged to start with an apology for the delay in bringing out this issue of *Folio*, I hope that the range of thought-provoking articles in the issue will more than compensate for its late arrival. Contributions come as usual from every corner of the globe. They range from coursebook-writing in India (Lalitha Eapan), to innovative ideas for teaching and coursebook materials in Thailand (Steven Graham), materials adaptation in China (Averil Bolster) and 'authentic' approaches to language teaching in the UK (Elinor Parks). In *Please Read the Text on Page Seven: It has nothing to do with you*, Kevin Ottley stresses the importance of materials relevance to student motivation, while David Wray and Anas Hajar make the case for strategy-rich coursebooks. Contributions include 'old hands' on the material development scene – Brian Tomlinson, the MATSDA President, and Alan Maley - as well as newcomers who, we hope, are set to carry the materials development baton, as we launch our 'Student Spot' with two coursebook review articles. The first evaluates EFL coursebooks produced for a Japanese audience, the second reviews a newly-published book on English idioms *Speak English like an American*.

I am struck once again by the generosity of the contributors to this issue, in disseminating and sharing their insights with colleagues around the world in the interests of expanding the field of materials development. I am sure that just as attendance at the MATSDA conferences in Liverpool last year sparked a number of the articles in this issue, this year's *Folios* will be similarly populated by papers stimulated by the 2014 Liverpool MATSDA conference.

Freda Mishan, University of Limerick

January 2014

The MATSDA / University of Liverpool 2014 Conference

SLA and Materials Development

June 28th-29th, 2014 at the University of Liverpool

Invited speakers include

Rod Bolitho Rod Ellis Pauline Foster Alison Mackey
Alan Maley Hitomi Masuhara Brian Tomlinson

Venue

University of Liverpool, Rooms to be announced
74 Bedford Street South, Liverpool, L69 7ZQ

Times

Registration: 08.30 on June 28th and 29th

Conference: 09.00-17.30 on June 28th; 09.00-16.30 on June 29th

Fees

Students: £90 (£50 for one day)
MATSDA Members: £120 (£70 for one day)
Non-Members: £145 (£85 for one day)

MATSDA Membership

Contact Susie Pearson at *matsdamembershipsec@nile-elt.com*

Booking, Accommodation Enquiries and Payment

Visit *www.liv.ac.uk/english/conferences/matsdajune2014*

Offers of Papers

To offer a paper for a forty five minute presentation or to offer a poster presentation please contact: Brian Tomlinson *brianjohntomlinson@gmail.com*

See you in Liverpool in June!

Greetings from the President

Brian Tomlinson, MATSDA President

Greeting to you all as we celebrate the fact that it's now twenty years since the first issue of *Folio* was published. In those days *Folio* was little more than a newsletter read by a few enthusiasts in the United Kingdom. Now it's a respected journal read all over the world by the increasing number of practitioners and academics who recognise the significance of materials development for language learning. It's also in great demand from the numerous post-graduate students who are doing their research on aspects of materials development. This increase in the status and significance of materials development and of *Folio* is partly attributable to the dedication and expertise of the many practitioners who have been Editors of the journal and partly to the quality of the articles contributed by materials developers from all over the world. It is also partly attributable to the influence of MATSDA conferences and workshops held throughout the world and to the publications of many of its members.

In 1993 there was very little research on materials development and very few publications had been dedicated to it. Now PhD students are researching materials development in almost every applied linguistics department in the world and there have been numerous publications. Last year alone at least the following books on materials development have been published in the UK:

Gray, J. (2013) (ed.) *Critical Perspectives on Language Teaching Materials*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Harwood, N. (2013) (ed.) *English Language Teaching Textbooks: Content, Consumption, Production*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

McDonough, J., Shaw, C. and Masuhara, H. (2013) *Materials and Methods in ELT: A Teacher's Guide*. London: Wiley Blackwell.

McGrath, I. (2013) *Teaching Materials and the Roles of EFL/ESL Teachers: Practice and Theory*. London: Bloomsbury.

Tomlinson, B. (2013) (ed.) *Applied Linguistics and Materials Development*. London: Bloomsbury.

Tomlinson, B. (2013) (ed.) *Developing Materials for Language Teaching*. (2nd edn.) London: Bloomsbury.

Also in 2013 an IATEFL materials writing SIG (MaWSIG) was founded and MATSDA wishes them all the best for their activities in the coming year and in the future.

MATSDA's main activities last year were the two conferences which we organised in cooperation with the University of Liverpool. We held a one day conference at the University of Liverpool in April with the theme of New Ideas for L2 Materials and a two day conference at the University of Liverpool with the theme of Enjoying to Learn: the Best Way to Acquire a Language? Both conferences received very positive feedback.

MATSDA also contributed to the APPI Conference in Lisbon and the ACERT Conference in Prague.

In 2014 our main event will be a two day conference at the University of Liverpool on June 28th-29th. In line with our brief to encourage interaction between practice and theory and theory and practice the theme will be SLA and Materials Development. The plenary speakers will be Rod Bolitho, Rod Ellis, Alison Mackey, Alan Maley, Hitomi Masuhara, Pauline Foster and Brian Tomlinson and there will also be presentations from materials developers and researchers from Algeria, Armenia, Columbia, India, Iran, Ireland, Libya, Portugal, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey and the UK. We are also discussing the possibility of MATSDA conferences in Brazil and in Khazakstan in 2014 and in Australia, Ireland and Germany in 2015.

Look forward to meeting you at one of our events and to reading a contribution from you in *Folio*.

Brian Tomlinson

Southport 11th December 2013

Looking Out for English[i]

Brian Tomlinson

Introduction

> *'Nearly 100% of innovation – from business to politics – is inspired not by "market analysis" but by people who are supremely pissed off by the way things are.'*
>
> *Peters, 2009*

In the world of EFL materials development I'm 'supremely pissed off' with at least two things. Recently in Tomlinson and Masuhara (2013), an ELT Journal review, we investigated six current global coursebooks for adults and confirmed our impression that:

1. EFL coursebook activities tend to neglect three vital prerequisites for effective language acquisition i.e. language experience, language discovery and language use. Instead they tend to focus on providing instruction, exemplification and practice in the classroom.

2. EFL coursebooks make very little attempt to stimulate or help their users to experience or use English outside their classroom. And yet it's indisputable that no classroom course can provide enough English to lead to sufficient acquisition for most of its learners (see Barker, 2011; Fukuda and Yoshida, 2013). Learners need to look out for English outside the classroom, as I found, for example, from a study of intermediate learners at Bell College, Saffron Walden which revealed that the only ones who improved their communicative competence over a term were the ones who found English outside the classroom by reading newspapers, watching tv, going to the cinema, joining clubs, going to the pub and, most importantly, talking to people in English.

My 'innovation' consists of a proposal for a course called *Looking Out for English* which:

1. Uses an EDU approach (i.e. Experience/Discovery/Use) to provide engaging experience of English, to stimulate learner discovery and to give opportunities to use English for communication (see Tomlinson, 2013a for a theoretical justification of these three requisites for durable acquisition).

2. Provides activities which aim to achieve the objectives in 1 above both inside and outside the classroom.

Activities in Looking Out for English

I'd like to stress the point again that the activities are for use both inside and outside the classroom and the intention is that the users of the course will spend far more time acquiring English outside the classroom than learning it inside the classroom.

Here are some examples of EDU activities:

1. For providing engaging experience of language in authentic use:

1. Task free activities (using extracts in the classroom from books, magazines, comics, newspapers, the web, YouTube, tv, adverts, films, the radio etc. which can be followed up outside class time).

   These activities involve the teacher (at the beginning or end of a lesson) 'performing' or presenting a potentially engaging authentic text (e.g. a poem, a story, a newspaper article). Those students who were engaged take a copy of the text, experience it again outside the classroom and decide whether to follow up its suggestions for finding and experiencing similar texts outside the classroom.

2. Engaging extensive experience of English in the classroom which can be continued outside of class time (e.g. books, magazines, comics, newspapers, the web, YouTube, tv, films, the radio, DVDs etc.).

   Kanda University in Japan provide such opportunities in the classroom and then provide access to a self-access centre rich in potentially engaging extensive texts. A teacher in Jakarta achieved the same thing without expense by encouraging her students each week to take something to read from the class library box and to bring it back together with a new engaging 'text' they had found for themselves. A teacher in Japan did something similar by getting her students to take home a student-recorded text each week and to bring another newly recorded one as well when they brought it back. I've done it by getting students to select a section from a newspaper to read (e.g. film reviews) and then getting them to write a summary of it (and of the same section from other newspapers) for the class newspaper. I've also done it by getting students in

[i] This article was first published in Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal (SiSAL), 2013, December, 4(4), 253-261.

Oman to predict what was going to happen in a football match in the Premier League in England and then to watch the match (with an English commentary) on tv that night.

3. Text-driven units of material which start with readiness activities which activate the learners' minds in readiness for extensive experience of a written or spoken text in the classroom.

   After doing response, discovery and development activities in relation to this text the students are encouraged to read further related texts both provided for them and found by themselves. *On Target* (1994) in Namibia, *English for Life* (Tomlinson, Hill and Masuhara, 2000) in Singapore and *Searching 8* (Fenner and Nordal-Pedersen, 2010) in Norway are examples of coursebooks which use this approach.

   See Tomlinson (2003; 2013b) for a detailed description of a text-driven approach.

2. Making discoveries about how the language is typically used:

1. Research tasks which start in class and continue outside it.

   An example of this was an activity I gave a class in which half the students were the 'some' group and half were the 'any' group. Each group had to find as many examples of their determiner in use in texts I gave them and to put these examples together to constitute the beginnings of a corpus. For homework they expanded their corpora from texts they found for themselves and then in class they made and shared generalisations about the functions of the two determiners (for example that 'any' is typically marked while 'some' is typically unmarked). Another example was showing a class a video of a British chef getting two celebrities to help him make a chocolate cake, getting the students to make discoveries about the language the chef used to get people to help him and then getting them to find out if this was typical or idiosyncratic by watching tv programmes in which somebody was getting other people to help them (see Tomlinson, 2010).

2. Self-access discovery tasks making use of the environment.

   For example, in class I got students to work out the meaning of a sign in Bahasa Indonesia by describing how I made discoveries which helped me. The sign was:

   Mobil Cuci
   Air Panas

   I told the students that I saw this by the side of the road when I was stuck in a traffic jam in Jakarta. Every day I passed it and I eventually worked out its meaning after noticing many cars were parked near it and then discovering that washbasins in restaurants always included the word 'cuci' in notices above them, seeing that bottles of water in a supermarket all included 'air' on the label and being asked by a waitress if I wanted it 'panas' or 'padas' when I asked for the food to be hot. Once the students had worked out that the sign was advertising a car wash with hot water I encouraged them to look out for signs in English which they didn't understand and then to find ways of working out the meaning for themselves.

3. Blooper activities leading to exploration of the English in the environment.

   A sample of amusing and authentic bloopers are collected from the web or from books and presented to the learners who then have to spot the errors and work out what should have been written. Here are a few examples taken from advertisements and published in (Hill, 2011):

   1. Crash Courses available for those wishing to learn to drive very quickly.
   2. TIRED of cleaning yourself? Let me do it for you.
   3. DECORATOR Specialises in inferior work. Immediate attention. Estimates free.
   4. Gentlemen Drop Your Trousers Here for Overnight Service.

   The learners share their solutions and are then given a week to collect bloopers in English from their own environment. A week later the learners in groups put their bloopers together and then present them to other groups to correct.

   The learners not only gain experience of English from the bloopers but from all the English they look at to find them. In many environments they can also become much more aware of how much English is available to them outside the classroom.

4. Text-driven units of material which include discovery activities involving focused exploration of a text in class followed by related research outside of class.

   For example the learners could be given the expression 'In case of fire' and asked in groups to decide where they are likely to see this and what its functions are. The teacher then performs the poem 'In case of fire break glass' by Roger McGough (McGough, 2004) and asks the learners, 'Did you like the poem or not. Why?' after discussing their answers groups of learners use the poem to make generalisations about the form and the functions

of 'in case of' expressions. They are then given a week to collect authentic examples of 'in case of' expressions before being asked to put together an 'in case of' corpus and to make final conclusions about form and functions. They then write bizarre 'in case of' notices to put around the school (e.g. 'In case of learning jump for joy'; 'In case of fire carry on sleeping').

3. Using the language for communication:

1. Unstructured learner interaction

   The learners form a social English club and agree that whenever they meet outside the classroom they will talk to each other in English. They also agree that they will look out for opportunities to introduce their fellow club members to English (e.g. by introducing them to English speaking friends; by letting them know about a drama which is going to be performed in English). For an example of a very successful experiment in encouraging unstructured interaction in a Japanese university see Barker (2011).

2. Writing booklets about enthusiasms

   Each learner tells the teacher about their favourite enthusiasm and the teacher helps them to work out a list of contents for a booklet on this enthusiasm. She also helps them to decide where to find further information about it outside the classroom. The learners spend a number of weeks inside and outside the classroom writing their booklets (using the teacher as a resource when needed). The learners write an illustrated draft of their booklet and this is then monitored first of all by a fellow learner and then by the teacher. The final version is then 'published' and the learners read each other's booklets in class and outside of class.

   One of my MA students used this approach with elementary level adult learners in London and very impressive booklets were produced (e.g. about restoring antique furniture and about growing vegetables on an allotment).

3. Writing a novel

   The learners are told to visualise a scene from their home town or village and to see somebody interesting that they know there doing something interesting. They then write a description of what they can see in their minds and this becomes the first page of their novel. They then spend time inside and outside class writing their novel and using their fellow learners and teacher as resources when needed. They also read 'novels' outside the class for inspiration. When their novels are finished they are monitored by other learners and by the teacher and then 'published' for other learners to read.

   I used this approach with a class of unmotivated lower intermediate learners in Vanuatu and after ten weeks of writing they each took a 60-80 page novel home to their villages. They also took self-esteem and pride as well as a much increased competence in English.

4. Writing a soap opera

   The teacher leads a class discussion on soap operas in which opinions are expressed about what a soap opera is, what its typical characteristics are and what makes a good soap opera. The learners in groups then come up with a title and characters for a soap opera set in the vicinity of their school. They vote for the best suggestions and the winning group are given the task of writing and recording the first five minutes of the soap opera. A week later the recording is played to the class and another group is given the task of writing and recording the next five minutes. Each week a group writes and records and at the end of the term each learner is given a copy of the complete recording. During the term all the students are encouraged to watch soap operas in English and to go out into the local area and find out as much as they can about it.

   I used this approach with a group of upper intermediate Argentinian students in a small town in England and each group was so determined to succeed that they started asking local people for information and advice and to monitor their scripts for them. This out-of-class interaction was a great bonus in addition to the increased confidence, competence and self-esteem that they gained.

5. Projects

   The students are given projects which involve them going outside the classroom to interview people, to research local institutions and to attend local functions. They then compile the information they've gained and present it in the form of a mock TV documentary to the class (and then maybe the whole school).

   Examples of such projects would be 'The Expatriate Community in Istanbul', 'Supporters of English Football Teams in Jakarta' and 'English Food in Tokyo'.

6. Text-driven units of material which include development activities which involve the learners in writing texts related to the core text of the unit (e.g. continuations, prequels, sequels, different narrator etc.).

   An example of this is when I used Roald Dahl's poem *The Three Little Pigs* (Dahl, 1984) as the basis of a text-driven lesson. One of the activities was for the learners to write a short story about Little Red Riding Hood in their town (she's the main character

in the poem). Another activity was to listen to and read the *True Story of the Three Little Pigs* (Scieszka, 1991) and then decide what they think really happened. Some of the learners then pose as journalists, they interview learners acting as the wolf, the pigs and Little Red Riding Hood and then groups use the interview scripts to write an article called 'What Really Happened to the Three Little Pigs'. The learners are then encouraged to find and share other versions of the story of the Three Little Pigs (there are many poems, stories and songs based on the story).

Conclusion

My conclusion is simple.

Materials should stimulate and help learners inside the classroom to acquire English outside the classroom.

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Brian Tomlinson *is a Visiting Professor at Leeds Metropolitan University and a TESOL Professor at Anaheim University. He has worked as a teacher, teacher trainer, curriculum developer, football coach and university academic in Indonesia, Japan, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, UK, Vanuatu and Zambia and has given presentations in over sixty countries. In 1993 he founded MATSDA (the international Materials Development Association) and he is now President of the association. His many publications include Discover English (with Rod Bolitho), Openings, Materials Development in Language Teaching, Developing Materials for Language Teaching, Research for Materials Development in Language Learning (with Hitomi Masuhara), Blended Learning in ELT: Course Design and Implementation (with Claire Whittaker) and Applied Linguistics and Materials Development.*

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Issues in English Textbook Construction for Primary Schools in Multilingual Contexts

Lalitha Eapen

This paper describes the major difficulties faced in the process of textbook construction in a working environment that was basically an interactional one, where six to eight writers with little experience in textbook construction had to struggle with the what, how and why of the construction of primary school textbooks of English as a second language. The paper reveals how untrained teachers can develop in terms of linguistic knowledge by doing a practical materials production project that had to be published within tight time constraints.

The context is one where only one set book, *Marigold* (NCERT 2006 and 2007), for each class (class one to five) was developed for a cohort of learners from different language backgrounds and sub-cultures in India. The books were primarily prescribed for the central and state government school system in India which introduced English from Class one in 2005. When textbook construction is centralised so that one text has to serve a large geographical area however, issues arise because of the multiplicity of cultures and first languages of the textbook users: the children and teachers.

The revision of the English textbooks described in this paper was part of a larger curriculum development effort conducted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) which normally looks after the centralised curriculum revamping in India. All subjects and texts were put through a rewriting process which ranged from position papers on the theoretical stances on learning and curriculum development to objectives delineation and textbook development. Committees were set up for these functions and coordinators from NCERT managed the meetings and the adherence to deadlines. The process took three to four years to finalise and was conducted in two phases: Books one and three were completed in the first year, and was followed by Books two, four and five in the following years. Committees met regularly, about once every four months. The textbook committees met for planning, finding materials, designing educational exercises and supplements, editing proofs and negotiations with the artists.

When the teaching of a second language syllabus starts in Class one, as it does in 25 out of 35 states and union territories in India so that English is made available to all including the underprivileged (totalling more than 150 million children at the primary school stage learning English (Mathew, 2012), there is an impact on learners, teachers, curriculum designers and textbook writers. While the consequences for learners are cognitive and linguistic in nature (Bialystock, 2008; Cummins, 1979a; Cummins, 1979b; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981), others, like teachers who are teaching English for the first time in Class one, and curriculum designers and textbook writers, have to find their feet in terms of 're-skilling' and 'de-skilling' their practice (Apple, 1985).

The authors

The first major hurdle to be crossed was that although the textbook construction group were primary teachers teaching classes in the schools, they were not specifically trained in ELT or in materials construction metalanguage, so they were not ready to create tasks for developing language skills through materials within the time required by the publication deadlines without some on-the-ground discussion and training. This meant that authors were not in a position to always 'exploit' a text for the teaching of sub-skills and elements of language and to keep in mind the general overview of the course plan for the book. Every meeting of course writers had, therefore, to be one of education and teacher development, an 'on-the spot' kind of development of teachers 'evolving' into materials producers, as it were. Normally, in an INSET teacher development course such as the one at the EFL University Hyderabad (for post-graduate teachers, where the *Certificate of the Teaching of English* course takes one year for practising teachers to complete), materials development is discussed and teachers get an orientation to materials development over three to four months. While there was no question about the appropriacy of teachers from the primary level being authors for primary class textbooks, the ability to focus on different sub-skills required work. Further, although the production of the materials took over three years for all five books to be completed, the actual meetings of the team were for a period of two to three days about three to four times a year. Of the ten teachers or so at one meeting, moreover, there would be a steady presence of five or six teacher-authors each time. This meant that at times there was a sense

of repetition of discussion that had been completed a month or two earlier. However, in hindsight, the textbook construction project proved to be an effective on-the-spot INSET type of training.

The authentic text

One of the mandates given to the textbook committee was that 'authentic' materials had to be chosen. This requirement, although sound, did pose the second hurdle. First, it was difficult to interpret the term 'authentic' for primary L2 classes, particularly for Books one and two. What did 'authentic 'mean? Published materials as in newspapers, books and magazines only? Or those published materials written by users of English as a first language? Or materials written by proficient users of English? These were some questions that had to be addressed while looking for materials. The problem was that original 'authentic texts' for the primary level might not be the best representation of an 'authentic' variety of language for the average Indian child. Secondly, if we used texts written by established writers writing in English in India these would need simplifying so they would no longer be 'authentic' as required. Thirdly, the writing team had to use texts which (for the most part) touched on aspects/details that were everyday realities to the child for whom English is the first language, but essentially foreign to Indian children in villages or smaller towns, if not to children living in the cities. For example, concepts like 'bread and butter' and 'socks and shoes' are not familiar daily items for every child in primary schools in the Indian sub-continent. Indeed, in a country as vast and diversified as India, it was a challenge to find common ground that was culturally indigenous as well as familiar realities and also to include enough culturally 'foreign' ideas to introduce children to a world outside their ken. Representations of each perspective had to be met.

Illustrations and layout

Producing illustrations that were appropriate and reader-friendly was another major challenge. Artists took time to arrive at illustrations suitable for a secular representation of the people of all sections of society with no undue emphasis on a particular class or group. Considerations about including every religion and as many communities and states as possible (the North-East had to be included, for example) for a centralised book, meant that artists had to be conscious of representing everyday use of symbols and images judiciously: for example, the 'bindi' on the forehead of girls could not appear on all illustrations of girls, for the bindi is not an everyday reality for all children from minority cultural groups. Further, some children had to appear in local dress in addition to others appearing in the normal school uniforms prevalent in schools. This is crucial since most adults in India wear traditional clothes, which are highly varied. The question was how to provide sufficient and complete representation of varied backgrounds of primary school children.

Moreover, representation in illustrations had to be not only of the city but of towns and small villages as well. Artists had to 'unlearn' producing visuals that were 'Indian' but not at the same time 'patronising' or 'condescending'. The tendency to 'Indianise' or orientalise pictures had to be resisted, so that images were not perceived through the lens of an outsider/foreigner/tourist. Colours, moreover, had to be eye-catching to appeal to children. Luckily, the funding for the textbooks was enough to ensure good quality paper that could also represent original colours. The tendency to over-decorate and embellish was not easily comprehended and overcome by artists, so 'busy' pages took time to simplify.

A major problem with illustrations was that the same artists did not work on all the books; we had different artists, and, in one case, on non-delivery of material, an artist had to be replaced, which meant another orientation and drafting. The question of uniformity of production across texts was something that artists found very difficult to work with, and was not always achieved.

In terms of layout, there were difficulties, again of orientation. The choice of the right fonts and font sizes was a conscious and deliberate one that had to be made, because it could not be assumed that the artists and printers had prior knowledge of this. The perception of what a child would find delightful or interesting differed in individuals moreover, and agreement had to be arrived at as to a presentation that prioritised logic and reader-friendliness.

The Teacher's page

Before English was introduced in Class one, primary teachers taught English from Class three or four as a subject. Visits to schools in Chandigarh and Delhi showed that teachers at the primary level did not have fluency in English. Materials had to take cognisance that users, the teachers, had had no training in teaching English as a second or even as a third language. In order to help such teachers, foreign cultural allusions that would be difficult to understand or explain through illustrations were reduced, and it was decided then to address the problem of teacher difficulties by adding a 'Teacher's page' (see NCERT web site http://www.ncert.nic.in/NCERTS/textbook.htm) for each section or theme into which the books were divided (since a teacher's book was not in the proposed budget and would not have been used much even if it were available). On the site, questions that the teacher might have about text implementation

were addressed, albeit briefly and in general. The site discussed the sub-skills of language, how to look at errors, how to give feedback and so on. Subsequent attempts at teacher orientation in the third year of the project through teleconferencing and workshops were not very focused, given the large geographical area that had to be covered, leaving the Teacher's page as perhaps the main resource for teaching practice at the time of implementation.

Conclusion

The experience of creating materials was educative. At any given time there were at least six people working together on drafts and several versions were produced before deadlines had to be given precedence, since not every teacher was always available to attend editing sessions. However, interactions were 'dialogic' in nature (Bakhtin, 1981), producing new meanings and knowledge that was knowledge-transforming/ building (Bereiter and Scardamalia,1993) for all. To work with a very large geographical area and with a variety of issues involving users of a variety of mother tongues and a variety of cultures, religions and types of schools in different environments, was challenging. One centralised textbook is not the answer, but this text, which has incorporated research findings in early language learning, might help to develop new ones that are more true to the environments of different states of the country. This was an INSET training experience, and the way in which budding materials producers could learn the ropes.

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Please Read the Text on Page Seven: It has nothing to do with you

Kevin Ottley

As the world grows and shrinks in equal measure, English language teaching (ELT) is required by businesses and educational institutions in countries which a generation ago were seldom heard of, or which even did not exist. A quick perusal of a well-known English as a foreign language (EFL) jobs website bears this out. Of the 159 English teaching positions currently advertised on the site, five are in Kazakhstan, two are in Kurdistan, one is in Kyrgyzstan, one is in Macedonia and two are in Slovakia. Feeling clever? Try this quick and simple quiz. What are the national languages of these countries? What are their capital cities? And what are these countries' most popular drinks?

I'm guessing you could not successfully answer all the questions for all five countries. Neither could I. Well, here is a simpler question. Take five countries which produce English language teachers – let's say, Australia, USA, England, Scotland and Ireland. How many students of English in the countries mentioned in the previous paragraph would be able to answer the three questions I posed about these five western countries? Not all of them, of course; but I think it is fair to say more than for the previous question; in other words, English students in Kazakhstan, or any of the other four countries, know more about Australia, USA, England, Scotland and Ireland than we do about their countries.

Now let's take it further. You have been teaching in, say, Kurdistan for one month. Your class of EAP students has never visited the USA, where you are from. Who do you think knows more about one another's cultures? Them, of course. And after two months? Three? Half a year? There will come a time when finally your knowledge of their country and culture will overtake theirs of yours (we hope!); after all, you are living there. But at the same time, your students' knowledge of your home country will also probably increase while you are their teacher. This will be on account of three reasons. First, you talk to your students about home, responding willingly to questions both in and outside of class. Second, the subject of your country will feature in your own lesson plans. Third – and this is especially true if you are American or British – some mention of your country or its culture generally will occur in the published materials you are teaching from.

It is certainly a fact that, if you are teaching in Kazakhstan, Kurdistan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia or Slovakia, there will be no mention of these countries in your teaching books. I would conjecture too that when you commence your English teaching duties in these countries, your own material will not feature anything about them, and probably won't for some time, if ever. Why this first point is true will be discussed in the first part of this article; thereafter, I will explore why the second point might be a deficit, and how it could be addressed.

ELT materials are produced for an international market, for international students. While this is an obvious observation, it is worth dwelling on its significance and impact in the classroom. Flicking through the texts and illustrations of such books, one cannot fail to agree with Tomlinson and Masuhara's (2013) point that, 'there seems to be an assumption that all learners are aspirational, urban, middle-class, well-educated, westernised computer users'. which immediately begs the question, what if they are not? While aspirational might be a difficult term to quantify, urban, middle-class, well-educated and westernised are not, and many students learning English in classrooms around the world will clearly be none of these, or at least not all of them. Here then is the problem. Presented with an English language book whose content, and the values which underlay this content, are unfamiliar or even alien, many learners are straightaway disenfranchised. Which in the classroom translates into boredom and demotivation. Moreover, the teacher, who is more than likely a product of the cultural values contained in such books, might then become identified with the teaching material (they might even be seen as promoting it), with the result that a barrier emerges between learner and teacher, one which may prove harmful to learning in the long term: if the teacher is identified with the teaching material, and the material is alien to the leaner, it will certainly prove difficult to generate and maintain empathy and rapport with the students.

Regarding English for academic purposes (EAP) materials in particular, my own experience reflects completely the concerns expressed by Bell and Gower (1998) that, 'no coursebook can cater for all the individual needs of all learners[...] With international markets it is obvious that the needs of individual students and teachers[...] can never be fully met by the materials themselves'. Indeed, we might even go

further. An anonymous blogger (teachingeap, 2012) has commented that 'one-size fits all is actually a danger to EAP. Some of the materials coming onto the market are so general that they are impossible to use'. An attempt to include everyone satisfies no one. I have in front of me a copy of the textbook I am expected to teach from on a second-year EAP access (foundation) course at a public university in one of the five countries listed above (for ethical reasons I do not name either the book or the university). I have opened it randomly at three separate pages. The subjects of the three texts/extracts which appear on these pages are: the moral issues regarding research into genetics; in-vitro meat; Romanesque sculpture (the language/skills focus for the three texts are, respectively: noticing signposting in public speaking; cohesion with 'it' and 'this'; pre- and suffixes). Of these texts, all are, clearly, of a specialist nature, requiring (one might have thought) some background knowledge about the subject in order to successfully engage with them. The first two, furthermore, might lead to cultural/ethical complications for students of particular religious backgrounds. The third, meanwhile, is so completely Euro-centred – not least as it is contrasted with another text about the Mona Lisa which makes much of the intellectual values which triumphed during the renaissance (which themselves only impacted upon an elite minority) – that it means virtually nothing to students who are not a product of western intellectual society (some of my students were unable to even recognise this cultural icon, a fact which highlights not their ignorance, but mine).

Set against these criticisms is the point made by Thornbury (2013) that EAP coursebook materials 'need to be mediated by the teachers...so they can be made to accommodate the lives and needs of the students'. To mediate means to negotiate between two parties in order to agree a solution or compromise (Cambridge online, 2013). Given the problematic nature of texts/extracts such as the ones under discussion, one assumes that Thornbury has in mind the mediation of a whole book rather than individual texts/extracts; or, in layman's terms, dump the bits of the book which are not culturally relevant to the learners. But this solution creates two other problems: how can one know which material is relevant (especially a teacher only recently arrived in a new country)?; and how, or with what, might one fill the holes in the syllabus which appear as a result of this exercise?

The answer to these questions is of course one and the same – canvass learner opinions. According to Widdows and Voller (1991), L2 curriculum reform should be modified to take into account learner opinions, an observation which grows out of the conviction that learner beliefs and opinions have a part to play in course design (Nunan, 1988). Nuttall (1996) recommends the students themselves be canvassed in order to find out what their interests are. Achieving this should not be difficult. Needs analyses are often undertaken by teachers and institutions, their purpose being to investigate the students' educational requirements, but how many teachers conduct, before or at the commencement of a course of learning, a subject analysis? This approach might even be commenced before the teacher has embarked upon their journey to a new place of work; i.e., reading up and finding out about a new country is reasonable and commonsensical, and why should this research not form the basis of later educational investigations? As Tomlinson notes, 'most of the events and places described in [a] textbook are inevitably located at a huge distance from the students'. (Tomlinson, n.d.). The way to deal with this problem is, surely, for the teacher to find out about events and places particular to the students. The results will surely be invaluable: not only is teacher enfranchised by knowledge of the culture of the country s/he will be working in, but will also learn about student interests, as well as gaining an insight into the cultural norms (and taboos) of her/his new home.

This brings us to the important, or critical, focus of sourcing the material. Here our freedoms in the classroom are curtailed not by what is presented in a coursebook, but by what is available in the media – obviously a much wider and deeper pool of supply. In my own teaching, I have sourced material from the internet (from news sites as well as from local-interest blogs), from books and pamphlets, from AV sources such as film and music, and from English language newspapers and magazines. I have also interviewed students, with the resulting discussions being utilised as teaching material. The challenge has not been finding suitable material; rather, difficulties have arisen over the appropriateness of the language. However, mediation not with the subject of the material but with the language with which it is composed (and this includes lexis, grammar and structure) should not present any real challenge to an experienced ELT teacher: language is what we do. Coursebooks can cultivate a culture of dependency. Do we want our creativity clipped? Or is it better to work knowledgeably and confidently with material we have ourselves sourced?

Furthermore, one will find – as I have found – a happy abundance of assistance from the student population when it comes to sourcing material. Students are, clearly, knowledgeable about and interested in their own culture, often more so than we are about ours. All of the five countries noted in the first paragraph of this article are new nations; that is, they have all secured independence – nominally or otherwise – from other countries in the last generation, during, that is, the lifetimes of the students. This being the case, the subject of local/national culture is for them exciting and refreshing (more so than it is for subjects and citizens of the BANA countries which produce

their teachers). As an experiment and an example, try this simple exercise. You are teaching the passive voice, a subject which, as presented in an average EAP textbook, is often artificial and dull. Rather than labouring this with your class (and with texts which are not relevant to their experience), simply invite the students to go away and source a few short texts about their own culture. If these contain examples of the passive, investigate how and why the form is used. If not, explore with the class the possibilities of changing active forms in the texts into the passive voice. I am convinced you will experience a greater responsiveness from the students, and more learning will take place consequently, than what would result from a textbook-bound class.

Other classroom activities which can be used, especially in the EAP arena, are as follows: the main points of a blog can be noted with a view to being reproduced as an argumentative essay; the content of a newspaper article can be reproduced according to academic norms; a debate or presentation can be built on the back of student opinions about a film, a piece of music, or a performer; a biography of a national figure, a poet, artist or politician, can be used as a source for the writing of a summary, with the emphasis on both paraphrasing and cohesion. Need I go on?

Finally, Thornbury (2013) observes that, 'little consideration is given to how the students' own linguistic and cultural backgrounds might affect or enhance[...] language acquisition'. While this point belongs to a wider pyscholinguistical debate about the acquisition of language generally, one is duty-bound to note that the learning or enhancement of a second language is surely made easier if the student is working with subjects and concepts with which they are already familiar. That is commonsense. Why then replace commonsense with mass-produced and expensive course books? That is the main argument of this article. As I have noted, texts/articles appearing in ELT books designed for international markets can be problematic for local markets. The solution is not for more course books, but for existing books to be supplemented or replaced with materials which are sensitive to the cultural realities of the learners. This will result in students engaging more successfully (because confidently) with the target language. Also, it means the instructor or teacher is more likely to embrace the local culture, which itself should guarantee more success in the classroom. And between the two, between authentic local-interest material and the language in which it is written, is mediation. This is where the instructor's strengths lie, and this should be the focus of her/his energies and teaching.

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FOLIO 16/1

Materials Adaptation of EAP Materials by Experienced Teachers (Part I)

Averil Bolster

This is the first part of a two-part paper, the second of which will be published in Folio 16.2.

Introduction

While it is widely assumed that EFL teachers adapt the published materials they are assigned (Bayne 2006, p.30), how much adaptation of commercial teaching materials occurs in classrooms is an under-researched area. This paper examines a research project which aimed to find empirical evidence to support (or otherwise) the contention that 'every teacher is a materials developer' (Tomlinson 2003, p.1). It also determines how much adaptation takes place in one particular context, that of an EAP class in an offshore university in China, an overseas branch campus of the University of Nottingham. It concludes that experienced teachers should be undertaking research in their classrooms and applying their findings to textbook writing in order to create materials that will suit the reality of how materials are actually used.

Reading the very first page of *Developing Materials for Language Teaching* (Tomlinson, 2003), I was struck by a short quote which has stayed with me ever since. It simply said, 'every teacher is a materials developer'. To me it made perfect sense so when the opportunity arose to undertake a research project in early 2012, I knew that I had to try to find out if this gem of an idea really is true. By taking Canniveng and Martinez's (2003, p.479) definition of materials development, 'anything that is done by writers, teachers or learners to provide sources of language input and to exploit those sources in ways that maximize the likelihood of intake', I focused on the point that teachers' exploitation of materials can be viewed as a form of materials development. This exploitation of sources or adaptation is in turn defined as 'making changes to materials in order to improve them or to make them more suitable for a particular type of learner' (Tomlinson, 2011, p.xiv). What I hoped to discover was empirical evidence to support or refute Tomlinson's statement.

Since I was working in a sizeable English-medium university in China, I decided I would use the best resources available – my colleagues. I would take one lesson in which they would be using the same section of a published textbook and determine how many of them would use the material as it is presented and how many would adapt the material in some way. If I found that most of my fellow teachers made some adaptation to the material, I would be satisfied that the maxim, 'every teacher is a materials developer' (Tomlinson, 2003, p.1) were probably true, in my particular teaching context at least.

However, I also wanted to know that if the maxim were true, then to what extent do teachers adapt materials. The section of published material that would be used for this research (page 32 of Garnet Education's *English for Business Studies in Higher Education Studies*) is divided into eight parts. By finding out, via my pre-lesson questionnaire (Questionnaire A, Appendix 2) how many of these parts teachers intended to modify at the planning stage, I expected to be able to calculate what percentage of the published material would be adapted. This would provide me with the concrete evidence I was seeking. Although materials can be defined as 'anything that is used by teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language' (Canniveng and Martinez, 2003, p.479), for the purposes of this paper, I use the term to mean textbooks. This is because my research was based on whether or not teachers adapted a section of a textbook presented as ready for use.

Literature Review

Starting with the viewpoint that 'every teacher is a materials developer' (Tomlinson, 2003, p.1), it soon became clear that this belief is widely accepted across the ELT community, given the often-voiced expectation that teachers adapt the materials they are issued with. The references conveying this assumption are too numerous to quote but a summary should be sufficient to highlight how widespread it is. Bayne (2006, p.30) expects teachers to adapt since 'no textbook is perfect' and Saraceni (2003, p.73) claims that simply using materials in class requires adaptation since each class has its own specific needs to which the teacher caters. Islam and Mares (2003, p.86) believe that even ESP materials that teachers have chosen themselves and which should be highly suited to their context have to be adapted. Similarly, Hyland (2008, p.96) states that 'the highly targeted and context-specific nature

of EAP means that no textbook can ever be ideal for a particular class and so an effective teacher needs to be able to evaluate, adapt and produce suitable and effective materials'. More recently, McGrath (2013, p. 15) states that not only do 'many' teachers adapt published materials but some of them use these materials as 'springboards' in their lessons.

While teachers adapting the materials that they are given seems logical and is widely-espoused, there is still a relative lack of research with empirical evidence to support it. The focus of this project was to determine if and how much teachers adapt materials but it is worth turning briefly to why they adapt. Bailey's (1996) research on teachers' departures from their lesson plans gives an insight into the on-the-spot adaptation that comes with experience. Gray (2000) has made some contribution to finding out reasons why teachers adapt due to inappropriate cultural representations and stereotypes depicted in teaching materials. Classroom experience is one of the key elements that Bayne (2006) recognises as encouraging teachers to adapt their materials.

Although this study is based on a published textbook, whether or not we need textbooks at all has been debated for years. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) put forward a strong argument in favour of them when they challenged the anti-textbook view, while Thornbury's (2000) Dogme approach would see classrooms free of textbooks altogether. However, there are those who favour adapting textbooks in order to better meet the needs of particular students in their own particular context. This view is in line with Harwood's (2005) 'weak' anti-textbook view. This view is not completely against published materials but maintains that they are not ideal and that research findings must be incorporated into them. He states that 'while the textbook can provide structure, its syllabus should be flexible enough to allow the local teacher to input additional locally appropriate content' (Harwood 2005, p.154). Over the years, suggestions have been made which would suit the weak anti-textbook view. These include the 'unfinished textbook' (Swales, 1980, p.20), 'flexi-materials' (Maley, 2003, p.189) and 'semi-materials' (Prabhu, 1989 in Maley, 2003, p.189).

Part of my research project was to discover if there is an appetite for my alternative, 'the gapped textbook'. Simply put, this textbook would contain a blank page in every unit to allow the teacher (or learners) to contribute their own materials to the course. This 'gap' in the textbook would partially free teachers from the constraints of published materials and allow them to 'personalize', 'individualize', 'localize' and 'modernize' – some of the key reasons why teachers adapt materials (McDonough and Shaw (1993) in Islam and Mares, 2003, p.89). The idea of 'the gapped textbook' began as a metaphor for the freedom and space that teachers require in order to add extra activities or exercises that they recognise their particular students need. Actually providing the physical space and time in a course might be something that teachers would appreciate in their textbooks. My hope is that it could ease the monotony caused by using books which have the same format throughout (Clark, 2010). This innovation could also harness the creativity of students as well as teachers (Clarke, 1989) by allowing negotiation between them.

This led to the final question I wanted my research to answer – how feasible is 'the gapped textbook'? In order for it to be seen as a viable innovation which satisfies the 'conservative caution of the publishers' (Tomlinson, 2003, p.166), an appetite for this idea amongst a group of experienced teachers would need to be established. A second questionnaire for reflection (Questionnaire B, Appendix 3) after using the published materials in the lesson would be needed. The timing of when Questionnaire B was sent was important as the target lesson had to be completed so that participants could not be influenced by its questions when planning the lesson and completing Questionnaire A. This follow-up survey would allow me to assess experienced teachers' attitudes to commercial materials and qualitatively evaluate how open to the idea of 'the gapped textbook' the participants would be.

Research Questions

The primary research question is:

- Is every teacher a materials developer?

In addition, the secondary questions are:

- Do experienced teachers adapt the published materials they are required to use and if so, to what extent?
- Would teachers appreciate the flexibility to personalise and localise published materials in the form of 'the gapped textbook'?

Methodology

Background, participants and materials

The research project was carried out in China at the University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC) and the participating teachers are all members of the Centre for English Language Education (CELE). UNNC is part of the growing trend of 'offshore campuses' – campuses which are set up in other countries but whose better known 'home' campus issues their degree qualifications. The students being taught by the teachers participating in this project are mainly (>95%) Chinese and aged 18-19 years old. They are in the second semester of the preliminary year (essentially a foundation year) of their degree programme. The material chosen as the basis of this research was used

in the first lesson of week four of this semester as by that week, teachers knew their classes well enough to determine what materials and activities suit them.

The material that the participating teachers used is for International Business (IB) students, namely section 4.2 of Unit 4 of *English for Business Studies in Higher Education Studies* (Walker and Harvey, 2009). This section includes a reading text about new technology and eight accompanying pre-reading, reading and note-taking tasks. IB was chosen because it is the largest cohort in the preliminary year and thus has the most teachers working on it. In semester two of the 2011/2012 academic year, 22 teachers worked on the IB stream and 18 of those teachers agreed to take part in this project, which represents a better than hoped for rate of participation.

Data Collection

Data collection took the form of a pre-lesson questionnaire (Questionnaire A, Appendix 2), a pre-lesson teacher profile (Appendix 1) and a post-lesson questionnaire (Questionnaire B, Appendix 3). The first phase therefore consisted of a questionnaire investigating the intended changes, if any, that teachers planned to make to their lesson using the assigned section of published material. Islam and Mares' (2003) chapter played a large role in the designing of Questionnaire A. They neatly summarised McDonough and Shaw's (1993) and Cunningsworth's (1995) adaptation techniques into seven parts. These seven techniques for adaptation (Islam and Mares, 2003, p.91) - extending, expanding, subtracting, abridging, simplifying, reordering and replacing – were used in the questionnaire so that the participants could understand what was meant by adaptation and easily identify which type they intended to make. This way, the results could be easily quantified. One small change was made for the purpose of my questionnaire and that was replacing 'simplify' with 'change complexity'. This was done in case some aspect of the published material did not need to be simplified to suit the students but rather needed to be more challenging.

The questionnaires were sent separately via email so as to keep the respondents' workload to a minimum. Many of the participants have a full teaching schedule of 18 hours per week, which requires a significant amount of time for preparation and marking. I was mindful of taking up too much of my colleagues' precious time and after careful consideration, I ruled out holding focus groups or meetings that would require a fixed time to be scheduled. With questionnaires, my colleagues had the freedom to fill them in at a time that best suited them.

Questionnaire A was emailed to the participants five days before the lesson in order to allow them time to get familiar with it and to fill it in as they planned the lesson. It produced both quantitative and qualitative results. Since the published material was very clearly broken into eight sections, teachers had to tick a box for each section on what kind of change, if any, they planned on making. This produced measurable results rather than an open question which would have provided too many qualitative results for such a modest project (Bell, 2010). I wanted to determine how many sections of the lesson were to be used exactly as they were presented in the materials and how many sections were to be changed. This gave me a quantitative measure of how much teachers adapted the published material they were given. Participants were also asked to provide a brief rationale for their decision to use the published material as it appeared or to adapt it.

In addition to the pre-lesson questionnaire, a short teacher profile one was also emailed at the same time (Appendix 1). All of the participants in the research project are experienced and well-qualified since these are recruitment requirements of the University of Nottingham Ningbo China. I wanted to find out, however, exactly how experienced and qualified they are since it is generally believed that the ability to adapt materials comes with experience (Bailey, 1996). The pre-lesson questionnaire and teacher profiles were returned to me before the lesson was carried out.

After the lesson in which the selected published material was used, we entered the second phase of the project and the post-lesson reflection (Appendix 3) was sent to participating teachers. This was to produce some qualitative results by using open-ended questions. A number of yes/no and simple choice questions were included to determine whether the participants used the teacher's book, which accompanies the assigned textbook, when planning their lesson. Although Bell (2010, p.147) warns that hypothetical questions might provide 'useless' answers, one was included in order to gauge the participants reaction to the concept of 'the gapped textbook'. This question consisted of two parts: 'If *English for Business Studies in Higher Education Studies Course Book* were published with a blank page following '4.2 Reading', would you use this blank page? In what way?'

Results and conclusions of this project can be found in the next edition of *Folio*, 16.2.

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Appendix 1

Teacher Profile Questionnaire & Results

Dear Colleague,

I appreciate you taking the time to fill in this questionnaire as part of my MA research project. I have asked you to provide your name solely for the purpose of organising my work. You will be given a pseudonym in all written work or presentations stemming from this project and your anonymity will be protected.

Averil Bolster.

Teacher's Name: _____

_____

Qualifications:

Please tick (✓) which qualifications you have earned.

1. CELTA or equivalent ❑
2. DELTA or equivalent ❑
3. PGCE or equivalent ❑
4. MA ESOL/Applied Linguistics ❑
5. Please add any other relevant teaching qualifications you have which are not mentioned above.

_____

_____

_____

Experience:

1. How many years in total have you been teaching English as a Second Language?

_____

2. How many of those years have been spent teaching EAP or ESAP?

_____

3. During your teaching career thus far, how many countries have you worked in?

_____

4. Please list the countries in which you have taught English?

_____

Language Learning Experience:

1. Apart from your first language, have you learned any other languages? Please tick.

   Yes ❑ No ❑

2. If yes, which language(s) have you learned? Please list them along with the level of proficiency you reached.

_____

_____

Thank you!

Appendix 2

Lesson Plan Questionnaire Part A

Teacher's Name: _____

In the first half (50 minutes)of lesson one of week four, it is expected that '4.2 Reading' on pages 32-33 of Garnet Education's English for Business Studies in Higher Education Studies Course Book is used. On page 2, you'll find a table based on the lesson plan suggested in the Teacher's (T's) Book for '4.2 Reading'. Before you teach this lesson, please tick (✓) the relevant sections and give a brief reason for your choices in the 'Rationale' section.

NOTE: Here is a glossary of the terms used in the pre-lesson questionnaire.

For the purpose of this research project, the types of adaptation are as follows:

Extend = A teacher may supply more of the same type of material, i.e. a quantitative change.

Expand = A teacher may add something different to the material, i.e. a qualitative change. For example, put material in a PPT rather than read it from the book.

Subtract = A teacher may not do all of the practice questions in an exercise, especially if they practise the same

point, i.e. a quantitative change.

Abridge = A teacher may focus on a particular part of an exercise which is especially relevant to his/her class, i.e. a qualitative change.

Change complexity = A teacher may change the wording of the instructions of an exercise or the exercise itself to allow the students to better manage it or make the exercise more challenging if they think it will be too easy for the students.

Reorder = A teacher may change the sequence of activities of materials.

Replace = A teacher may simply replace one visual for a more culturally appropriate one or may replace an entire activity with one that he/she feels will meet the goals of the lesson.

Pre-Lesson Questionnaire

When planning Lesson 4.2 (Ex. A- H), tick whether you intend to make a change or not to the exercises as stated in the Student Book rubrics. Give a brief reason for your decisions in the Rationale sections.

	No change	Change To Original Material						
	As in the T's Book	Extend	Expand	Subtract	Abridge	Change complexity	Reorder	Replace
Ex. A								
	Rationale							
Ex. B								
	Rationale							
Ex. C								
	Rationale							
Ex. D								
	Rationale							
Ex. E								
	Rationale							
Ex. F								
	Rationale							
Ex. G								
	Rationale							

Note: Use addition space if you wish.

Appendix 3

Lesson Plan Questionnaire Part B

Post-Lesson Reflection Questionnaire

Teacher's Name: _____

Now that you have completed your lesson using '4.2 Reading' from Garnet Education's *English for Business Studies in Higher Education Studies Course Book*, I would be grateful if you answered the following questions. Your honest opinions are appreciated. Feel free to use additional paper if you wish. Thank you for your contributions to this project.

1. Had you used the published materials prior to this lesson?

   _____

2. When you planned this lesson, did you use the Teacher's Book? If yes, did the notes in the Teacher's Book contribute to your lesson planning?

   _____

   If yes, how much?

   _____

3. To what extent did you feel helped or hindered by the published materials (including the notes in the Teacher's Book, if you used them)? 0% being completely hindered and 100% being completely helped.

   _____

5. Did your lesson meet the aims as set out in the course book?

   _____

   If yes, to what extent and if no, to what extent? How can materials avoid limiting teachers in their practice?

   _____

   If *English for Business Studies in Higher Education Studies Course Book* were published with a blank page following '4.2 Reading', would you use this blank page? In what way?

   _____

6. Are there any other comments you would like to add?

   _____

***NOTE:** If you created your own materials for this lesson, please feel free to include them when you return this questionnaire.

FOLIO 16/1

Designing 'Strategy-Rich L2 Textbooks' for Language Learner Autonomy

David Wray and Anas Hajar

Introduction

There is an exceedingly good old Chinese proverb which says, 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him how to catch fish and you feed him for a lifetime'. Applied to the field of second language teaching and learning, this proverb perhaps suggests that language learners 'may be empowered to manage their own learning' if they are taught 'to work out the answers for themselves' through taking up a set of effective Language Learning Strategies (LLSs) (Griffiths, 2013, p.1). Therefore, research into the LLS concept is pedagogically-oriented because it is believed that LLSs are 'both learnable and teachable' (Oxford, 2008, p.52). However, most prominent LLS researchers (e.g. Chamot, 2009; Dörnyei, 2005; Macaro, 2001; Nunan, 1996; Rubin, 2013; Wenden, 1991) have utilised a cognitive psychology standpoint and upheld the view that training language learners to use LLSs rests exclusively on the shoulders of language teachers.

In an attempt to strengthen communication between researchers in the field of LLS and those working in the field of materials design and evaluation, this paper aims to suggest the incorporation of strategy-training tasks into language textbooks on the grounds that textbooks are still seen as one of the most convenient learning resources for providing language learners with 'security, system, progress and revision' (Tomlinson, 2012, p.158). Accordingly, the integration of some useful LLSs into language learning materials can play a pivotal role in creating thinking language learners who are able to direct the processes of their own L2 learning and accomplish their desired goals in today's complex communicative world.

The genesis of the concept of 'strategy instruction'

The construct of LLS, referring to thoughts and actions selected by language learners to regulate their own language learning, is by now familiar to most language teaching professionals. LLSs can be either unobservable mental operations such as selective attention, or observable behaviour such as seeking out a conversation partner or taking notes. LLSs also need to involve some degree of consciousness or awareness on the part of the learner because 'the element of *choice* [...] is what gives a strategy its special character' (Cohen, 2011, p.7, author's italics). The major impetus in capturing the noticeable variations in L2 learners' linguistic accomplishments began in earnest in the 1970s with the well-known 'Good Language Learner Studies' (Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern and Todesco, 1978) in which the assumption of the researchers was that an identification of the features and strategies utilised by 'good language learners' (GLLs) could then be imparted to the less successful ones and this would enable the latter to find their own means to success. In this sense, thirty years ago it was commonly believed that GLLs deployed many LLSs while the less successful ones were 'inactive learners' who did not have 'an appropriate repertoire of learning strategies' (Wenden, 1985, p.7). This fallacy, however, was exposed by some empirical studies (e.g. Porte, 1988; Purpura, 1998; Vann and Abraham, 1990) that compared effective and less effective language learners. According to these studies, the latter used as many LLSs as the more successful language learners, but the main weakness of the under-achieving learners was a result of their lack of *appropriateness* and *flexibility* in using LLSs in the given contexts rather than the *quantity* and variety of the LLSs they use (Chamot, 2008, p.266).

Addressing the empirical studies that examined how less successful learners approached their language learning, both Griffiths (2008) and Rubin (2013) have affirmed that L2 learners need to develop some degree of metacognition to identify their own learning goals and manage effectively their repertoire of LLSs. Metacognition, as Kozulin (2005, p. 2) suggests, represents 'the highest level of mental activity, involving knowledge, awareness, and control of one's lower level cognitive skills, operations and strategies'. In this sense, having metacognitive knowledge is a prerequisite to enhancing learners' autonomy (taking responsibility for their learning) simply because metacognition represents learners' ability to make their thinking visible and this in turn can cause them to have a greater awareness and control of 'how they learn and how they react to successes and setbacks in learning' (Anderson 2012, 170). Examples of metacognitive strategies include selective attention (i.e. paying attention to specific parts of the language input), advance organisation (i.e. planning the learning activity in advance) and self- monitoring

(i.e. checking one's performance as one speaks). To this end, the salience of the integration of strategy training activities into language programmes and to a lesser extent in language learning materials (e.g. Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary and Robbins, 1999; Ellis and Sinclair, 1989; Grenfell and Harris, 1999) has been underpinned since the end of the 1980s (Cohen, 2011; Oxford, 2011).

Language Learning Strategy Instruction: Insights & criticisms

Perez-Cavana (2012, p.151) argues that the construct of 'strategy instruction' has been used interchangeably with other terms such as 'strategy training' and 'learner training'. For the purpose of this paper, Cohen's (2008, p.46) definition of the term 'strategy instruction' is used to signify 'any efforts by teachers, textbooks, or websites' to empower language learners' metacognitive skills which are essential for helping L2 learners plan their learning, monitor their LLS repertoire or even to review both their accomplishments and conscious decisions related to improving their language learning proficiency.

Concerning the types of strategy instruction, Oxford (2011, p.174-175) principally distinguishes between 'direct, teacher-led strategy instruction' and 'strategy-rich L2 textbooks'. The former, which is associated with the view that the teacher directly teaches LLSs to a group of learners in a specific learning setting, dominates the literature on LLS research (ibid.). Griffiths (2013, p.124), for instance, argues that language teachers' attention should be focused not only on conveying linguistic content but also on understanding their learners, and on empowering them to develop autonomous control over their learning. With this in mind, a host of models for teaching LLSs in both first and second language contexts have been developed (e.g. Chamot, 2005; Grenfell and Harris, 1999; Macaro, 2001). These strategy instruction schemes, as Cohen (2011) notes, share many features, in particular the crucial role of language teachers in mediating their learners' metacognitive understanding of the worth of LLSs so that they can deploy them autonomously. Nonetheless, some researchers (e.g. Cohen, 2011; Murphy, 2008; Plonsky, 2011; Rees-Miller, 1993) have questioned the value of 'direct, teacher-led strategy instruction'. Both Murphy (2008) and Plonsky (2011), for instance, have criticised this because it is overly teacher-centred. This argument has been based on the grounds that language teachers in this strategy instruction are responsible for selecting LLSs, modelling them and encouraging their learners to practise and evaluate these LLSs. Related to this, the findings of Nyikos' (1996) study about the nature of learner-centred classrooms affirmed that some teachers themselves were in need of orientation regarding strategy instruction in order to be able to introduce learning materials that would reinforce learners' awareness of LLSs. Addressing this point, Cohen (2011, p.137) contends that the incorporation of strategy instruction into language classrooms should be accompanied by 'in-service L2 teacher development programs', designed to raise teachers' understanding about the applications of LLSs in their classes.

Some other LLS researchers (e.g. Cohen, 2011; Murphy, 2008; Oxford, 2012) have highlighted the need to include explicit coverage of certain LLSs into language textbooks. Cohen (2011, p.137), for instance, points out that using textbooks which have strategy-embedded activities and explicit explanations of the advantages and applications of a variety of LLSs can strengthen learners' autonomy because these learners no longer need 'extracurricular instruction'. Bastanfar (2010), in turn, goes further and argues that textbooks with explicit strategy instruction can be a means of teachers deepening understanding of the applications of LLSs, given that average or beginning learners may need some help from their teachers regarding the value of strategy use and how they can transfer some LLSs to similar tasks. As a result, 'strategy-rich L2 textbooks' can both empower learners' autonomy and creativity and lessen teachers' professional overload.

Attempts to Integrate Strategy Instruction into Language Textbooks

Littlejohn (2008) points out that very little research has been conducted to unearth the viability of embedding LLSs into language textbooks, ascribing this to the lack of communication between researchers in the field of LLS and those working in the field of materials development for language learning and teaching. Addressing the potential of the explicit integration of LLSs into language textbooks, Murphy (2008, pp.316-317), for instance, highly values the *Rundblick Series* (The Open University, 2003), which is designed for English speakers who plan to learn German. This series has included LLSs as a primary feature of the materials since its inception. Although the writers of this series (the Open University Module Team) decided to use English to explain the LLSs, learners need to put the LLSs into practice in target language activities. One of the activities of *Rundblick, Book 1* (ibid, p.117) explains how LLSs were incorporated explicitly in the activities of this textbook to learn and restore new vocabulary items. More precisely, the course writers in that activity introduce a number of LLSs to help learners rehearse the vocabulary that they have learnt in the previous book units such as 'organising vocabulary according to the topic area', 'recording new vocabulary on cards and going through them every week', 'organising their cards according to how well they know the word', 'drawing mind maps' and 'keeping a spoken diary' (ibid, p.117). After that, the learners have to choose

one or more of these LLSs and try them out. In this sense, learners can develop their LLS repertoire while simultaneously learning the target language.

Likewise, Oxford (2011, p.192) presents the *Tapestry series* (Fragiadakis and Maurer, 2000; Oxford, 2005) as an excellent example of language learning textbooks. This series includes explicit strategy instruction and is primarily designed for English learning among adult university learners in North America, Asia and the Middle East. One of the fundamental benefits of using this series, as Oxford (2011) describes, is that it has strategy-embedded activities as well as explicit explanations of the advantages and applications of the different LLSs that they address. In *Tapestry Reading, level 3 (Middle East Edition)* (Oxford, 2005, pp. 66-67), the writer presents a learning activity accompanied by explicit strategy instruction in order to raise the language learners' awareness of the importance of utilising 'visual features in a reading' to identify, repeat or summarise significant information. Firstly, Oxford (ibid., p.67) outlines the different kinds of visual features usually found in language textbooks such as 'photos or illustrations', 'charts, graphs, or tables', 'headings or titles of sections', 'margin notes and important facts', 'guiding questions at the beginning and end of chapters' and 'summaries of key points at the end of sections'. After that, she explains the advantages of using these visual features through stating that these features 'help you remember key points and give you clues about what to study' (ibid., pp. 67-68). At the end, the learners are asked to apply this strategy through working in pairs to discuss where and why the writer uses the visual features in one of the reading texts found in that textbook. This example illustrates how the integration of LLSs into language learning textbooks can play a crucial role in helping language learners manage and deploy effectively their repertoire of strategies. However, Murphy (2008) notes that the task design in most 'strategy-rich L2 textbooks' is to present a specific set of LLSs and to ask learners to practise these. More specifically, this design of language learning tasks 'does not constitute a natural opportunity for the learner to choose and use strategies which they feel are most appropriate for the task in hand or to reflect on their choice' (ibid, pp. 313-314). For this reason, both Gu (1996) and Rees-Miller (1993) contend that devoting class time to overt language work might be more profitable than teaching learners specific LLSs or even incorporating them into language textbooks.

Characteristics of 'Strategy-Rich L2 Textbooks' for Language Learner Autonomy

In response to the above criticisms in relation to incorporating LLSs into language textbooks, in the next part of this paper we offer for consideration three main characteristics of 'strategy-rich L2 textbooks'.

Contextualisation

With the so-called 'social turn' in education (Benson and Cooker, 2013; Block, 2003), some researchers endorsing socially-oriented theoretical perspectives (e.g., Gao, 2010; Parks and Raymond, 2004; Toohey and Norton, 2001) suggest that language learning does not take place in a sociocultural vacuum, but rather it is a social process in which the social, cultural, historical, and political-economic situations to which a language learner belongs need to underpin his/her learning. Thus, learning contexts or 'real-world situations' are 'fundamental, not ancillary, to learners' (Zuengler and Miller, 2006, p.37). With this in mind, both McKay (2012) and Tomlinson (2011) underline the significance of designing or developing L2 textbooks locally, and that this should be done by a group of course writers who are cognisant of the social, political, and cultural conditions of the situated learning context, and the language difficulties that are often encountered by the learners in that learning context. In this sense, using language textbooks that are rich in strategy instruction and developed by local textbook writers can both reinforce learners' metacognitive capabilities of their language learning and create the sense that the LLSs integrated into textbooks are relevant to learners' preferred learning styles.

Explicitness

In one empirical study, Brown and Palincsar (1982) differentiated three kinds of instruction, which they termed 'blind', 'informed', and 'controlled'. In the blind mode, learners were given a learning task without any explanation of how to complete it; in the informed mode, learners were presented with a strategy, its name, and why it was useful; and in the controlled mode, learners were not only informed about the name of the strategy and why it was useful but also when it may not be useful. One of the findings of this study was that informed learners surpassed blind learners, and controlled learners did best, illustrating the value of explicit strategy instruction. This study suggests that it is fundamental to give explicit descriptions of the common applications of the LLSs presented in the tasks of L2 textbooks. As Cohen (2011, p.150) explains 'the more explicit the strategy instruction is, the more likely the strategy tips will be retained and transferred to new L2 learning and use situations'.

Choice

An essential factor in motivating language learners and expanding their capability to self-manage is

giving learners chances to decide which LLSs to use and to suggest the LLSs that reflect their own past language learning experiences and address their language learning goals and needs. By doing this, 'strategy-rich L2 textbooks' can develop learners' metacognitive mechanisms and foster self-directed learning, underlying their sociocultural backgrounds.

Conclusion

At present, there appears to be little in the literature on materials development that addresses the effect of introducing strategy instruction into language learning textbooks (Murphy, 2008). As discussed in the section above on attempts to do so, this might be partially ascribed to the lack of dialogue between researchers working in the field of materials design and evaluation and that of LLS. Therefore, we have stressed in this paper the importance of incorporating explicit strategy instruction into these textbooks as well as giving a language learner multiple chances to choose the LLSs tailored to their language learning goals. By doing this, language learners' meta-awareness and autonomy can be fostered. This is a gap which we would hope to see filled in the near future.

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FOLIO 16/1

Developing Materials for the 21st Century

Steven Graham

Introduction

It is the duty and responsibility of lecturers to keep up to date with all the latest innovations and technology that is available and apply this new knowledge to existing courses and classroom pedagogy. This paper details the background to the revision of the English for Communication in Multicultural Societies course, delivered at Khon Kaen University (KKU) in Thailand by Khon Kaen University International College (KKUIC) and focuses on the mis-match between expected coursebook requirements from the Institute of Learning and Teaching Innovation (ILTI) at KKU and the needs as dictated by institutional guidelines and international expectations.

This paper concerns an application for a grant offered by the Institute of Learning and Teaching Innovation (ILTI) at KKU to publish a textbook for the ECMS course. The grant on offer was for approximately £1,000 and there were 40 scholarships available. By using the existing curriculum and course design procedures, it is possible to detail a 'difference in expectations' between what is supposed by an organization that distributes grants for the production of textbooks and what is expected from a course that is delivered to international programs in a world-recognized university. Specific comments put forward by the awarding body are addressed with a view to advancing the cause of the 21st century materials writer in order to deliver quality materials fit for the contemporary international student. Finally, implications for the classroom and areas for future research are discussed.

Background

Thailand's education system has been experiencing problems for a number of years (Foley, 2005). Government legislation by the Office of the National Education Commission (1999) to promote a more learner-centred teaching approach has not been implemented across the country resulting in teacher-centred approaches to teaching such as rote memorisation still being practised in Thailand's classrooms today. As a consequence, classes are still large, teachers are ill-prepared and (of considerable importance to this investigation), materials and equipment are not of the required standard (Baker, 2008).

This has resulted in Thailand appearing near the bottom of recent international performance tables where English language is concerned (*English First*, 2012) and also when cognitive ability is considered (*Economist Intelligence Unit*, 2012).

Tomlinson (2012) in his state of the art article reviewed the field of materials development and concluded that teachers are more willing and able to localise their materials today as they become more critical of commercial publications and more confident in their own skills as material developers. A project described by Colebrook (1996) explained how monocultural textbooks designed for the international market failed to appreciate that the materials were to be used in diverse educational surroundings. In recent years there has been more movement towards the localisation of materials due to the fact that globalised coursebooks are often perceived as being designed for everyone, yet satisfying no one (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2004). In an effort to solve this problem, the idea of having source-books rather than coursebooks has been put forward by Timmis, Mukundan and Alkhaldi (2009) who suggest discarding the common collocation of 'doing the coursebook.'

But what of the students and teachers? What role do students play in all of this? Richards (2001) asks us whether our students will manage their own learning, be independent learners, needs analysts, team members or peer tutors? This paper will look at this question in detail. In addition, when teachers design courses and the associated materials, they must consider potential problem areas by asking 'What do I see as the challenges of my situation?' and 'What resources are needed and are available to address the challenges?' (Graves, 1996, pp. 5-6). Graves states that it is the teachers' experience and the available resources that need to be the focus. Teachers do not recognise the importance of their experience in these situations, and, the author of this paper suggests, neither do the institutions they work for. Morris (1994) cited in Richards (2001), states that problems arise when an institution focuses more on administrative matters, when it will find itself less inclined to want to implement change from the expected norms.

Khon Kaen University (KKU), located in the north-east of Thailand is one of the country's leading universities

and one of only a select few with a world ranking. Competition is high between these leading universities and the impetuous to advance the cause of education and improve standards is incessant. As part of the ongoing review of existing courses and an element of the Khon Kaen University International College (KKUIC) internal validation and assessment procedure, research is under way to look at the learning preferences and classroom anxiety experienced by learners from four faculties who undertake the English for Communication in Multicultural Societies (ECMS) course. The existing course which was initially designed as a task-based communicative course with an eclectic approach to language teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 2001), has been adapted to have a more Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) context in line with ASEAN integration and the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015.

Making the connection between research and materials development does not, however, ensure success (Richards 2006) as this does not always take into account the limitations of particular situations, and that designing effective teaching materials has to meet the objectives and standards of the institution. This is similar to the planning and teaching of lessons, in that there must be clear aims (Munoz, 2007). As a consequence, when rethinking the design of the ECMS course, an aesthetic approach (Maley, 2009) was taken, with materials such as art, music and student-made inputs (Maley, 2010) being a welcome addition to the language functions already the mainstay of the course.

However, this blueprint for the ECMS course was not supported by the ILTI who did not award a textbook-writing grant. It is important to state at this time that their decision has been respected at all times and that there is no move to contest the awarding of any grants. There is no intention to make the implication that the writing of coursebooks and the issuing of grants was for the sole purpose of enhancing the reputation of the university (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). The objective of this paper is to look at the reasons why the grant was rejected and counter with claims that textbook requirements for courses vary depending on the aims, objectives, enabling objectives and type of course that is being offered.

This investigation questions whether a coursebook for the ECMS course has to supply all the information and resources that students need in order to achieve the desired objectives in line with comments from ILTI. In addition, this research questions whether there is a requirement to structure a coursebook in a way that integrates language and knowledge of cross-cultural communication in every chapter, as laid down by ILTI. Clear principles were established when the ECMS course was designed and those principles had to be related to the use of the language being taught (Yalden, 1987). This paper discusses whether there is a new role for the coursebook which will allow for more creativity and inspiration (Cunningsworth, 1995), which takes a more humanistic approach to language learning by helping students to have the right attitude and to be motivated to expand their horizons and interests in the proposed subject matter (Nunan, 1991).

Investigating ILTI rejection of proposed coursebook

This investigation involves the analysis of recommendations from the reviewers making up the ILTI panel who gave the reasons why the scholarship had been rejected. The analysis entails comparisons between the Thailand Qualifications Framework (TQF) Form 3 for higher education pertinent to the ECMS course, the application form itself, and relevant literature from the academic community in order to justify why the development of soft skills, namely investigative skills and a culture of inquiry as well as group work, presentation and demonstration skills can be a viable substitute for a coursebook that provides all the content needed, laid out in a systematic and logical manner, and requiring no supplementary materials. Whilst there is a need for coursebooks that contain all the course material needed, this author believes that there is also a requirement for coursebooks that involve students investigating for themselves, in order to build a culture of inquiry.

Proposed coursebook brief

The grant application laid out the following scenario detailing the background as to why there was a need for a new coursebook.

Khon Kaen University International College (KKUIC) provides English language instruction for faculties outside KKUIC as well as for its own students. English for Communication in Multicultural Societies is predominantly a listening/speaking course which has undergone revision based on faculty research. The revised course requires a type of coursebook which is not available in the marketplace.

The course was designed for probationary students at KKUIC and for the requirements of outside faculties that require courses towards their international programs. The aim of the course is to develop the communication skills needed to use English in multicultural societies, so that by the end of the course, students will be able to demonstrate that they have the English communicative skills to socialise, give presentations, and attend seminars, meetings and social gatherings in conjunction with the use of electronic communications.

Following research into how the course could be adapted to have a more ASEAN context, the proposed coursebook would give students the opportunity to research the ASEAN member states and make comparisons and contrasts with Thailand in relation to culture, language and would promote better

understanding of their ASEAN neighbours.

Outline of proposed coursebook

Students are to successfully demonstrate their understanding and use of English communication skills in order to:

- Focus attention.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce speakers.
- Greet people.
- Introduce topics.
- Present.
- Use figures and tables.
- Deal with questions.
- Close a presentation.
- Talk about current events.
- Express thanks and make apologies.
- Make arrangements.
- Request and offer assistance.
- Telephone.
- Use social networking sites and email.

The coursebook contents were listed as follows:

Chapter 1 - Presentations

Layout – Example of the structure required for presentations.

Language Checklist – Checklists of language required for the introduction, main body and conclusion of a presentation.

Skills Checklist – Checklists of skills required to plan and prepare for a presentation and deliver the main body and conclusion.

Chapter 2 - Announcements

The language required to prepare announcements for a variety of settings.

Chapter 3 - Play and Demonstration Planner

How to plan for role-play activities.

Chapter 4 - Social networks

Use of social networks to compare cultures and languages with other countries.

Chapter 5 – Email

Use of email to provide feedback to classmates on their work.

Chapter 6 - Functions

Use of English language functions to demonstrate understanding through role-play. The following appear in the application:

1. Hello and Goodbye
2. Talk About Yourself
3. Keeping Conversation Going
4. Checking Meaning
5. Finding Your Way and Giving Directions
6. Understanding Signs and Notices
7. Describing Likes and Dislikes
8. At the Tourist Office
9. At the Post Office and the Bank
10. At the Restaurant and Hotel
11. Using Public Transport
12. Telephoning
13. Shopping
14. Instructions and Processes
15. Agreeing and Disagreeing
16. Thanking and Apologising
17. Asking Permission
18. Suggesting
19. Interrupting and Changing the Topic
20. Inviting, Refusing and Accepting
21. Giving Advice and Warnings
22. Complaining
23. Emails and Notes
24. Filling in Forms
25. Sentence Building

Comments from ILTI

The comments from ILTI consisted of two paragraphs:

'More resources on intercultural communications/cross cultural communication/multicultural communication and cultures of the ASEAN countries should be added.'

The theme and the objectives of the book are clear. However, the structure and the content of the book do not reflect them. Each chapter should integrate language skills and knowledge of cross-cultural communication in order to help students communicate successfully in cross-cultural settings. Each chapter should be connected to each other and follow the same structure.'

TQF Form 3 for English for Communication in Multicultural Societies

The details of the Learning Skills Development section of the TQF form 3 for the ECMS course, as written by this author, is broken down into five sections. All sections employ the development of the four skills through discussions, group-work, exercises from coursebooks and presentations by the lecturer and students. There is also continuous evaluation in addition to midterm and final examinations.

The first section is the development of ethics and morals

where 'students will demonstrate their discipline, honesty and responsibility by handing assignments in on time, resisting plagiarism, regularly attending classes at specified times and adhering to agreed classroom etiquette, whilst developing their four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking)'.

In addition, 'students will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the principles and theories of the academic disciplines of this university, whilst applying their newly acquired skills to real life situations'.

Furthermore, 'students will demonstrate their ability to think critically, research, interpret and evaluate information in their quest for knowledge in order to creatively solve academic problems'.

Moreover, 'students will demonstrate their ability to work with others and their capacity for leadership by using their initiative in diagnosing problems, whilst at the same time being aware of the social and cultural diversity of their peers'.

Finally, 'students will demonstrate that they can successfully collect and evaluate data and present academic information with the use of computers and other electronic communication technology in a self directed learning environment'.

Justification for a different style of coursebook

Excerpts from the grant application, comments from ILTI and the TQF form 3 have been presented in order to help illustrate how there is a disparity in expectations between the author, the educational institution and the awarding body. It is important to note at this time that it has been presumed that ILTI did not have access to the TQF form 3 when it was making their decision as part of the allocation of grants process; however, the information presented to ILTI contained in the grant application form came predominantly from the TQF form 3.

The comments from ILTI clearly indicate that there was a requirement by them for more resources to be added on the subjects of intercultural communications/cross cultural communication/multicultural communication and cultures of the ASEAN countries. However, the author takes the view that we should adhere to the TQF 3 form, in that students are to demonstrate their knowledge and their ability to think critically, research, interpret and evaluate information in their quest for knowledge in order to creatively solve academic problems. The proposed coursebook contains samples of this, with students asked to perform role-plays using a play and demonstration planner designed to assist them with their planning and preparation by outlining the structure needed.

Rather than present content to students in a coursebook, the intention of the proposed coursebook is to allow students to research one country in groups during the 16-week semester and inform the rest of the class on what they were able to uncover. The LLTI comments concerning the structure and content show a lack of understanding of the innovative nature of the course which allows the students to provide some of the content themselves and inform the rest of the class through demonstrations and presentations. Further soft skill development is advanced under the interpersonal skills and responsibility sections of the TQF form 3.

The presentation aspect of the course runs concurrently with the demonstrations and involves individual students, one presenting each ASEAN country (with the exception of Thailand) presenting three aspects of culture and/or language of the country and comparing their findings to that of Thailand. The comparison is an important phase of the learning process as students are able to relate to it by the use of comparison and contrast (Cunningsworth, 1995). This comparison and contrast is exhibited when it appears as part of the demonstrations to accompany the language functions being shown during the weekly coursework. When the examinations are undertaken (midterm and at end of semester), the students have covered all the content at least once during the semester. This content is what they have researched and presented to the class in previous weeks, amended after peer feedback and feedback by the teacher.

When referring to the TQF form 3 for this course, the reader can appreciate that the focus is on the development of the four skills through the use of group work, discussions, presentations and exercises from the coursebook. The exercises are examples of language functions and the students are encouraged to experiment in the classroom, so that they are proficient when it comes to taking the examinations.

In this section of the paper, it has been demonstrated that there is a need for a coursebook that will allow students the freedom to research the language functions they are given, the languages and cultures of the countries they have been assigned, as well as their own language and culture to integrate their research findings in a way that they can explain in English to the other groups in the class as part of the continual assessment process. It is important to stress the underlying premise that the process of learning a language is not systematic as implied by the ILTI recommendations for content and language integration in each chapter of the coursebook. Language is learned by systematising knowledge and it is up to the learners to create their own system. An external system may be helpful, but there is no guarantee that it will work (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). The following section discusses whether there is a need to supply all content in a coursebook or whether it is possible to provide a structure that allows students to integrate language and cross-cultural information by themselves.

Rationale for proposed course-book

The previous section has outlined the grant application, the ILTI comments and the TQF form 3 with regard to the justification for the proposed English for Communication in Multicultural Societies coursebook at KKUIC.

As argued previously in this paper, there are many advantages to writing localised materials (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2004), including the freedom from the usual restrictions that are put on commercial publishers. Arguably, the most important advantage is the ability to direct the correct materials to the target audience. As Graves (1996) argues, teachers possess the experience to do this and should use this to produce appropriate materials for each course in conjunction with the curriculum requirements. In reply to the questions posed by Graves in the introduction to this paper, the author believes that the teachers of the course are best placed to ask and answer those questions and then act on their judgement.

By teachers allowing their learners to, in effect choose their own materials (under the facilitation of the teacher), it is possible to ensure that the social and cultural contexts of the language functions being demonstrated and presented are recognisable to the students (Cunningsworth, 1995) and are put in context in terms of their own surroundings and that of other ASEAN countries.

Questions were asked by Richards (2001) in the introduction to this paper as to the role that students are expected to play. This author suggests that students can play all the roles suggested, such as manager of their own learning, independent learner, needs analyst, team member and peer tutor. To what degree depends on the imagination of the teacher and the institution which allows the teacher the freedom to facilitate classes within the boundaries of the existing curriculum.

In the proposed new coursebook, students are encouraged to use the language functions as an 'ideas bank' in line with a suggestion by Cunningsworth (1995), in addition to investigating the culture and languages of their assigned ASEAN countries. This would hopefully stimulate creativity within students and inspire them to perform to their best. At the same time, by allowing students to use language in the cultural contexts that they have chosen through their own research, there is no danger of language being divorced from the situations and reasons that it was intended for (Nunan, 1991).

There is considerable discussion amongst those in the teaching profession as to whether authentic materials are superior to created materials. With the advent of accessible technology, authentic materials are more readily available, especially materials that are researchable online. The student assessments on the ECMS courses that have run so far suggest that the students are truly motivated by the way the course allows them the opportunity to express their ideas using the information that they have researched as part of a team and also as individuals.

Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) four-part materials design model consisting of *input, content focus, language focus* and *task*, constitutes the thinking behind part of the development of the ECMS course. It is the task that best describes the ECMS course in this case, as the task is the main focus for the students, with the language and content being taken from the input and being chosen by the students depending on what they need to do as part of their task. The course is designed for the students to research the input required for the task (namely the culture and the language of the country they are studying) and marry this to the language functions provided, and not to provide all of the input in the form of a coursebook. Materials for the 21st century should be designed to build a culture of inquiry and a robust soft skills set, rather than provide everything for students 'on a plate'.

In 'scripting role-plays: a holistic view of sociocultural content', Dubin and Olshtain (1986) note that role-plays are often used without a clear objective in mind, with the thinking that students will acquire the language and associated cultural norms by acting out the role of somebody else. The ECMS course is clearly structured and emphasises the important part that the teacher plays as a facilitator of the learning process, in that students will make mistakes and use language inappropriately during the learning process and that this is what is to be expected. This feedback is an integral part of the course and teachers have plenty of opportunity during the 16-week semester to give their responses to students on their presentations and demonstrations, allowing students to test and adjust their language use in a variety of contexts of their choosing. The teacher aims to highlight the difference between what is acceptable and what is not, so that when the students are assessed as part of the midterm and final examination process, they produce the most appropriate language for each situation taking into account the cultural sensitivities of the ASEAN countries they have been studying.

Students have preconceived ideas and expectations as to the content of a course, but to what extent depends on such factors as their previous educational experience, their age and the type of second language program (Yalden, 1987). The ECMS course has been specifically designed to take all of these elements into consideration. The selection of content by the students, in addition to the provided language functions, is factored in during the development process to allow

for the cultivation of soft skills such as investigation skills, teamwork, critical thinking and problem-solving in line with the TQF form 3 requirements.

Implications for materials development

On reflection, the research conducted on the ECMS course and the resulting plans to write a coursebook shows how teachers can explore their classrooms and collaborate in order to do the best for their students. This form of exploratory teaching (Allwright and Bailey, 1991) and research is not utopian as long as it is possible for teachers to collaborate (as on this ECMS course, which was conducted by three teachers), not just on classroom activities, but also with institutions, researchers and most importantly, the learners, to produce the most appropriate materials for them.

When looking at teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), Richards and Rodgers (2001) suggest that a more eclectic approach is needed, one that gives teachers the opportunity to reflect and compare. This allows teachers the opportunity to appreciate related issues and controversies, as well as to understand how theory and practice can be related and how this can help generate productive activities and resources.

Future research should look into the cross-disciplinary context of the teaching of languages and culture as well as the cognitive aspects of how students can best learn languages and culture together. The ECMS course is cross-disciplinary in nature and could be considered a form of Content and Language Integrated learning (CLIL), in that although it is an English language course, taught in English, there is a substantial amount of social studies material involved, as the course covers the culture and language of the ASEAN countries. This content gives rise to three major dimensions of cognitive demands in that students will need to be able to incorporate new ideas and knowledge into specific areas of the existing curriculum. In addition, students will have to be able to use all the new linguistic resources at their disposal and understand how they are to be used in a variety of settings. Furthermore, they must demonstrate their ability to research and investigate in different settings depending on the context of the task at hand (Richards and Hurley, 1990).

Guerrettaz and Johnston (2013) review the literature regarding the design, development and evaluation of materials and conclude that there is no single universal criterion for second language materials that allows them to be appropriate in all educational circumstances. By developing their own materials, teachers ensure a better match between materials and needs as well as broadening the creativity of the tasks and activities at their disposal (Parcon, 1995). If we also allow the students to contribute their content within the confines of the curriculum, we ensure that their needs are being addressed and that they are motivated at the same time.

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FOLIO 16/1

The ACA Model for Authentic Linguistic Interaction: Innovating materials and practice in teaching modern foreign languages in higher education

Elinor Parks

Introduction

This article reviews some of the issues in the current practice of the teaching of modern foreign languages (MFL) in Higher Education (HE) in Britain. It proposes an innovative model for classroom practice aiming to extend the connections between the target language (TL) community and classroom teaching; the model aims to increase intrinsic student motivation and transform the classroom environment into an opportunity for learners to experience authentic linguistic interaction. Among other recommendations for innovative language teaching, such as effective implementation of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), the article proposes a new way to approach speaking, namely through an ACA (Authentic Communication Activity) model. The model aims to increase the enjoyment of the learning experience, by enabling students to experience an authentic communication exchange with the TL community directly from the classroom. The article considers the role of authentic linguistic interaction in increasing motivation and evaluates how it may contribute to greater fluency and arguably a more positive self-image as a language learner.

Current issues in Modern Language Teaching in HE

In Anglophone countries, falling numbers of students studying languages have become a major preoccupation for language educators (Doughty, 2011). In the U.K. the decline in uptake remains a concern at secondary level but is most pronounced in HE (Gallagher-Brett and Broady, 2012). Among other concerns identified in the literature, of particular relevance here is the link between opportunities to experience linguistic interaction in the TL and students' intrinsic motivation for Modern Language study in HE. Maintaining a high level of linguistic interaction however, is not something which can be easily achieved in HE due to the way the curriculum is structured. Modern Languages as a discipline is 'complicated by its dual nature [...] it is in some ways like any other humanities or social science subject, but it also has at its core the development of linguistic proficiency' (Klapper, 2006, p.1). This 'dual nature' has serious implications for the amount of time students are exposed to linguistic input in the L2. Busse and Walter (2013) note; 'it is common practice in the UK and in many universities in continental Europe, [that] the first language (in this case, English) is the language of instruction for literature classes and for classes on the linguistic aspects of the second language' (Busse and Walter, 2013, p. 439). In a study they conducted at two major UK universities they found that 'students at both universities receive three hours of German language instruction per week' (ibid.). One of the students interviewed by the researchers commented in this respect that 'It's odd because the focus of [tutorials] is on the literature side and the analysis and it's almost like sometimes the important side of learning a language is given a backseat' (Busse and Walter, 2013, p.451). The study found that although students' desire to become proficient in the language increased over their first year of study at university, ironically their effort decreased; they believed they were not making adequate progress due to the little opportunity they were given to practise linguistic interaction and this had a negative effect on their motivation (Busse and Walter, 2013, p.435). One student, with reference to the teaching of language, commented as follows: 'German language-wise [sic] for me was taught much better when I was at school. [...] My motivation for German back then was much greater than it is now, because we were speaking it all the time [...] and so you thought you were making progress' (2013, p.445). Another student interviewed by the researcher resorted to joining a German club, which gave him the opportunity to communicate with native speakers in an authentic context. He described the experience as follows: 'it's encouraging when you're talking to them [native speakers] and you're actually managing to talk about diverse things and you're getting it right. It gives you the confidence again to speak in class' (Busse and Walter, 2013, p.449).

In a similar context, in a study conducted in Tunisia with university students studying English as a foreign language, Mason (2010) found that 'one of the often expressed 'wants' of students is to have contact with "native speakers" and real interaction with the "target culture" (2010, p. 207). These student voices highlight the opportunity to engage in linguistic interactions, preferably with native speakers, as a powerful motivator. In this context, it is interesting to review the current approaches and methodologies in

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) to identify how to best develop such opportunities for Modern Language students in HE.

Theoretical framework

Reflection on Approaches in Language Teaching Materials and Practice

Communicative approaches to the teaching of foreign languages (CLT) have fostered the development of modern teaching methods and are now at the basis of most curricula and foreign language textbooks. The adoption of a communicative approach to language teaching has greatly affected the way languages are taught both in school contexts and in HE. CLT however is not a uniform approach, Howatt (1984) distinguishes a 'weak' and a 'strong' version (Ellis, 2003, p.28). A weak version does not advocate a complete shift away from more traditional approaches whereas the stronger version claims that 'language is acquired through communication' (Howatt, 1984, p.279 in Ellis, 2003, p.28). Within this approach we find two methodologies, Task Based Language Teaching (based on the strong version of CLT) and another known as Task-supported Language Learning (based on the weak version). With regard to models of classroom procedure, under the methodology of Task-supported language learning we find the P-P-P model (present-practice-produce) (Ellis, 2003, pp.28-29). With regards to TBLT models of classroom procedure, there are a variety of innovative models that have been proposed in recent years.

The implementation of Task-supported LL through PPP and TBLT

There is considerable scholarship critiquing the P-P-P model as an application of communicative language teaching. Skehan suggested that 'the belief that a precise focus on a particular form leads to learning and automatisation (that learners will learn what is taught in the order in which it is taught) no longer carries much credibility in linguistics or psychology' (1996, p. 18). CLT, since its origins, has influenced methodologies and materials in a variety of language learning contexts. Within this approach, TBLT has gained popularity and is now a commonly implemented methodology both in teaching practice and materials development.

TBLT constitutes a different application of CLT, namely that 'problem-solving properties in a task are the driving force behind the learning of a new language' (Macaro, 2003, p. 40). TBLT tasks usually consist of three steps: a. pre-task b. during-task c. post-task (Willis, 1996). While TBL *does* seem to constitute a better methodology, the question remains 'how well does it facilitate acquisition?'; arguably one of the problems with TBLT is inherent in the models of classroom procedure it uses. Cook argues that the kind of communications that tasks elicit is worthless and inherently limited as it emphasizes the rational and transactional without opportunities for the imaginative and playful (2000). He suggests that it is limiting in two respects:

1) It does not reflect how people use language authentically – for everyday language use is full of language play.

2) It is demotivating.

(ibid.)

Many textbooks seem to focus on transactional language such as ordering food, telling the time, making a reservation, purchasing a train ticket, among others. As Cook points out, these are the kinds of tasks that students often find demotivating as they do not challenge them intellectually nor do they allow for language play (unless they are considerably modified). As TBLT consists of tasks, the methodology itself does not dictate the kind of communication that is elicited, therefore TBLT allows a variety of different models of classroom procedure.

Addressing the issues – innovative ideas

Addressing proficiency, enjoyment and FLA

There are various factors involved in effective language learning, even with regards to motivation. Some incentives are 'extrinsic' motivation, such as employability or collecting university credits, however of particular interest here is student enjoyment of the learning experience as an intrinsic motivator towards language learning. Krashen (1981) noted that in second language acquisition affective factors including *anxiety* may impede the *absorption of target language*; additionally it can be argued that enjoyment is effective in reducing this anxiety and can therefore facilitate language acquisition. Krashen further emphasizes that 'a necessary condition for successful L2 acquisition is a "lowered affective filter" on the part of the learner' (Krashen, 1982, p.x). Some recent studies on motivating factors would also seem to indicate that interacting with native speakers in an informal setting has substantial benefits on the students' motivation to speak the language and can contribute towards building confidence.

Authentic interactions with native speakers and learner motivation

In his study *Using ethnography to develop intercultural competence*, Mason (2010) found that when Tunisian

students of English were exposed to an opportunity to interact with British students on a discussion about the North-South cultural difference in the UK, they particularly enjoyed this task and one commented that 'learning and hearing from British people is not the same as talking and communicating with them' (Mason, 2010, p.211).

Considering the application of ethnography in other contexts, Mason furthermore notes that 'as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has developed across Europe [...] language learning is often more effective when it is built around *real-life tasks*, rather than being an end in itself' (2010, p.216).

Authentic Communication Activities (ACA)

Authentic Communication Activities constitute a new idea / model of classroom procedure for lesson activities based on some of the principles of TBLT but with a much stronger emphasis on authentic materials and authentic interaction.

A *strong* application of Authentic Communication Activities would involve an actual authentic interaction between *L2 learners and TL speakers / community*, whereas a *weak* version would involve the use of authentic materials to prompt an *authentic interaction between L2 learners* in a realistic scenario with the aim to incorporate both the 'imaginative' and the 'playful'.

ACA activities could be incorporated in materials as well as prompt the use of interfaces such as Web 2.0 to facilitate students' achievement of an authentic linguistic exchange with the TL community.

The proposed implementation of the ACA model could follow a cyclic structure such as the one displayed in *Figure 1* below.

Following are examples for the implementation of both the *strong* and *weak* version of an ACA model activity. A strong activity would incorporate all five stages as outlined in *Figure 1*. Let us take for example a similar topic to the one selected by Mason (2010), the North-South divide in Italy. This being a controversial topic, would elicit strong opinions from native speakers, which could then be carried through to the later stages when students discuss the responses they had from native speakers. In this particular example, the activity would be outlined as follows:

STAGE 1: (L2-L2 interaction) Students would be primed for the activity through the reading of a text / viewing of an excerpt on the cultural differences between Northern and Southern Italy. This would follow with a discussion task eliciting students' own views on the topic. The tutor would then explain how stage 2 will take place.

STAGE 2: (L2-TL interaction) There are two ways in which this can take place: virtually or face-to-face. In a virtual interaction, students might be set up into small groups on a particular workstation where they could conduct the interview task with native speakers over Skype or other video-conferencing application. If this is taking place face-to-face, a group of native-speaker students could be brought into the classroom and the students could then be set up into groups to interview them.

STAGE 3: (L2-L2 interaction) This stage would take place as a discussion activity on the responses students received from native speakers. It would basically

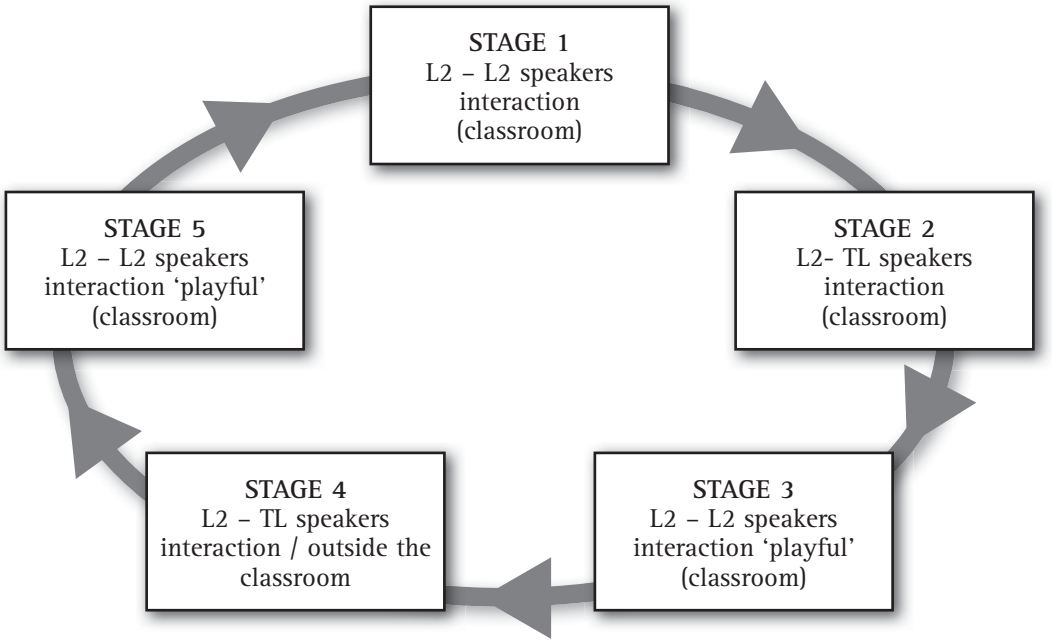

Figure 1

require students to feedback the interview responses to the class while allowing them the opportunity to comment on the answers received.

STAGE 4: This stage consists of extending the students' learning beyond the classroom and engaging with native speakers in a more natural / less structured way. Students could engage with the TL community in a language club or alternatively virtually, through social networking sites such as Facebook. The discussion would focus on the different views that Italians may have on the North-South divide.

STAGE 5: This would be a final opportunity for students to discuss the views they managed to collect in stage 4. This discussion could be structured in the form of a debate or the creating of posters that could then be presented to the class in the target language.

The main difference in a weak implementation is that stage 2 would be replaced with a social networking activity to mimic an authentic interaction instead of providing students with access to native speakers directly from the classroom. This may be a better option where access to technology and to native speakers is difficult to arrange in a classroom setting.

One of the important aspects in this kind of activity is that it offers students opportunities for the 'playful' and 'imaginative' as well as an authentic linguistic interaction. It furthermore exposes students to both formal and informal contexts (in which arguably anxiety should be lower and affect higher) to ensure students build skills in intercultural competence. ACA activities extend beyond the 'transactional' applications of TBLT and offer students the ability to play with words creatively to relate opinions, design questions, predict responses, describe experiences and place themselves in scenarios that are culturally different.

Conclusion

Although the arguments presented here are not exclusive, the current situation of languages in HE in Britain, particularly the traditional MFL degree, is quite concerning. Many textbooks, particularly those designed for A1-B2 Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) levels, still reflect a very traditional approach towards language teaching, which does not address some issues presented here such as decreased motivation, not enough interaction with native-speakers, proficiency, authenticity and application of communicative teaching methods, all areas which arguably could benefit from more research particularly in an MFL context. All the above-mentioned points are linked to the student experience and revisiting these should have as its primary objective providing an enjoyable learning experience.

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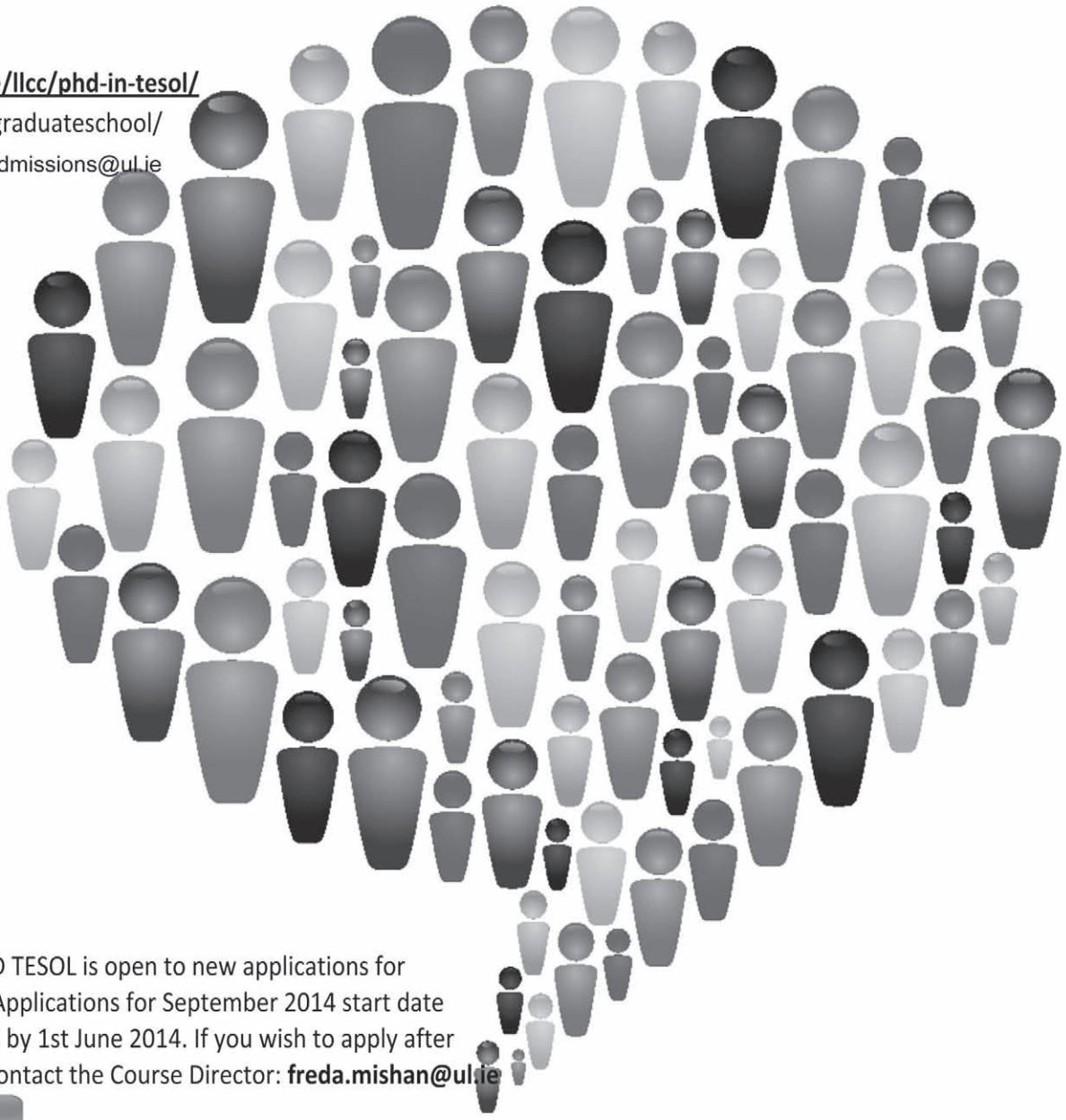

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40 years of Innovation 1972 - 2012

Taking a Chance on Chance

Alan Maley

The context for this brief article is the prevailing educational ethos which many teachers have to work under. This is characterised by 'its emphasis on objectives, detailed curricular prescription, predictable outcomes, testing and assessment, bureaucratic control, and the rest' (Maley, 2009, p.4).

'Such an image of education requires that schools be organised to prescribe, control, and predict the consequences of their actions, that those consequences be immediate and empirically manifest and that they be measurable' (Eisner, 1985, pp. 356-7).

I will not enlarge on this here as I have already referred to it in detail in earlier numbers of *Folio* (Maley 2009, 2010). Furthermore, there is an abundant literature on the subject in the area of general education in the work of Eisner (1985, 2002), Lutzker (2007), Palmer (1998), Postman and Weingartner (1976), and many others.

One of the prevailing myths is that teaching and learning are like two sides of the same coin: what is taught is expected to be what is learned. The whole system of objectives, curricular prescription and testing is predicated on this myth. But as Prabhu, among others, has pointed out, 'Teaching is at most hoping for the best' (Prabhu, 2006, unpublished). This element of unpredictability extends beyond what is or is not learned, to the moment by moment unfolding of action within the classroom (Underhill and Maley, 2012). In spite of this, we continue to prepare teachers as if the process were predictable, rather than helping them to be in a state of preparedness for the unexpected. Small wonder then, that many novice teachers feel helpless when they face the reality of the classroom encounter.

Materials are also affected by the myth. They are largely algorithmic, with outcomes which are predictable and where little space is left for the unexpected. My focus in this article therefore is to suggest one small way in which we can undermine the myth of predictability, namely by embracing the randomness principle.

Some criteria for effective materials

Before I go into detail, however, it may be useful if I set out some of my key criteria for effective materials. They are congruent with, though not identical to the much more detailed listing given by Tomlinson (2011, pp.6-23).

- Intrinsic interest. There is no point in presenting learners with texts or other inputs which do not interest them.
- Engagement leading to 'Flow' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; 1996) Ideally, the activity has to fully engage the learners, so that they lose themselves in total absorption.
- Depth of cognitive and affective processing. This engagement has to be affective as well as cognitive, and it has to involve deep processing (Craik and Lockhart, 1971).
- Flexibility/ adaptability. The inputs and activities should be adaptable for different levels, and should be 'loose' enough to encourage teachers to develop alternative ideas.
- Open-endedness. Questions are more interesting then answers, and multiple answers are more productive than single right answers.
- Non-triviality. The trivial content of many materials is mind-shrivelling – bland topics and texts, and mechanical activities are a formula for switch-off, as Wajnryb pointed out long ago (Wajnryb,1996).
- Relevance: personal / learning. The learners have to be able to perceive the relevance of what they are asked to do – both in terms of learning pay-off and personal relevance.
- Economy / elegance (less=more). Simple ideas usually work best, as I hope to show in the examples below.

The Randomness Principle

The three sample activities below all exemplify the randomness principle. Basically, this entails inputs which are randomly generated, and which have no necessary connection. The activity invites learners to find connections. This kind of process was among those used by the Surrealist artists and writers in the 20th century. It capitalises on the natural tendency of the human brain to make connections and identify patterns - even when they are not objectively there. It is part of the larger category of improvisational techniques we so signally fail to impart to our trainee teachers (Nachmanovitch, 1990).

Activity 1. Strange partners

Procedure

1. Students work in pairs, 'A' and 'B'. Tell all the A's to write a vertical list of 12 adjectives on their paper, without showing the list to their partners. At the same time, all the B's write a list of 12 nouns, also without showing the list to their partners. They then place their two lists side-by-side. For example:

LIST A	LIST B
cheap	*leaf*
fast	*tree*
leather	*house*
fragile	*cat*
open	*wife*
broken	*job*
wet	*bank*
frozen	*book*
windy	*bed*
dusty	*film*
tasty	*song*
painful	*handbag*

2. Tell students to combine the words on their lists and to write the phrases down on a separate sheet of paper. For example: 'a cheap leaf', 'a fast tree', 'a leather house' and so on.

3. After ten minutes of discussion, ask them to construct some kind of a narrative thread or story line to connect at least some of the pairs. They may add words to connect sentences or phrases at this point. If they prefer, they can write a poem instead.

Variations

Tell students to work in pairs. One student writes a list of ten abstract nouns (Examples: *laughter, anger, disappointment*), while the other writes a list of concrete nouns (Examples: *the rain, the sky*). They then place their lists side-by-side and combine the words in the lists using the word 'of'. For example:

Laughter of the sky
Disappointment of the rain
Anger of the leaf

Next, ask them to combine their sentences to form a poem by arranging them in a coherent way.

Comment

The random principle operates quite powerfully to bring together unlikely combinations of words. Strangely, however, the very peculiarity of the new combinations makes them highly memorable, and sparks new images and ideas.

Activity 2. Metaphor poems

Procedure

1. Make copies of this list of words and phrases for use during the class:

Love	an egg
Hate	a tooth brush
Disappointment	a vacuum cleaner
Marriage	a spoon
Friendship	a knife
Hope	a mirror
Life	a window
Work	a cup
Time	a banana
Conflict	a brush

2. Hand out the sheets. Tell students to write three metaphors by combining one item on the left with another on the right (they will have to join the words using 'is'). They should not spend time thinking about the combinations. For example:

- *Life is a window.*
- *Friendship is a knife.*
- *Love is a vacuum cleaner.*
- *Marriage is a banana*
- *Hate is a mirror.*

3. Then ask them to choose just one of their new metaphors. They should now write two more lines after the metaphor to explain it or comment on it. For example:

Marriage is a banana:
when you've eaten the fruit,
only the skin is left.

Hate is a mirror:
It reflects back
on the one who hates.

Tell students not to use 'because' as it is unnecessary, and to keep the lines short.

Comments

This activity is very easy to do and since the metaphors generated are often so unusual and striking, students are motivated to find the 'why' behind these metaphors. That's how the human brain works – always looking for connections.

Acknowledgement. Adapted from Jane Spiro (2004), *Creative Poetry Writing*. OUP.

Activity 3. Group poem on a theme

Preparation

Prepare a list of theme words. (Examples: *wind, pain, night, hunger, water, money, childbirth, rice, rain*). These words should be general enough to allow for many things to be said about them, but sufficiently concrete to excite a reaction.

Procedure

1. Ask students to work in groups of six. Write up the theme words on the board and let groups choose one each.

2. Then, tell them to write just one line each on the given theme on a sheet of paper. Students should not consult each other. Allow five minutes for this task.

3. They then show each other the lines they have written. Tell them that they should now try to form a connected poem from the lines they have. It may be necessary to change the wording of lines, but not their essential meaning. They are allowed to throw out a maximum of two lines and replace them with better fitting lines. Allow 15 minutes for this task. For example, they might have come up with these eight sentences about 'rice':

   Rice is our mother, we cannot live without her.
   ~~*I love Hainan chicken rice.*~~
   How I love the green rice paddies.
   The grains of rice are like pearls.
   Rice is the spice of life.
   ~~*Sticky rice is really nice.*~~
   When you eat rice, don't leave a grain.
   Rice loves water and water loves rice.

4. They might decide that they want to replace two lines (scored through above) and add these lines instead:

   Without water, no rice: without rice, no life.
   Hold out your bowl, for rice is life

5. They might then rearrange the lines, and make other changes, like this:

   How I love the green rice paddies.
   The grains of rice are like pearls.
   Rice is the spice of life.
   Rice is our mother, without her we cannot live
   Rice loves water, and water loves rice.
   Without water, no rice. Without rice no life.
   When you eat rice, leave not a grain.
   Hold out your bowl, for rice is life.

6. Each group appoints a spokesperson to read their poem to the class. Elicit comments as appropriate.

Follow up

1. As a homework assignment, ask students to improve their poem. They are allowed to add up to four more lines. (This may help if they want to introduce rhyme or regular stanzas.)

2. Ask groups to rehearse and perform their poem as a group orchestration, with different voices and combinations of voices, repeated and overlapping lines, etc.

Variations

1. Give about six related theme words for a group of six. For example: *rain, floods, drought, rice, food, starvation*. This time, each student takes a different theme word and writes one line. They then have six lines, each one based on each of the six theme words. Finally, they try to combine them into a poem, as above.

2. Give students the first line and the last line of a poem. They then have to write their lines and combine them into a poem, as above.

Comment

The activity forces them to rework what they have written, which is unpredictable, to produce a coherent and appealing text. It calls for a high degree of discipline and engagement, both with the text and with each other.

Final word

I believe teachers face the twin scourges of all institutionalized education: the dead hand of routine, and the bondage of institutional control. To stay alive professionally over a long career, teachers must continue to develop, and to resist both mind-shrivelling routine and the over-regulation which passes for education in many places (Casenave and Sosa 2007). To do this, they do not need to mount a major offensive. It may be sufficient to find small ways of resistance, which upset routines and challenge control. Harnessing the unpredictability of the randomness principle is one such way.

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FOLIO 16/1

STUDENT SPOT

Analysing textbooks using the Littlejohn framework: Viewpoints from Japanese pre-service student teachers

Simon Humphries, Misa Miyakoshi and Kenji Miyoshi

Textbooks are one of the main tools of the trade in language teaching (Littlejohn, 2011), and a study by Arkian (2008) indicated that more than three-quarters of teachers use a textbook for over half of their teaching. Nevertheless, because publishers may wish to maximise profits by marketing their products to as wide a range of contexts as possible, critics note that textbooks fail to meet the local needs of teachers and learners (Hadley, 2013).

In Japan, despite the introduction of communicative language teaching (CLT) in the secondary school curriculum, many teachers continue to use the traditional reading comprehension and grammar-translation yakudoku approach (Humphries, 2012; Nishino and Watanabe, 2008). Two factors blamed for this phenomenon are the lack of classroom-oriented training (Nagasawa, 2004) and the lack of communicative activities in government-mandated textbooks (Humphries, 2013).

In an attempt to improve the preparation of undergraduates who want to become English teachers in Japan, Doshisha University introduced a materials analysis and development course in 2012. Following three stages, students on the course:

1. study the principles that underlie common teaching approaches;
2. analyse textbooks such as those mandated by the Japanese government, based on the analytical framework designed by Littlejohn (2011);
3. create their own materials.

This paper focuses on findings by two students based on the second stage—the textbook analysis. Misa Miyakoshi analysed a junior high textbook aimed at ninth graders called *New Crown* (Takahashi, 2012) and Kenji Miyoshi analysed a tenth grade senior high textbook called *Vivid* (Minamimura, 2006). Both textbooks claim to follow the government's communicative guidelines. Misa and Kenji report from two perspectives:

1. A summary of their findings using Littlejohn's (2011) analytical framework based on their readings of Littlejohn (2011) and Humphries (2013).
2. The advantages and disadvantages that they faced as pre-service trainee teachers using the framework.

The Analytical Framework

It is beyond the scope of this paper to re-describe Littlejohn's (2011) framework. The Appendix shows a simplified/summarised description, based on Humphries (2013), which was a supplementary reading to help the students to conduct the analysis. However, students read and discussed the full Littlejohn (2011) chapter in detail, and readers may wish to do the same. To summarise, it is a three-stage process that moves from the concrete to the abstract. In stage 1, we compare the levels of access to information and resources for the teacher and students. The second stage is probably the most important part of the analysis. We select a chapter, identify the constituent activities and look for trends in what the learners are expected to do. Finally, the third stage contains the most abstract level of analysis, where we build upon the foundation from the previous two stages to uncover the underlying implications.

Findings

New Crown

New Crown is a widely used government-mandated textbook for junior high school students. After analysing *New Crown 3*, which is the edition for grade 9 students, there were both positive and negative aspects for teachers and learners.

The teacher's pack contains a teacher's textbook, worksheet booklet, four teacher manuals, guidance book, methodology guidance book, class CDs, teacher training CD, and team teaching guidance book. It was felt that there were too many materials and teaching instructions, thus reducing the scope of originality

for teachers. There was also a difference between the ideal aim of the textbook and the present situation of Japanese junior high school students. The textbook claims to have the balance of four skills, reading, writing, listening, and speaking, on the surface, but it seems as though the textbook is trying to put more emphasis on output through various activities. In reality, however, Japan continues to have the *juken* entrance exam system, where the ninth grade junior high school students have to spend most of their time preparing for difficult reading and grammar-focused examinations to enter senior high school. Therefore, many teachers tend to teach English using the traditional grammar-translation method rather than focusing on communication, even if the required textbook aims at the new approach. Another problem with the high English output approach is that the majority of the Japanese students are not used to speaking out and actively participating in class. Thus, they feel more comfortable in the traditional form of English classes, where more Japanese is spoken than English.

The student textbook is accessible with the use of colour printed graphics and topics that are easy for Japanese students to relate to. It uses a variety of genres from history to foreign cultures, which follows the objectives stated in the government's policy of developing future global leaders. The student textbook and the supplementary workbook provide individual study opportunities.

Overall, there are numerous ways to use *New Crown*, which can be both positive and negative, depending on the student level and situation. It is necessary for teachers to analyse the students' needs and find the most appropriate use of the textbook according to the results of that analysis.

Vivid

Vivid English Course I, which was authorised by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in 2006, is designed for grade 10 senior high school students in Japan. First, I am going to show you some results that were consistent with the expectations that I had formed before the analysis of *Vivid*, and then, I am going to show you some results that surprised me.

I found three main results that were consistent with my expectations. Firstly, the textbook leaned towards grammar-translation and reading comprehension. Every chapter of the textbook has a long reading passage, and the tasks are mainly related to its comprehension and a particular grammatical item. Secondly, there were only one or two listening activities in each chapter. Lastly, there were just one or two pair work activities and no group tasks at all.

The nature of the students' output activities ran counter to my expectations. On a simple level, there turned out to be more of these activities than I had expected, because I can only remember translating reading passages from my high school days. Despite the existence of output exercises, their frequency was still quite low and limited to certain types. Spoken output tasks were rare; instead, the textbook favoured written output and, in particular, gap-filling and substitution drills. As well as the limited range of the answers students would have to produce, there seemed to be a problem with the source of the answers. Students needed to answer questions related to content from the reading passage or to complete grammatical drills. There was no scope for learners to provide personal information or opinions.

All in all, most findings from the analysis of the textbook using the Littlejohn framework were consistent with my expectations. *Vivid* contains a number of reading comprehension and grammatical exercises, a limited number of listening exercises, and sporadic pair work and output activities, although a few more output tasks are provided than I had expected.

Advantages and disadvantages of the framework

Misa's view

There were both advantages and disadvantages of the Littlejohn framework. The level 1 analysis (see Appendix) helped me to look at the balance of materials between teachers and students. It opened my eyes to an unfair balance of information between teachers and students; therefore, when teaching in the future, I will need to make more materials to bridge this gap. The level 2 analysis (see Appendix) helped me to visually compare results through the creation of graphs. In particular, the graphs helped me to see what was missing from the textbooks. In order to follow the government's communicative guidelines, I will need to create materials that help students share personal information and express their opinions in English.

However, it was hard to define some of the categories from the detailed appendix in Littlejohn (2011, pp. 208-11), especially in the mental operation section (pp. 208-9) that delineates what the learner is expected to do. User requirements in this category such as *repeat identically, repeat selectively, repeat with substitution, repeat with transformation* and *repeat with expansion* are all forms of repetition and it is very likely that repetition is used in various ways for each activity. In the end, I had to guess what type of repetition a teacher would use in each case, which made the analysis very time-consuming.

I realized that this framework helped me to see various parts of the textbook and how they could be used

in more than one way. Unfortunately, the reality is that teachers in Japan tend to select only a couple of areas that they feel are needed for students to pass the entrance exam. For me personally, it has raised my awareness of possible different ways that I could use each section of the textbook, so that I can add variety to my textbook use and my teaching.

Kenji's view

This framework has two advantages. Firstly, it proposes that the textbook analyst should examine every activity from many angles, which opens our eyes to different viewpoints. Secondly, through the level 2 analysis (see Appendix), we are able to quantify our results. Therefore, we can visually demonstrate comparative results, which is useful for making informed decisions to colleagues in meetings when we select new textbooks. (In a Japanese school, after the textbook has been selected, all teachers must use it, so these textbook selection meetings are very important for them.)

However, I found it difficult to follow all the detailed categories from the appendix in Littlejohn's chapter (Littlejohn 2011, pp.208-11). For example, it was difficult for me to correctly categorise the *focus* of some activities (see Littlejohn 2011, p. 208) because the boundaries of each user requirement were closely related and sometimes difficult to predict; in other words, it was difficult to separate *form-focused* and *meaning-focused* user requirements from the combined *form-and-meaning-focused* user requirement. In addition, the *mental operation* analysis contained too many simultaneous user requirements (see Littlejohn 2011, pp. 208-9). For example, just reading a sentence out loud involves (a) working memory use, (b) long-term memory use, (c) letter recognition, (d) word recognition, (e) phonological decoding, (f) meaning/grammar decoding, (g) syntactic parsing and (h) semantic-proposition encoding, each of which must involve deeper mental operations. The problem with this level 2 analysis is how deeply the analyst should think about the potential mental operations involved with an activity. The degree of depth will influence the result of the textbook analysis. In the end, the decision about the depth of analysis may be influenced by the time available for the analyst.

Concluding remarks

In summarising the results of their analyses, both Kenji and Misa focused on the amount and quality of output activities. Both these future teachers are probably influenced by the situation in Japan discussed in the introduction. *New Crown* seems to support the government's CLT-oriented policies, whereas, teachers may prefer *Vivid*, which contains traditional exercises. As Misa points out, the traditional teacher-led grammar-translation approach suits Japanese students who want to prepare for entrance tests and fear a break away from the passive study style that they are used to. It is useful for these two student teachers to be able to relate their findings to their future jobs and to begin considering how they will use their materials to tackle tensions between policy and contextual constraints.

Both students shared similar opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the analytical framework. They felt that the framework raised their awareness of different viewpoints and noted the need to forge a balance of information between the teacher and students through the creation of supplementary materials. Moreover, they both valued the visual and comparative power of the level 2 analysis (which reveals trends in what the users are required to do with the materials - see Appendix) and that the results could be used to make informed suggestions to colleagues during textbook selection meetings. On the negative side, the student teachers noted the difficulties that they faced when categorising the user requirements from the extensive appendix in Littlejohn (2011, pp. 208-11) and the time-consuming nature of the analysis. Indeed, when they become busy teachers, they may decide that they have no time to use Littlejohn's full approach. However, this framework is adaptable, so teacher trainers in different contexts could create simplified versions containing contextually relevant user requirement examples.

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Appendix

Level 1 Analysis: Suggested Areas (based on Humphries, 2013, pp. 220-221, drawn on Littlejohn, 2011, pp.208-9).

Target groups of users
Stated aims
Balance of information between the teacher and learners
Followed by a chapter-focused description of the main sections of instruction.

Level 2 Categories of Analysis and Sample User Requirements (from Humphries, 2013, p. 221, drawn on Littlejohn, 2011, pp.209-11).

Category	Sample User Requirements
Focus	Meaning or Form
Mental Operations	Build Text or Decode Semantic Meaning
Turn Taking	Initiate or Respond
With Whom?	Pair Work or Individually
Information Source	Materials or Learners
Learner Input	Graphic or Written
Learner Output	Oral or Written
Nature of Content	Personal Information or Metalinguistic Knowledge

Potential Level 3 Underlying Principles (based on Humphries, 2013, pp. 231-236).

Congruity of stated aims and underlying values
Principles of selection and sequencing
Teacher and learner roles
The use of knowledge
Development of study skills
Social values

FOLIO 16/1

BOOK REVIEW

Speak English like an American: Learn the idioms and expressions that will help you speak like a native!

By Amy Gillett,
Language Success Press, Date of Publication: 2013, Number of Pages: 176: Softback

ISBN-10: 0972530037
ISBN-13: 978-0972530033

www.facebook.com/SpeakAmericanEnglish
www.facebook.com/SpeakEnglishwithAmy
www.amazon.com/Speak-English-Like-American-Gillett-ebook/dp/B0058EAX3W

Reviewed by Laura Swilley

Introduction

Idiomatic language is an essential aspect of daily communication in practically every language, and therefore vital in English language learning and instruction. Since the meaning of an idiom cannot be deduced from the individual words that form it, single word vocabulary learning has proven to be insufficient in fully mastering the English language (Maisa and Karunakaran, 2013). To this teacher's knowledge, in contrast to syntax, there is a dearth of idiom-specific resource books. Fortunately, *Speak English like an American: Learn the idioms and expressions that will help you speak like a native!* by Amy Gillet, a skill-specific English second language textbook which focuses on over 300 American idiomatic expressions through dialogue, was recently updated to its sixth edition in 2013 to include new innovative technological trends, such as an electronic version of the textbook, a correlating smartphone and tablet application, and an interactive Facebook page. Though the layout of the book itself remains simple, its consistency in style and continuation of a creative and humorous storyline of interesting characters throughout creates an enhanced level of student interest and connection to material.

In my review of the somewhat unfortunately named *Speak English like an American*, I will consider the following:

1. Nature of the learner group
2. Purpose of the materials
3. Teacher's need and preference
4. Practicality
5. Authenticity

Nature of the Learner Group

Ideally, a textbook should be appropriate for learners' language level, be challenging but not frustrating, and meet learners' immediate learning needs (Adi, 2012). *Speak English like an American* does not specify a particular target learner language level, but I feel it is appropriate and adaptable for any level. Oftentimes, idiomatic learning is postponed for advanced levels of English learning, but 'most students are very interested in learning idiomatic expressions, so it is [a mistake] to postpone learning them until students reach advanced levels' (Andarab, 2013), and due to *Speak English like an American's* audio recordings of all idioms and conversations, it is entirely plausible to utilize it at a beginning English level.

When teaching idioms, one must have a register in mind, for idiomatic language is register specific (Liu, 2012), and as implied in its title, *Speak English like an American* is designed for students who hope to develop a natural American vernacular and familiarize themselves with modern-day American situational

dialogues. Unlike many of the EFL textbooks of the 1970s and 80s which some experts believed to show evidence of gender-linked bias of exclusion, subordination and distortion, and degradation of women (Ghorbani, 2009), *Speak English like an American* shows a fair representation of both male and female characters. For example, in the past, males tended to be over-represented and occupy more powerful occupational roles than women, both males and females performed gender-stereotypical activities, and women tended to be stereotypically emotional and were more likely than male characters to be the butt of jokes and of implied slurs (Ghorbani, 2009). In contrast, *Speak English like an American* offers a depiction of a wife who is a business owner, a husband who learns to bake cookies while working for his wife, a daughter who is interested in politics, and a son who is a musician.

Purpose of the Materials

A textbook's purpose should correlate with its goals and objectives. When choosing a text it is important to consider 'to what extent the materials promote communicative use of the target language; how the materials increase learners' knowledge and understanding of the target language community and culture; and how the materials encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning' (Adi, 2012). *Speak English like an American* was perceptibly designed to be most appropriate for independent study, for the publishing company, Language Success Press, offers a textbook and e-book which both provide lesson activity answers in the back of the book, a smartphone application which includes an electronic quiz with answers and a voice recording device, and a company run Facebook page on which students can take charge of their learning through interactions with other students and site administrators.

Teacher's Need and Preference

Though simple in its construct, *Speak English like an American* is highly adaptable for a variety of teaching methods, which is advantageous because materials should exploit, rather than constrain, a teacher's expertise (Adi, 2012).

As a teaching material, a textbook has several roles and dimensions in language teaching. It is more than just a teaching material but it also consists of a 'hidden curriculum' because it frequently provides some curriculum components such as procedures for teaching planning, teaching implementation, and evaluation. We can see the curriculum components in textbooks especially in the teacher's guide which provides some practical instruction on how to use the textbook in the classroom. (Adi, 2012, p. 3)

Regrettably, *Speak English like an American* does not have a teacher's book at this time, but according to Tanya Peterson (personal communication, December 6, 2013) it is a possibility in the future.

The book itself contains 25 lessons about the Johnson family, Bob the husband, Susan the wife, Ted the son, and Nicole the daughter. Each lesson begins with an introductory activity of a cartoon in which one of the characters uses an idiom. The warm-up is also methodology-neutral, in that there is no rubric indirectly addressed to the teacher on this page, so it is an extremely non-constraining lesson introduction. For example, with the use of a single picture and an idiom, a teacher could choose to seize students' interest through the activation of prior knowledge or foreshadow events of the lesson's dialogue thorough whole or small group discussion.

Figure 1: Textbook Warm-up Page (Gillet, 2013, p. 10)

Traditional methods of teaching English idioms tend to focus on rote learning and memorization of language chunks (Chen and Lai, 2013), and this methodology is definitely present in *Speak English like an American*, but the lesson instructions in no way constrict a teacher's methods of choice. Some might argue that such a rigid learning process is outdated, for 'recent approaches propose that idiomatic meanings are built both out of literal meanings of idiom constituents and the specific figurative interpretation

of these constituent word meanings in a given context' (Andarab, 2013), but I feel rote memorization can be quite effective, for it is an important first step in Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain. Rote memorization falls into the bottom level of Bloom's taxonomy, the 'remembering' domain. Most often, a student must first remember an idiom or collocation before he or she is able to understand, apply, create, and evaluate, and analyze the said phrase. Educators over time have often depicted the levels Bloom's taxonomy as a stairway which students are encouraged to climb to higher levels of thought. 'The lowest three levels are: knowledge, comprehension, and application. The highest three levels are: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation' (Forehand, 2012, p. 3). The arrangement is hierarchical, for each level is incorporated in the levels above (Forehand, 2012). In other words, before a student can reach the comprehension domain, ideally, he or she must successfully master the knowledge domain. Again, there is much room for exploitation of an experienced teacher's expertise throughout this text to explore the domains.

LESSON 1

BOB'S DAY AT WORK

Bob works as a manager in a furniture store. Peter, his boss, is not happy about sales. Bob's new advertising campaign hasn't helped. Peter decides to fire him.

Peter: Bob, I hate to **break the news**, but our sales were down again last month.

Bob: Down again, Peter?

Peter: Yeah. These days, everybody's shopping at our competition, Honest Abe's Furniture Store.

Bob: But everything in there **costs an arm and a leg!**

Peter: That's true. They do charge **top dollar**.

Bob: And their sales people are very strange. They really **give me the creeps**!

Peter: Well, they must be doing something right over there. Meanwhile, we're **about to go belly-up**.

Bob: I'm sorry to hear that. I thought my new advertising campaign would **save the day**.

Peter: **Let's face it**: your advertising campaign was a **real flop**.

Bob: Well then I'll **go back to the drawing board**.

Peter: It's too late for that. You're fired!

Figure 2: Lesson Dialogue Example (Gillet, 2013, p. 11)

Practicality

Textbook practicality is also of utmost importance. The material should be creative and engaging, economical in terms of preparation time and allow for all learners to be actively involved in its use (Adi, 2012). *Speak English like an American's* dialogues contain funny modern-day stories in dialogue form which should be engaging and relatable to many students. Also, the correlating smartphone application contains a recording feature which allows students to record and listen to themselves saying the idioms and dialogues. The fact that both the text and the supplementary application can be purchased and delivered automatically to one's smartphone or tablet, and the textbook with audio, quizzes, and a voice recorder can be carried around in one's pocket, makes *Speak English like an American* one of the most convenient and practical textbooks on the market today.

Figure 3.1: Smartphone and Tablet Application Start Page

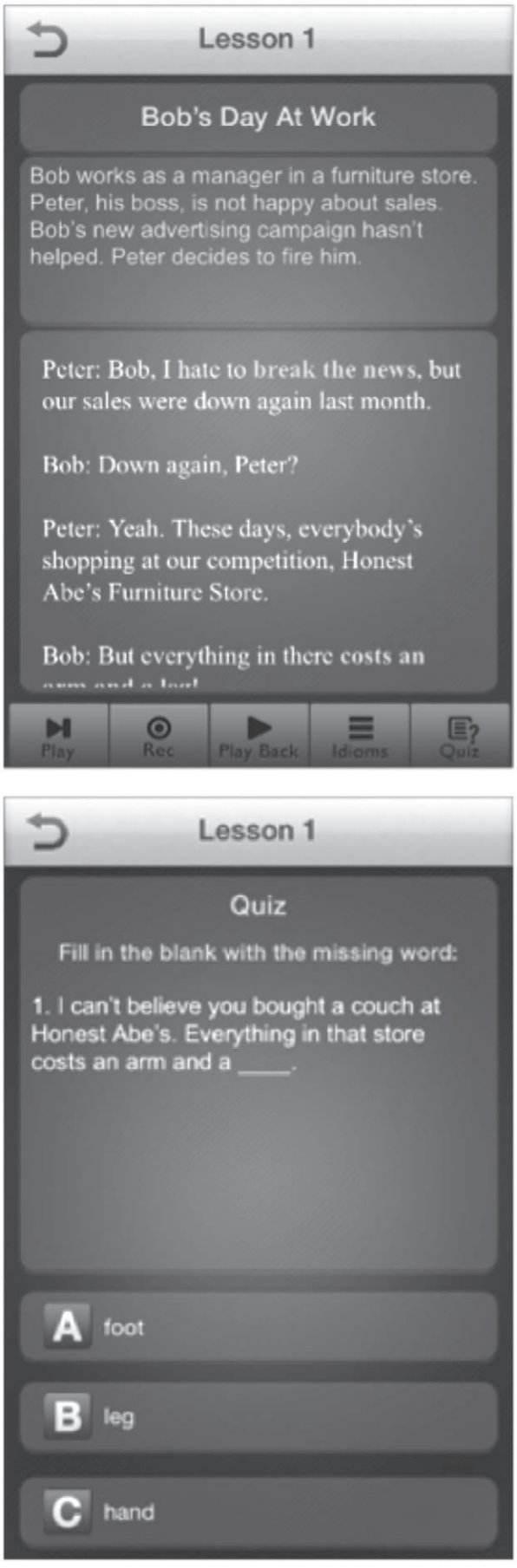

Figure 3.2: Smartphone and Tablet Application Lesson and Quiz Example

Authenticity

The significant lack of authentic idiomatic teaching materials continues to be a dominant problem in the pedagogical world. *Speak English like an American* contains over 300 American idioms, but when compared with the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) corpus-based website, The Idiom Connection (www.idiomconnection.com/mostfrequent.html), a website which lists the 100 most frequently used English idioms in an academic settings in the United States, only 13 appear in this book. Many linguists believe a selection of idioms for materials should be based on research, not intuition, but no single corpus can provide an all-inclusive collection of idioms. Many linguists also claim that a corpus is arguably a much better starting point than a devised list of idioms, 'in part because such lists are by and large entirely devoid of a coherent focus on a particular language domain' (Simpson and Mendis, 2012, p.420). However, the considerable range of meanings of 'authentic' make the term, particularly in regards to educational materials, quite ambiguous (Gilmore, 2007), weakening the corpus argument. Hence, one can argue that the lack of a corpus base does not make *Speak English like an American* inauthentic or any less effective than a corpus-based textbook.

Conclusion

Speak English like an American's sixth edition with its innovative technological updates make the inclusion of idiomatic language in English language learning and instruction much more convenient than in years past. The importance of a strong grasp of common everyday idioms in any language is imperative in achieving fluency, and *Speak English like an American's* aim is just that, to increase fluency for students who desire to speak and comprehend common everyday American English. Though idiom-specific textbooks are still much less common ones for syntax, *Speak English like an American* by Amy Gillet makes a significant contribution in bridging the lexis-syntax educational materials gap.

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