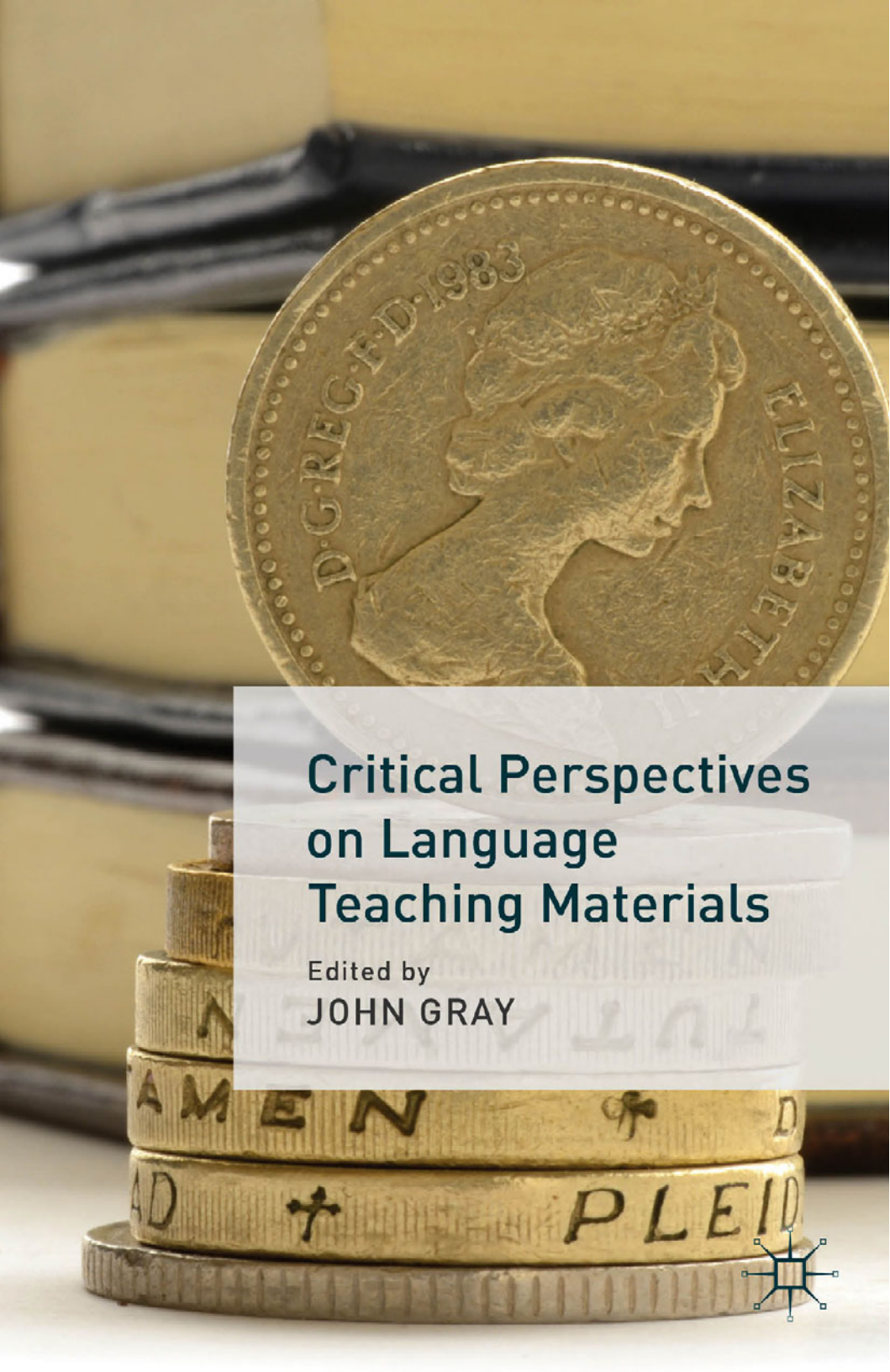




Critical Perspectives on Language Teaching Materials

Edited by
JOHN GRAY



Critical Perspectives on Language Teaching Materials

Also by John Gray

NEOLIBERALISM AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS (*with D. Block and M. Holborow*)

THE CONSTRUCTION OF ENGLISH: Culture, Consumerism and Promotion in
the ELT Global Coursebook

Critical Perspectives on Language Teaching Materials

Edited by

John Gray

Institute of Education, University of London, UK

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1

Introduction

John Gray

As I collated the bibliographies from the individual chapters in this volume to compile a single one for the whole book I was struck by the range of the references. As might be expected in a book on language teaching materials, there were repeated references to the core texts in the ever growing materials literature – that much was to be expected. However, it was the range of references to other literatures that caught my attention. Names such as Basil Bernstein, Pierre Bourdieu, John Dewey, Friedrich Engels, Michel Foucault, Nancy Fraser, Paulo Freire, Anthony Giddens, Antonio Gramsci, Jean-François Lyotard and Edward Said (among others) were striking for two reasons. First, they were a clear indication that those writing about language teaching materials are drawing increasingly on a wider range of disciplines than has traditionally been the case – sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, political economy; and second, that the body of thinking these names represent is itself philosophically heterogeneous. It will be immediately obvious then that this book is a collaboration between a group of scholars who (given the book's title) are united in thinking critically about language teaching materials, but who are (as will become evident) far from being as one in their intellectual take on the objects of their scrutiny – the materials themselves.

The chapters assembled here explore a range of language teaching materials for use in English, French, Spanish, German and content and language integrated learning (CLIL) classrooms. Traditionally the materials literature has focused mainly on English language teaching (ELT) materials, no doubt on account of the size of the global market. By including chapters on materials for languages other than English, the present volume seeks to redress something of an imbalance, while at the same time allowing for the exploration of the commonalities and

differences that might exist. As writers we bring a range of perspectives to bear – as applied linguists, as teacher educators, in some cases as materials writers, and all of us as users, at some stage in our careers, of materials of the kind we discuss here. The focus is predominantly on textbooks – a focus I see as justified, given their enduring centrality in classrooms around the world.

This introductory chapter aims to set the tone for the volume as a whole and begins by outlining some of the key assumptions which underpin the book (expanded on below) – namely that:

- Commercially produced materials such as textbooks, in addition to being curriculum artefacts, are also cultural artefacts which serve to make languages mean in particular ways.
- Representation and identity are key aspects in the creation of textual meaning.
- Commercially produced materials are core commodities in textbook publishing and that this commercial aspect cannot be ignored in seeking to understand their contents.
- Language teaching research (which includes materials research) is a form of ‘boundary work’ (Edge and Richards, 1998), which presupposes the need to conduct research that is more interdisciplinary in character.
- There is a need for more materials analysis to complement the work being done by colleagues in the field of materials development and evaluation.

In discussing these assumptions I will refer mostly to ELT materials (as this is my own area of expertise) – however, many of the points made are equally applicable to language teaching materials for other languages. The introduction then concludes by introducing the individual chapters and provides a brief overview of each one.

Curriculum and cultural artefacts

In a useful state-of-the-art paper on the language teaching materials literature (which I will refer to throughout this introduction), Brian Tomlinson (2012: 143) states:

Materials can be informative (informing the learner about the target language), instructional (guiding the learner in practising the language), experiential (providing the learner with experience of the language in use), eliciting (encouraging the learner to use the

language) and exploratory (helping the learner to make discoveries about language).

And indeed, at their best, materials can and should be these things. This view of materials is one which sees them primarily as curriculum artefacts – key classroom tools which are designed to facilitate language learning, and which may be more or less useful in that endeavour. However, materials are also much more than this list would suggest. In addition, they are cultural artefacts from which meanings emerge about the language being taught, associating it with particular ways of being, particular varieties of language and ways of using language, and particular sets of values. At the same time, they are also ideological (in the Marxist sense) in that the meanings they seek to create tend to endorse and reproduce (although not invariably) existing power relations, particularly with regard to social class (Gray and Block, in press), and similarly with regard to race, gender and sexual orientation (see Chapter 3). This has sometimes been referred to as the hidden curriculum, which Elsa Auerbach and Denise Burgess (1985: 476) suggest ‘generates social meanings, restraints, and cultural values which shape students’ roles outside the classroom’, or at least has the potential to do so. From this perspective, students may learn more from the textbook than the subject being taught.

Of course the idea of the hidden curriculum is not unique to language teaching materials. When I think back to when I was a child, I learned to read using the ‘Janet and John’ and the ‘Dick and Dora’ books.¹ As curriculum artefacts these materials did what they were designed to do – I learned to read using them. But I also learned a lot of other things as well. Or perhaps more accurately, certain messages I was already in receipt of were reproduced and reinforced in these textbooks – for example, about how boys and men are supposed to be, and how girls and women are supposed to be. Here are two examples from Book 1 of *The Happy Venture Readers* (Schonell and Serjeant, 1958). In the first, Dick is engaged in the kind of sporting activity he is shown to enjoy throughout the book:

Dick will get his big bat. Dick and Jack run to the big tree to play. Dick has the bat. Jack has the ball. ‘I will throw my ball,’ said Jack. ‘I will hit it,’ said Dick. (p. 16)

Dora on the other hand, although she also participates in games, is frequently shown playing with her doll, Jane – an activity she shares with May, but not with Dick or Jack.

Dora will wash Jane. She is a rag doll, so Dora can wash her. Dora has a line by the tree. May sits on a seat to see Dora wash the doll. (p. 22)

From the perspective of the twenty-first century, the message the book conveys about gender may appear old fashioned – boys are more physical than girls, they play with balls and get into scrapes, while girls are gentler, they play with dolls and they often watch boys and each other playing. However, the books reproduced the then prevailing gender normativities, while at the same time portraying an exclusively middle class world in which everyone spoke the standard dialect. Of course books for adults are different, and what is hidden can take a variety of forms. As Auerbach and Burgess (1985: 475) showed, ELT textbooks for migrants to North America from the mid 1970s onwards, while ostensibly produced to enable them to successfully enter the job market, actually tended to ‘prepare students for subservient social roles and reinforce hierarchical relations’, thereby betraying the producers’ view of the migrant as destined for low paid, low status work. It would appear that little had changed in nearly a century – just four years earlier, Jean Anyon (1981: 25), in her study of ideology in US history textbooks, reproduced part of a text from the early 1900s for the teaching of English to migrants, which was clearly designed to teach more than language:

I hear the whistle. I must hurry. I hear the five minutes whistle. It is time to go into the shop....I change my clothes and get ready to work...I work until the whistle blows to quit. I leave my place nice and clean.

Whatever else it may have been, the text was also a primer in the basics of a spatiotemporal disciplinary regime appropriate to working in an industrialised setting. Although there has been a limited amount of attention to this aspect of materials analysis in our own field (e.g. Dendrinos, 1992; Chun, 2009; Gray, 2010a; Gray and Block, in press), research into the textbook as a cultural artefact has been more common in mainstream education (e.g. Preiswerk, 1980; Anyon, 1981; Stray, 1994; Provenzo et al., 2011). Even so, to date there is nothing in the Anglophone world like the Georg Eckert Institut für internationale Schulbuchforschung (established in 1975) in Germany, which is dedicated to textbook research (mainly materials for history, geography and civic studies) and which is principally focused on the study of ‘concepts of identity and representations as conveyed through national

education' and 'the question of what relationship textbook-conveyed interpretations and inventories of knowledge have to those concepts of identity that are offered by other educational media and players in the academic arena' (www.gei.de). It could be argued that the language teaching materials literature has much to learn from such mainstream education research orientations, and it is hoped that the present volume will contribute to this in some small way.

Representation and identity

As has been argued elsewhere (Gray and Block, in press), at the heart of the language teaching textbook is a regime of representation which constructs the world of the target language for the student. Representation refers to the processes in which language and images are used to portray this world and as Michael Apple and Linda Christian-Smith (1991: 4) point out:

[These processes] embody what Raymond Williams called the *selective tradition* – someone's selection, someone's vision of legitimate knowledge and culture, one that in the process of enfranchising one group's cultural capital disenfranchises another's.

But this is not simply a matter of privileging the knowledge or the values of the powerful over those of the powerless or those deemed illegitimate in some way – representation has political and commercial implications of several kinds. On the one hand, there is the representation of geographical spaces. For example, UK ELT publishers ensure that materials designed for use in different national markets (e.g. Greece and Turkey) contain no references to contested territories lost by one country to another, or that countries which are seen as potentially lucrative markets (e.g. US) are not referred to critically. Such representational practices are commercially determined. On the other hand, there is the representation of people and the various identities that are relevant to them (see Chapter 1, on identity in ELT textbooks). As I argue elsewhere (Gray, 2010a), ELT textbooks in particular have changed significantly in this regard since the 1970s. One area in which change has been most thorough is the treatment of gender, a development which was driven largely by women within the publishing industry determined to root out the sexist representations which typified so many ELT publications in the 1970s and 1980s. Under the impetus of second wave feminism² (Mills and Mullany, 2011), and in particular the move towards feminist

language reform (Pauwels, 1998), the pervasive sexism identified by early materials studies (Hill, 1980; Porreca, 1984) has become a thing of the past, at least in UK-produced materials. Materials today are typified by codified regimes of inclusivity whereby women in particular, but also people of colour, the disabled, the elderly and so on are listed as requiring non-stereotypical representation. Such practices, however limited and superficial, have their origins in a politics of equal rights in which issues of representation, identity, recognition and respect are central.

The struggle to be represented, or to be represented in particular ways, arises out of a response to the related politics of erasure and misrecognition. This is particularly relevant to certain categories of people, such as women, workers, ethnic minorities, religious minorities and those identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) (see Chapter 3). Erasure refers to the systematic editing out of certain groups or identity positions (i.e. their non-representation) from officially endorsed versions of social reality, and the resulting denial of recognition. Good examples of this are the near total absence of the working class from twentieth century North American history books (Anyon, 1981), and the progressive eradication of working class characters and references to working class experience from UK-produced ELT materials from the 1980s onwards (Gray and Block, in press). Misrecognition, on the other hand, refers to demeaning or stereotypical representation, such as the sexist representation of women, or the representation of colonised or indigenous peoples in history or geography books as subservient, feckless, lazy or otherwise lacking in agency (see Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006).

Such practices are not without consequences. As Nancy Fraser (1998: 141) has argued:

To be misrecognised [...] is not simply to be thought ill of, looked down on, or devalued in others' conscious attitudes or mental beliefs. It is rather to be denied the status of a *full partner* in social interaction and prevented from *participating as a peer* in social life – not as a consequence of a distributive inequity [...] but rather as a consequence of *institutionalized* patterns of interpretation and evaluation that constitute one as comparatively unworthy of respect or esteem. When such patterns of disrespect and disesteem are institutionalized, for example, in law, social welfare, medicine, and/or popular culture, they impede parity of participation, just as surely as do distributive inequities. The resulting harm is in either case all too real.

Responses from publishers to such charges, when they have been forthcoming, have often been far from unproblematic. As Apple and Christian-Smith (1991: 10) have pointed out with regard to mainstream US textbooks, ‘*items* are perhaps mentioned, then, but not developed in depth. Dominance is partly maintained here through compromise and the process of “mentioning”’. Their point is that ‘mentioning’ is frequently tokenistic, the previously erased group gets a name check but the issues surrounding its erasure or its members’ struggle for recognition on their own terms is not explored. (The value and the limitations of ‘mentioning’ are discussed in Chapter 3.) With regard to the representation of women in UK-produced language teaching textbooks, the removal of overt sexism did not presuppose any move towards serious engagement with the politics of feminism – rather gender equality tended to be presented as part of the lifestyle choices of individual women who simply chose to do the high-powered jobs they were frequently depicted as doing (see Gray, 2010a for fuller discussion).

The textbook as commodity

It will be clear from the discussion so far that textbooks are more than educational tools and cultural objects – they are also commodities to be bought and sold. As Marx (1867/1976) explained, the commodity has both use value and exchange value; that is, it exists to meet particular human needs and it can be exchanged for money. From the perspective of the producers, it is the exchange value of the commodity rather than its use value that is primary. In this respect, textbooks are no different from other commodities – ‘before anything else their prime function [is] to earn their producers a living’ (Apple, 1985: 149). More recently, Andrew Littlejohn (2012: 284) has made a similar point:

although materials are aimed at use *inside* a classroom, they will always bear the hallmarks of the conditions of their production *outside* the classroom. This is particularly the case with materials which are produced in a commercial context, where the need to maximise sales, satisfy shareholders, and achieve corporate goals may have a direct impact on the design of materials, quite distinct from their pedagogic intent.

For this reason, it is important to consider the particular kind of commodity the textbook is, because, as Chris Stray (1994: 4) put it some time ago, ‘[t]o look only at its use in formal educational settings is to

miss the interpenetration of economy and society with the process of formal cultural transmission’.

Drawing on the work of the sociologist Andrew Wernick (1991), in Gray (2010a) I argued that the UK-produced ELT textbook is a *promotional commodity*; that is, it is not only a commodity in its own right, but one which also serves to promote English as though it too were a commodity (in much the same way that advertisements promote and provide an identity for whatever they are selling). Furthermore, the textbook serves to promote (whether directly or indirectly) a range of additional products, such as language courses, tests (such as IELTS and TOEFL), dictionaries, workbooks and so on. All of these are linked together through the repeated deployment in promotional material of similar imagistic and discursive tropes in which success, travel, fun and consumerism are central, and which collectively form part of the promotional promise of English (see Pegrum, 2004; see also chapters 7 and 8, this volume, for how this plays out in French and Spanish materials).

One of the things Marx did was to elucidate the hidden social relationships behind the commodity – what might be called its secret life. As Apple (1985: 147) memorably put it:

Goods and services are relations among people, relations of exploitation often, but human relations nevertheless. Turning on a light when you walk into a room is not only using an object, it is also to be involved in an anonymous social relationship with the miner who worked to dig the coal burned to produce the electricity.

In *Global Education Inc.: New Policy Networks and the Neo-liberal Imaginary*, Stephen J. Ball (2012) sheds considerable light on the complex secret life of the textbooks produced by giant educational publishing companies, or what he calls ‘edu-businesses’. Ball’s focus is not on relations of exploitation in textbook production, but on the much expanded role of textbook publishers in the marketisation of education, the production of educational products and education policy globally. Ball shows how one such company – Pearson Education – has become one of the largest global providers of ELT materials and now works with governments around the world, many of which are happy to outsource the provision of education and to have policy determined for them by such companies. He concludes:

Pearson is a globalising actor in a very real sense, through its publishing, its assessment and qualifications systems, English language teaching and administration and management products. It is

operating across all three educational ‘message systems’ – pedagogy, curriculum and assessment and joining these up, globally, across a range of media, within its products and business growth plan. Its publishing and curriculum and assessment work contributes to define what cultural knowledge is most worthwhile and these producers have invested within them particular conceptions of educational process and organisation.

(Ball, 2012: 127)

As I argued in Gray (2012a), in such a scenario where curricula are being reformed in highly marketised contexts globally, particular methodologies (generally based on L2 use only), particular sets of materials and accompanying tests are promoted, thereby enabling the providers (who as Ball shows can be the purveyors of just about everything) to reap the benefits of a market they have helped to standardise.

Against such an increasingly marketised and homogenised background, it is little wonder that some teachers have turned their backs on published materials, seeing them as having less and less real use value, and viewing them more as unnecessary or troublesome objects which actually get in the way of real learning. Although not couched in terms of commodification, the case for (and the popularity of) ‘teaching unplugged’ or the Dogme ELT movement (see Chapter 10) is not to be wondered at. In elaborating what was to become a major critique of the role of published materials in language teaching, Scott Thornbury (2000a: 2) expressed his initial disquiet thus:

Along with the quantity (I hesitate to use the word variety) of course-books in print, there is an embarrassment of complementary riches in the form of videos, CD-ROMs, photocopiable resource packs, pull-out word lists, even web-sites, not to mention the standard work-book, teacher’s book and classroom and home study cassettes. [...] There are the best-selling self-study grammar books, personal vocabulary organisers, phrasal verb dictionaries, concordancing software packages – you name it. But where is the story? Where is the inner life of the student in all this? Where is *real communication*? More often as not, it is buried under an avalanche of photocopies, visual aids, transparencies, MTV clips and cuisenaire [sic] rods. Somewhere in there we lost the plot.

From this perspective, recovering the plot entails the rejection of such commodities and a move towards a pedagogy of scaffolded talk in which the language that is learned is the language which emerges in classroom

interaction – rather than the one which had been selected and pre-packaged for mass consumption. Of course not all teachers work in settings where the abandonment of commercially produced materials is an option, but the attention which Dogme ELT has attracted (at least in some sectors) is indicative of a level of discontent with published materials as they are and materials-driven language teaching generally.

Interdisciplinarity

In the late 1990s two key academic papers (Rampton, 1997; Edge and Richards, 1998), written from somewhat different perspectives, made the case for greater interdisciplinarity in applied linguistics. Ben Rampton's (1997: 8) argument was one in favour of moving the field beyond second language acquisition and second language teacher education (as prototypical applied linguistics activities) in the direction of what he described as a Hymesian 'socially constituted linguistics'. This would amount, he wrote,

to a vision of a kind of social and cultural semiotics which brings cultural and social organisation centre-stage, and which construes language in the first instance not as grammar but as a repertoire of ways of speaking shaped through the part it plays in social action and communicative conduct. (p. 8)

While such a perspective does not necessarily imply a sidelining of prototypical applied linguistics activities (second language classrooms and second language teacher education programmes can certainly be looked at in terms of contextually shaped repertoires of ways of speaking), it does suggest a wider conceptualisation of the field than perhaps had previously been the case. Julian Edge and Keith Richards (1998) in their paper were more firmly focused on prototypical applied linguistics activity – specifically, qualitatively oriented research related to second language teaching and learning. Their intervention was motivated largely by increased numbers of second language teachers embarking on postgraduate study and what they saw as 'the absence of a properly established qualitative tradition in TESOL' (Edge and Richards, 1998: 338), a situation they held to be 'further complicated by the temptation for researchers not to work on "*developing a sociological imagination*"³ (Holliday, 1996), but rather to settle for inadequately conceptualized and poorly developed research methodologies'. In such a scenario, they argued, 'there is a pressing need for TESOL researchers

to engage productively with the richness of intellectual opportunity currently available in the human sciences' (p. 334). Adrian Holliday's (1996) paper, to which Edge and Richards refer, was similar in that it too saw the need for language teaching research to engage more fully with the social sciences. Given the diversity of cultural and educational settings globally in which English was being taught, and the largely one-way flow of 'centre' knowledge and expertise to the 'periphery', Holliday (1996: 234) made the case for a 'professional sociological imagination' on the part of researchers. This would entail a focus on 'the multiplicity of relations between students, educators, the community' on the one hand, and 'the people, material, and concepts which the profession transports across cultures' on the other.

While many areas of applied linguistics did indeed become more interdisciplinary, David Block, Marnie Holborow and I have argued that political economy remained something of a blind spot for the field. From our perspective, political economy is understood as 'a pathway to interdisciplinarity which combines branches of economics and politics in order to understand how social institutions, their activities and capitalism influence each other in various ways' (Block et al., 2012: 2). Overall, we underline the need for applied linguistics research to engage with the political, economic and ideological dimensions relating to language and social identity, but also to second language teaching and second language teacher education. However, while recognising the interdisciplinarity (albeit with some lacunae) in areas of applied linguistics post-Rampton (1997), we also noted that in many ways ELT research had not followed suit, despite the fact that the ELT industry is an area of applied linguistics activity in which politics and political economy clearly come together. Teaching is perforce a highly politicised activity and commercially produced materials exert a powerful influence over what takes place in many classrooms around the world.

In this respect the materials literature could be seen as being a case in point. In the state-of-the-art paper referred to above, Tomlinson (2012: 144) states that '[g]iven how important language-learning materials are, it is surprising how little attention they have received until recently in the literature on applied linguistics'. In this assessment he is correct, and it is in no small part due to his own contribution over many years that language teaching materials have begun to receive more serious academic attention (see Harwood, in press; Harwood, 2010; McGrath, 2013; Tomlinson, 2013). As he suggests, the lack of attention can be attributed to the fact that materials were traditionally seen as being mainly the preserve of practitioners or as an adjunct to the study of methods. Also

the fact that published materials originate in the commercial sector may have meant that many researchers saw them as falling outside the traditionally understood remit of applied linguistics research. So far, as suggested above, the burgeoning literature referred to by Tomlinson has focused mainly on materials as curriculum artefacts. The writers contributing to this volume take the view that there is a need to complement this work by focusing on materials in more interdisciplinary ways and indeed that it is only by doing so that we can come to a deeper understanding of them. This leads to my final point about materials analysis and its relationship with materials development.

Materials analysis

Materials development, as Tomlinson (2012: 143–4) points out, is firmly focused on the practice of teaching, and

refers to all the processes made use of by practitioners who produce and/or use materials for language learning, including materials evaluation, their adaption, design, production, exploitation and research. Ideally, all of these processes should be given consideration and should interact in the making of language learning material.

And he further elaborates:

Materials development is now not only undertaken by practitioners but is also a field of academic study. As a practical activity it involves the production, evaluation and adaptation of materials. As a field it investigates the principles and procedures of design, writing, implementation, evaluation and analysis of materials. Ideally, these investigations both inform and are informed by the development and use of materials. (p. 144)

From this perspective, materials development is the superordinate term comprising evaluation *and* analysis. Tomlinson argues that evaluation is carried out with a view to the potential effects of the materials on language learners, an activity which is seen as being very different from materials analysis, which ‘focuses on the materials and aims to identify what they contain, what they ask learners to do and what they say they are trying to achieve’. And he adds, that while ‘aiming to provide an objective account of the materials [...] the selection of questions

is inevitably subjective and there is often a hidden agenda which it is hoped the revealed data will support' (p. 148).

My own view is that materials analysis, precisely because it is focused on content (including the ways in which content comes into being and the ways in which it is used in classrooms), is best understood as an activity which does not take place under the umbrella of materials development. While the aim of materials development is the (immediate) production of materials for use in specific classrooms, analysis tends to be more concerned with identifying and interpreting actually existing content (whether contemporary or historical). From this perspective, materials are seen not only as mediating tools of subject knowledge but also as instruments for the ideological reproduction and legitimization of interested knowledge – palimpsests in which versions of events and worldviews are recoverable through systematic analysis. At the same time, they are commodities (certainly in the case of textbooks) which have been produced for the making of profit and require being seen as such. While agreeing that there is often an 'agenda' in materials analysis beyond the analysis itself, I would argue that it is not hidden. Certainly much of the analysis of mainstream education materials (referred to above) has been conducted within a critical theory research paradigm and, as such, has been motivated by a clearly articulated concern with social justice (e.g. Anyon, 1981; Apple, 1985; Provenzo et al., 2011), while all the time implying that better materials could be developed in the future (and could have been developed in the past).

From this perspective *materials research* might be a more appropriate superordinate, consisting of materials development on the one hand and materials analysis on the other. When seen thus, research in our own field appears lopsided, with materials analysis lagging behind the advances already made in materials development (and materials analysis in other subject areas).

Some of the chapters which follow address issues in materials development and materials analysis, while some are mostly concerned with analysis – not only of content on the page, but of content as it is used in classrooms (see chapters 4 and 5). Collectively they can be seen as an attempt to address something of this imbalance in the language teaching materials literature. Many of the contributors engage in qualitative content analysis which Nigel Harwood (2010) has described as being concerned with an interpretive orientation in which the aim is to uncover the meanings and values being associated with the language being taught. However, as Jason Nicholls (2004: 33) has argued, many

materials analysis studies ‘while rich in descriptive detail are short on robust critical analysis’. And he adds:

textbook research needs to become more robust and accountable in order to affect, convince, and persuade positive change. In short, the field needs to become more critical, questioning and defensible. To do this researchers will need to connect with the philosophical dimension in their work, to ask themselves fundamental questions about why they are comparing the portrayal of particular issues across texts, and to consider the grounds upon which analyses are justified.

It is hoped that the chapters which follow will prove to be both philosophically coherent and robust on analysis and that the volume as a whole may serve as an incitement and guide to further research in the area of language teaching materials research.

Overview of this volume

This book continues with two chapters which look specifically at ELT materials aimed at the global market. In Chapter 2, John Kullman’s largely historical study explores the way in which students’ lives and identities came to occupy a central position in textbooks aimed at adult learners from the 1970s onwards. Kullman argues that the increasing centrality of the learner in pedagogic materials cannot be explained without an understanding of evolving discourses of identity beyond the classroom. In Chapter 3, I continue with the theme of identity and discuss the ongoing issue of LGBT invisibility in a small sample of contemporary ELT materials. I suggest that this can best be understood through the lenses of heteronormativity and commercialism, and I argue that publishers’ much vaunted claims to inclusivity ring hollow when it comes to the representation of sexual minorities, as inclusivity is trumped by the need to maximise profits.

The next two chapters consider materials for specific contexts and explore how they are used in actual classrooms. In Chapter 4, Christian Chun turns his attention to a textbook and YouTube videos which are used in a North American university programme in English for Academic Purposes. Chun locates his analysis within the context of neoliberalism – the ideology driving market fundamentalism across much of the world since the 1980s, and he explores the ways in which neoliberal discourses are mediated by the materials, and the ways in which these are recontextualised in classroom interaction. In Chapter 5,

Denise Santos provides a vivid 'ethnography of materials production' (Harwood, 2010) and takes the reader through the process of developing a set of materials designed to promote critical thinking among children in Brazilian state schools. In addition to an examination of the process of multiple drafting, Santos then analyses how the materials are used in classroom settings and demonstrates how materials can be re-construed in interaction.

In Chapter 6, Tom Morton focuses on CLIL in Spain and explores teachers' thinking on the role of materials. Morton shows how CLIL places a heavy demand on teachers to become materials developers and he argues that while teachers may welcome the development of commercially produced materials, there is a danger that this may lead to the homogenisation and commodification of educational practices already characterising materials produced for other languages.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 focus on materials for the teaching of French, Spanish and German. In Chapter 7, Simon Coffey compares two textbooks for the teaching of French – one produced in the UK for use in the state school sector and one produced in France for the teaching of French as a foreign language. Coffey shows how French materials convey a particularly narrow concept of Frenchness and how they resemble ELT materials in their deployment of discourses of consumerism and the heteronormative construction of gender. In Chapter 8, Cristina Ros i Solé analyses a popular Spanish-produced textbook for the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language. Her focus is mainly on the treatment of culture, which she argues should incorporate competing versions of the target culture, while at the same time providing students with the space to reflect on cultural representations and giving them the tools to 'pass judgement'. Her analysis reveals the textbook she chooses to be wanting in this respect. In Chapter 9, Nick Andon and Ursula Wingate turn their attention to the teaching of German in the UK state school system, and they argue the need for content which has personal, interactional and situational authenticity. In their study of two popular textbooks, they systematically analyse the topics, texts and tasks and reveal a worrying lack of authenticity and challenge across reading, listening and production activities.

Chapter 10 brings the volume to a conclusion with a provocative contribution from Scott Thornbury who has two targets in his sights – methods and textbooks. He argues that despite the supposed 'death of method' textbooks continue to peddle outdated and frequently contextually inappropriate prescriptions for teaching. Thornbury's account of the history and philosophy of the Dogme ELT movement (cited above)

presents a view of second language teaching and learning in which textbooks are accorded a very secondary role – if indeed they can have one at all.

Notes

1. These were the British equivalent of the North American ‘Dick and Jane’ books.
2. The feminism of the second half of the twentieth century, which was focused largely on ‘white, middle-class, heterosexual women in Western contexts’ according to Sara Mills and Louise Mullany (2011: 15). This is perhaps a little unfair as many scholars such as Kate Millett (1970), Zillah Eisenstein (1979) and Monique Wittig (1993), to name but a few, did indeed focus on issues of class, race and sexuality.
3. This term was coined by the North American sociologist C. Wright Mills (1959: 6) who states that it ‘enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society’.

2

Telling Tales: Changing Discourses of Identity in the 'Global' UK-Published English Language Coursebook

John Kullman

Introduction

The English language coursebook is a pedagogical tool but also a cultural artefact and, in evaluating any cultural artefact, there must be a consideration of the culture within which this artefact is produced and the prevailing discourses that have shaped it, as well as its own role in influencing current and future discourses. Lave and Wenger (1991: 52–3), in discussing the situated nature of learning, write that:

Activities, tasks, functions and understandings do not exist in isolation; they are part of broader systems of relations in which they have meaning.

These *broader systems of relations* are given little attention in literature on the design and evaluation of language teaching materials and tasks. The primary focus of such literature has been to provide the reader with the tools to analyse whether and in what respects materials and tasks reflect 'established' and 'accepted' principles of language teaching methodology. There have been few in-depth explorations of why the coursebook is as it is, or of possible links between coursebook content and broader changing cultural, historical and socio-political systems of relations. This chapter explores the stories learners are asked to tell about themselves in global UK-published English language coursebooks written for and used by young adults studying in a multiplicity of contexts. In doing this I draw on perspectives from the fields of cultural and media studies, discourse studies, narrative theory, psychotherapy and social,

cross-cultural and critical psychology and suggest that an understanding of powerful discourses of identity can help us answer the question of why the global coursebook is as it is. I conclude by considering the implications for all those involved in the writing and publication of global coursebooks, as well as the teachers and learners who use them.

What do we mean by ‘discourses of identity’?

Those working in the field of critical discourse analysis (CDA) have emphasised that ‘discourse’ is ‘more than just language use: it is language use, whether in speech or writing, seen as a type of social practice’ (Fairclough, 1992: 8). Gee (1999: 7–8) expands on the notion of language use as social practice to assert that discourses are intimately bound up with identity, since discourses concern ‘how language is used “on site” to enact activity and identities’. Thus:

when we speak or write we always take a particular *perspective* on what the ‘world’ is like. This involves us in taking perspectives on what is ‘normal’ and not; what is ‘acceptable’ and not; what is ‘right’ and not, what is ‘real’ and not; what is the ‘way things are’ and not; what is the ‘way things ought to be’ and not; what is ‘possible’ and not; what ‘people like us’ or ‘people like them’ do and don’t; and so on (p. 2).

These perspectives on the world are reflected in the ways people narrate the stories of their lives, and ‘it is in narrative that we construct identities’ (Benwell and Stokoe, 2006: 130). Those working in the field of narrative theory have pointed to how individual narratives are themselves inextricable from social narratives; for Stephenson (2000: 117–18), ‘one way in which individuals strive to make sense of their lives is to try to relate their own story to a broader cultural or historical narrative’. A key point made by Somers and Gibson (1994: 73) is that these broader narratives are, though, dependent on context: ‘The extent and nature of any given repertoire of narratives available for appropriation is always historically and culturally specific’. An inevitable result of such historical and cultural specificity is that in any cultural context certain narratives will be dominant, secondary or suppressed. The consequence is that ‘narrative structures set certain limits over who we can be’ (Gergen, 1999: 70) and ‘those who cannot identify with the dominant narrative are likely to feel alienated and excluded’ (Stephenson, 2000: 118).

The notion that certain narratives come to be dominant in and across particular cultural contexts at particular times means that narrative analysis needs to address questions of ideology and power; questions

at the heart of CDA, since language use is 'shaped by relations of power, and invested with ideologies' (Fairclough, 1992: 28). Much of the work done by critical discourse analysts (e.g. Fairclough, 1995, 1999; van Dijk, 1998) draws, either implicitly or explicitly, on the ideas of Foucault, who writes of 'regimes of truth' in a particular society at a particular time. These are:

the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctified; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those charged with saying what counts as truth.

(Foucault, 1980: 131)

Foucault also introduced the notion of *orders of discourse*, which are:

the particular configurations of conventionalised practices (genres, discourses, narratives, etc.) which are available to text producers and interpreters in particular social circumstances.

(Fairclough, 1999: 184)

An order of discourse:

governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others.

(Hall, 1997: 42)

An important notion for Fairclough (1995: 102) is 'technologization of discourse', a process which involves one discourse community being colonised by, and embedding in its own discourse, the discursive practices or genres of another, often unwittingly. Fairclough refers to how the discourse of education has been 'technologized' by other discourses and genres, and refers to the work of Postman (1987), who is concerned with how the discourse of education has been 'technologized' by television genres.

Education and discourses of identity

Sociologists of education are concerned with notions of what constitutes 'knowledge' in different contexts and disciplines and with how this 'knowledge' is represented in curricula, teaching and learning

methodologies, as well as pedagogical materials and activities. In other words, they are interested in different orders of educational discourse. Bernstein (1990, 1996) refers to the process of 'recontextualisation' whereby subject-matter content is transformed into 'instructional discourse' by the 'regulative discourse' of the institutional context. He calls this instructional discourse 'vertical discourse' as it 'takes the form of a coherent, explicit, systematically principled structure, hierarchically organised' (Bernstein, 1996: 171) and contrasts it with 'horizontal discourse', which is 'everyday, oral or common-sense' and has 'a group of features: local, segmental, context dependent, tacit, multi-layered, often contradictory across contexts but not within contexts' (pp. 170–1). For Bernstein educational institutions privilege vertical discourses and learners' own horizontal discourses are relegated in importance or disregarded. The privileging of vertical discourses is effected through 'strong framing' whereby 'the transmitter explicitly regulates the distinguishing features of the interactional and locational principles, which constitute the communicative context' (Bernstein, 1990: 36).

With globalisation orders of vertical discourses in one context can and do technologise orders of discourse in others. For Giroux et al. (1996: 166) the consequence is that curricula in many different contexts:

purvey dominant versions of everyday Discourses, which are at odds with the discursive histories and experience of students from non-dominant social groups.

More specifically, Csikszentmihaly (1996: 130) is concerned about how a powerful globalising educational order of discourse defines:

a tacit set of rules that regulate linguistic practices such as what can and cannot be said, who can speak with the blessing of authority and who must listen.

For Hyland (2000: 108) textbooks themselves are 'largely creatures of their own communities' and are interdiscursive configurations of the conventions, values, practices, activity types and so on that together constitute a particular order of discourse.

Globalising discourses of identity in ELT

The notion that there are 'advanced' methods of ELT which can be transplanted from one cultural context to another so as to 'improve'

the teaching and learning of English has been seriously challenged and has led to calls for 'appropriate' 'context-sensitive' methods (e.g. Bax, 1997; Canagarajah, 1999, 2002; Holliday, 1994, 2005; Kumaravadivelu, 2008). In addition, a broader perspective on the identity of the learner has emerged. Norton (2000: 139) argues that many 'communicative language teaching methods [...] do not actively seek to engage the identities of language learners in the language teaching process' and proposes (Norton Pierce, 1995: 26) that 'the lived experiences and social identities of language learners need to be incorporated into the second language curriculum'. This has also been the call of those who have embraced socio-cultural theory and applied the ideas of Vygotsky and others to highlight the complex connections between language, thought and idea of self in the processes involved in second language acquisition (e.g. Lantolf and Pavlenko, 2001). The implication of socio-cultural theory is that an important role of the language teacher is to attempt to lead the learner towards ownership of the new language. This involves the teacher helping individual learners to find their own new voices in the new language, and to mediate between these new voices and their first language voices.

With the call for greater context sensitivity in language teaching methodology, there have been related calls for greater critical scrutiny of ELT materials and tasks. Pennycook (1994: 178), for example, states that:

English language teaching materials are never neutral, and indeed represent very particular understandings of language, communication, learning, education, and so on. Such understandings, in turn, are also not merely random views but rather part of a broader range of discursive and cultural practices that emanate from the West.

A small number of attempts have been made to identify these 'very particular understandings' including that of Luke (1989), who applies Foucault's notion of orders of discourse as well as Eco's notion of 'open' and 'closed' texts (1979). Luke (1989: 71) concludes that:

most textbooks are 'closed' in that they rely on extreme linearity and conventionality in the presentation of surface images; possible worlds are precluded and conflated, brought into alignment with a prescriptive norm, while the narrative is driven along in an utterly formulaic series of 'causal chains' [...] the systematic elimination of alternatives enables the author of the closed text to draw all possible worlds into a single unitary 'correct' version.

A valid criticism made of those (e.g. Dendrinos, 1992; Alptekin, 1993) who have emphasised the ideologically driven content of ELT materials is that there has sometimes been a tendency to assume too readily that just because certain ideological meanings are encoded and certain discourses of identity are privileged in coursebooks, learners will somehow embrace and appropriate these discourses of identity. Canagarajah (1999: 91), for example, claims that the content of the English language coursebook is: 'reframed, reinterpreted, and "rewritten" by students' counter-discourses', which serve to 'detach themselves [the students] from the ideology of the textbook [...] and construct for themselves more favorable subjectivities and identities'.

While I accept the view of Canagarajah, I believe that we can only come to a nuanced understanding of the process of how learners construct 'more favorable subjectivities and identities' if we identify those discourses of identity embedded in their coursebooks. In doing so, I concur with Fairclough (1995: 6), who, while acknowledging that 'any reading is the product of an interface between the properties of the text and the interpretative resources and practice which the interpreter brings to bear upon the text', believes that 'the range of potential interpretations will be constrained and delimited according to the nature of the text'. In applying Fairclough's words to UK-published global coursebooks, we need to consider in what ways 'potential interpretations' might be 'constrained and delimited' by the topics, texts and tasks that are commonly to be found in the contemporary coursebook, and how these are framed.

In attempting to answer these questions the work of those who have attempted to determine the nature of the news media is a useful guide. The work of Gitlin (1980) was instrumental in alerting us to the processes by which decisions are made in news media organisations on what items to report and how to report them, and employed the term 'framing' to describes the process by which a particular news item is presented to the audience. News frames are:

principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters.

(Gitlin, 1980: 6)

Altheide (1996: 31), in analysing in detail how such frames operate, describes a news frame as:

the focus, a parameter or boundary, for discussing a particular event. Frames focus on what will be discussed, how it will be discussed, and above all, how it will not be discussed.

A major problem for Chomsky (1992) is that the range of frames employed by all but a few dissenting news media organisations is limited in the extreme. The result is that the news media provide us with 'a very narrow, very tightly constrained and grotesquely inaccurate account of the world in which we live' (Chomsky, 1992: 6). Hall (1996: 425) argues that this is because the global news media is controlled by and reflects the 'maps of meaning' of a narrow elite. For Hall (1996: 425) these maps of meaning are taken by key gatekeepers in the global news media to be culture-free or culturally neutral and:

it is assumed that there is, basically, only *one* perspective on events; that provided by what is sometimes called *the* culture, or *the* central value system.

Parallels can be drawn between criticisms of the mono-cultural perspective of the global news media and criticisms in the field of ELT of the lack of consideration of context and culture in much discussion of methodology. In contrast to the field of media studies, however, in ELT there has been a relative paucity of micro-analysis of how published materials frame the world, the people in it and the learner. In the rest of this chapter I trace how global UK-published ELT coursebooks for the young adult learner have themselves been characterised by certain frames and discourses of identity.

Exploring identity frames and discourses of identity in the UK-published coursebook

In the research that informs this chapter (Kullman, 2003) I was interested to find out what had been the major changes and developments (over and above those that reflect changing ideas on ELT methodology) in coursebooks published between 1971 and 1999 in the UK for the global market and written for adult learners. As such, this is primarily a historical study which has been supplemented with examples provided from follow-up analysis of the *Speakout* series published by Pearson in 2011. It is also important to state that changes which I identified in my original research (particularly with regard to the deployment of discourses of individualism and consumerism) have continued to be a significant feature of UK-produced global coursebooks in the first decade of the twenty-first century (Block, 2010; Gray, 2010a, 2010b, 2012b; Kullman, 2013). The coursebooks analysed in the original research were: *Kernel Intermediate* (O'Neill et al., 1971); *Kernel Upper Intermediate* (O'Neill, 1973); *Developing Strategies* (Abbs and Freebairn,

1980); *Studying Strategies* (Abbs et al., 1982); *Headway Intermediate* (Soars and Soars, 1986); *Headway Upper Intermediate* (Soars and Soars, 1987); *Workout Intermediate* (Radley and Millerchip, 1993a); *Workout Upper Intermediate* (Radley and Millerchip, 1993b); *Reward Intermediate* (Greenall, 1995); *Reward Upper Intermediate* (Greenall, 1996); *Cutting Edge Intermediate* (Cunningham and Moor, 1999a); *Cutting Edge Upper Intermediate* (Cunningham and Moor, 1999b). Coursebooks selected for analysis were the core coursebooks specified for classroom use in a particular British Council recognised language centre located in an institute of higher education in the UK in different periods since the late 1970s. The only exception was the *Kernel* series, written in the early 1970s and therefore not contemporaneous with the existence of the language centre in question. The coursebooks chosen were also among the bestselling global UK-published coursebooks in the years following their publication. The coursebooks currently being used in the same particular British Council recognised language centre are *Speakout Intermediate* (Clare and Wilson, 2011) and *Speakout Upper Intermediate* (Eales and Oakes, 2011).

My initial analysis was concerned with determining the overall orientation of the coursebooks, and ascertaining if there were noticeable changes in the cultural orientation of coursebooks in the 28 years between *Kernel Intermediate* and the *Cutting Edge* books. In addition, I carried out an analysis of the opening units of the six intermediate level coursebooks. As I commenced the analysis I was guided by the ideas of those who had written on how certain orders of discourses are prominent in particular contexts at particular times (e.g. Foucault), on how educational systems privilege vertical orders of discourse that are distinct from learners' individual horizontal orders of discourse (e.g. Bernstein) and on the close links between discourses and identities (e.g. Gee), and by the work of those who had analysed framing in the news media and how any cultural artefact will present a partial and culturally specific perspective on 'reality' (e.g. Hall).

My approach was informed by Altheide's model of *Ethnographic Content Analysis* (1996), which provides a framework for the analysis of documents and written texts. In ethnographic media analysis:

Categories and variables initially guide the study, but others are allowed and expected to emerge throughout the study, including an orientation towards *constant discovery* and *constant comparison* of relevant situations, settings, styles, images, meanings, and nuances.

(Altheide, 1996: 17)

Altheide employs the term ‘protocols’ which are lists of ‘questions, items, categories, or variables that guide data collection from documents’. In quantitative content analysis where ‘the emphasis is on obtaining data that can be counted and analysed statistically’, protocols ‘tend to have numerous categories or variables’ and tend to be ‘pre-coded before data are collected’. Conversely, protocols for qualitative content analysis ‘tend to be less precise and fairly short’; they ‘may have some precoded items for each of the categories, but most are likely to be coded and given “refined meaning” after the data have been collected’ (Altheide, 1996: 26).

In the initial analysis a number of protocols were developed with regard to the following general areas: which topics are included; what types of people are represented; which elements of language and communication are prioritised; what settings and contexts are included for the presentation of language; how the learner is positioned; what type of texts in general are used and their sources; what task types are present, what learners are asked to do in tasks and what roles they are asked to play; what features of design are common; and what sort of visual images are included. I started by making detailed notes on each of the 12 coursebooks in respect of these eight categories, accompanied by comments, questions and comparisons with other coursebooks. Subsequently the opening units of the six intermediate coursebooks were analysed with the use of protocols which had by now become increasingly detailed (see Appendix at the end of this chapter for protocols used in the analysis of the opening units).

The increasing centrality of the learner

In the research that informs this chapter, the initial analysis of the six sets of coursebooks and opening units of the intermediate coursebooks revealed that between 1971 and 1999 the most noticeable change concerned the ways in which the learner had gradually become more central. This was a gradual process apparent across the six series, in which there was a move away from the use of others’ (often fictitious) lives, which served to create a storyline and overarching narrative for the coursebook. Instead the learners’ own lives became the central organising narrative of the coursebook by the end of the 1990s. Thus, in *Kernel Intermediate* learners are first asked to read and listen to a text, carry out some activity or activities related to the text, and then to briefly relate the content of the texts to themselves or to situations they might find themselves in, often in tightly controlled drills or exercises the primary

role of which appeared to be the accurate use of grammatical structures. In the first unit of *Kernel Intermediate* learners are first introduced to some of the main characters in the storyline; it is only after intensive questioning about the people in the pictures and texts that learners are instructed to use the simple present to form statements and questions through the use of substitution tables about people in their own lives.

The first unit of the bestselling global coursebook of the 1980s, *Headway Intermediate*, demonstrates some move towards learners contributing to the narrative and sharing their own experiences. However, the narrative continues to be driven by texts about other people in recognisably British contexts. The unit begins with a report 'The average British family: A stereotype' and after question-and-answer practice on the text, learners are asked to find differences between what is acknowledged as a stereotypical description of a British family and 'an average family from your country' (Soars and Soars, 1986: 1–2). Prominent in the unit is also a full-page text on 'the Day and Life of Linda McCartney' (p. 4). There is only one instance in Unit 1 where learners are directed to ask and answer questions about themselves and other learners; this is when learners are directed to ask other learners about how active their weekends are and how far and how often they participate in sport, what sports they play, and how good they are at these sports.

In contrast, at the start of the very first unit of *Reward Intermediate*, learners are asked to define themselves and to write down six pieces of information about themselves, using some of the 31 words and phrases provided. After learners have completed the task, there is a two-stage transference of information; first each learner is instructed to 'show' the information to another learner, and then this learner is directed to 'tell' this information to the class. The interrogation of one learner by another, as directed by the coursebook instructions, is a particularly noticeable feature of the first unit of *Reward Intermediate*; learners' questioning of each other and their responses to a large extent comprise the unit. In the first module of *Cutting Edge Intermediate* ('About you'), the learner is in an even more pivotal role. The module begins by directing learners to find out about each other in terms of five things they 'have in common' in respect of three aspects of identity: home/family, jobs/studies and likes/dislikes (Cunningham and Moor, 1999a: 6). Later in the module learners are asked to write 'ME' on a piece of paper, and around 'ME' the names of 'six important people in your life' (p. 11) and to explain what these people are doing at the moment. Later in the

module learners are asked to interview a fellow learner and to complete a pie chart which shows in diagrammatic form how the fellow learner 'spends his or her time' (p. 13), after which they report on their learner to the class.

The learner is no less central in the *Speakout* series. In the first activity of the first part of the opening unit of *Speakout Intermediate* (Clare and Wilson, 2011) learners are asked to work in pairs and to 'take turns to find out as much as you can about your partner. Talk about your family, job/studies, home and likes/dislikes'. Later in the unit, learners are asked to complete a questionnaire either as themselves or by taking 'a new identity' and to then share their answers with other learners (p. 17). The 12 questions include the following: 'What is your idea of perfect happiness?'; 'What possession is most important to you?'; 'What do you most like about your lifestyle?'; 'What do you least like about your lifestyle?'; 'If you could change one thing about your past what would it be?'.

The findings from the initial analysis on the increasing centrality of the learner led to a second stage of analysis guided by protocols designed to help come to a greater and more detailed understanding of how the learner had by the 1990s become a central focus of interest in the coursebook. In this second stage a further set of protocols were used to direct attention and these included:

- in what ways are features of personality and personal qualities focused on, how are these framed and what are learners asked to do in tasks where these are the focus;
- in what ways are lifestyle practices focused on, how are these framed and what are learners asked to do in tasks where these are the focus;
- in what ways is personal change focused on, how this is framed and what are learners asked to do in tasks where this is the focus.

Personality and personal qualities

In the two *Kernel* books learners are never asked to describe themselves, or indeed others, in terms of personality and personal qualities, but from the *Strategies* series onwards, asking learners to analyse and describe their own and other learners' personalities has been a staple of the coursebook. This is usually through a personality quiz in which learners assess themselves and match adjectives with descriptions of general behaviour (e.g. *Studying Strategies*; *Headway Intermediate*; *Reward*

Intermediate). In *Reward Intermediate* (Greenall, 1995: 46) learners are directed to ‘answer these questions about personal qualities’:

Can you ...
 always tell people what you really think?
 relax with people you don't know?
 usually get what you want?
 keep calm in stressful situations?
 keep your temper under control?
 laugh at yourself?
 always see both sides of an argument?
 ignore criticism easily?
 express your feelings easily?

In both *Reward Intermediate* and *Headway Intermediate*, the quiz is followed by an activity which asks learners to match adjectives with these general descriptions of character traits and behaviour in generalised situations. Three of the ‘qualities’ in the quiz which are particularly worthy of comment are: ‘Can you always tell people what you really think’, ‘Can you usually get what you want?’ and ‘Can you express your feelings easily?’. These ‘qualities’ relate to ‘assertiveness’, a particularly common ‘quality’ promoted in the personality quizzes found in the coursebooks surveyed. Such a tendency is apparent, too, in *Studying Strategies* (Abbs and Freebairn, 1982: 86–9) and a quiz entitled ‘Are you assertive enough in today’s difficult world?’. In *Speakout Upper Intermediate* (Eales and Oakes, 2011: 13) a personality quiz again appears and learners are asked to decide whether they agree or disagree with ten statements, two of which relate to a lack of assertiveness: ‘I often hesitate to speak to groups because I get embarrassed easily’ and ‘I get nervous in large groups’. A third statement is ‘When I was younger I was often awkward in social situations, but not any more’. Common to *Reward Intermediate* and *Workout Upper Intermediate* are tasks which direct the learner to make judgements about people’s personalities from drawings or photographs. In *Workout Upper Intermediate* (Radley and Millerchip, 1993b: 77) a unit entitled ‘Personality’ begins with close-up photographs of seven individuals’ mouths and faces, and learners are asked to match the mouths with the faces. Learners are subsequently asked, from the visual image alone, to ‘describe the facial characteristics and personality’ of each of the seven individuals.

Lifestyle

A recurring theme in coursebooks published since the end of the 1980s is lifestyle. Indeed, the first unit of *Workout Upper Intermediate* is entitled 'Lifestyle'. Learners are first asked to discuss with other learners: 'Which of these three things do you consider necessary for a satisfactory lifestyle?' from the following list: money; a nice house; a car; friends; exciting holidays; living in town; living in the country; good food and drink; a successful career; a happy relationship. Particularly noticeable about this task is the narrow choice provided to learners with the absence of factors such as religion, health, security and family and the emphasis on affluence. The rest of the page on which this task appears is dominated by six colour photographs which feature the following individuals and groups of people: a close-up of a young white woman and her son of about four years old (who, from the style of their dress, appear to be fairly affluent) playing together in a park or garden; a young Chinese boy of about four years old on the street in a Chinese city being spoken to by a soldier in uniform who is kneeling down, with three onlookers; a young white boy of about 18 months old on his own surrounded by children's books; an Asian teenage boy doing schoolwork at a desk; a group of five young children playing next to a small stream in what appears to be a poor shanty town in Latin America; a group of 19 black African men, women and children, photographed from a distance and standing outside a poorly constructed small brick building with a tin roof. After looking at the photographs, learners are asked to discuss: 'Which of the children in the photos do you think have the happiest lifestyle? Why? In what ways could the children disagree with you? Our ideas about what is necessary for a good lifestyle change as we get older. Why is this?'. When we consider the conjunction of text and image in the coursebook, the most striking effect is the incongruity between many of the factors highlighted in the first activity which may be 'necessary for a satisfactory lifestyle' and the apparent poverty of the people featured in the Latin American and African settings. On the following page, before listening to a text, learners are asked to consider the following question: 'How much can you tell about a person's lifestyle and attitudes to life just by looking at them? Which of these things give you a clue?: facial expression; clothes; ways of standing or sitting; anything else?' (Radley and Millerchip, 1993a: 8).

In *Reward Upper Intermediate* (Greenall, 1996: 60–1), in a unit entitled 'Lifestyles', there is another example of how learners are encouraged to differentiate themselves from others. This begins with learners being

asked to list and rank 'important things in your life' and follows tasks in previous units that have asked learners to: consider which of a list of inventions (including television, the light bulb, the computer and the petrol engine) have 'made the most important contribution to people's lives' (p. 46); decide which of a list of items of technology they might find in the home; rank a list of 'features of a holiday' (p. 28); answer a questionnaire and be judged against a key to decide if they are 'true gourmets' or not, and if not, to adjust their eating habits to be more adventurous (p. 50). Learners are then asked to read an article on the Amish community in the US and, after work on the text, to talk in pairs about 'how your lifestyle would change if you had to live without: electricity; motor vehicles; central heating; plumbing' and to consider 'if there is any other aspect of your modern lifestyle which you couldn't live without?' (p. 61).

The emphasis on consumption is also found in *Cutting Edge Intermediate* (Cunningham and Moor, 1999a). In a module entitled 'Things of importance' consumer objects are the focal point. In one component of the module (pp. 84–5) learners are directed to 'describe a personal or ideal possession' and are provided with 'useful language' which includes the following phrases: 'One of the most precious things I own is...' 'I've always wanted...' and 'Something I'd love to own is a...'. Learners are then asked to look at photographs of four people and five objects and to decide which object belongs to which person before a listening text. This is followed by a task which requires learners to talk to others about their most treasured possessions and why they are important to them.

In the *Speakout* series an emphasis on lifestyle continues. A task similar to the 'Which of these three things do you consider necessary for a satisfactory lifestyle?' in *Workout Upper Intermediate* appears in *Speakout Upper Intermediate*. Interestingly, in this task learners are asked to discuss which are the three most and least important 'ingredients of happiness' (Eales and Oakes, 2011: 29) from ten choices provided: a life partner; peace and quiet; a nice car; free time; friendship; sport or exercise; money; future plans; good food; music. After listening to a recording of a man completing this survey, they are then asked to 'prepare a short happiness survey' to carry out with other students in the class.

Personal change

The emphasis on the development of personal qualities, most notably assertiveness, and on the 'improvement' of lifestyle are linked to a more general tendency prominent in the coursebooks published since the late

1980s, that of personal development and change. In both of the *Cutting Edge* books, learners are instructed to focus on diagrammatic representations of other's 'life stories' and then to relate these to their own lives. In *Cutting Edge Intermediate* life is depicted as a road disappearing into the horizon flanked by signposts marked with different ages. Learners are instructed to place particular 'life experiences' on the road, and then asked to talk about their own 'life experiences' (Cunningham and Moor, 1999a: 36). In *Cutting Edge Upper Intermediate* (Cunningham and Moor, 1999b: 8–9) learners are also asked to diagrammatically represent their lives in a 'life map', and to explain this to other learners, having been provided with a framework indicating 'past', 'present' and 'future'. In *Speakout Intermediate* learners are asked to go so far to imagine that they are going to make a film about their lives and to choose five events to include which they then talk to their partner about.

There is also an emphasis in the coursebooks published in the late 1980s and 1990s on personal change and self-improvement related to healthy lifestyle practices. In the *Kernel* series learners are never asked to consider their own health, while in *Studying Strategies* (Abbs and Freebairn, 1982: 62–5) patients are depicted in passive roles being treated by 'experts' and there is an emphasis on symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and cure through surgery and other means associated with 'conventional' medicine. In contrast, in *Headway Intermediate* (Soars and Soars, 1986: 50) learners are asked to make two lists, 'What will make you live longer?' and 'What will make you die sooner?', and are asked to think about 'these areas: job/ambitions/lifestyle/indulgences', and then to 'reduce your list to a "recipe" for a long life'. They then complete a questionnaire entitled 'How long will you live?' before working out their own life expectancies. *Workout Intermediate* includes texts and tasks relating to alternative health remedies, causes of death, personal health histories, healthy and unhealthy diets and the consequences of having an unhealthy diet, preventative medicine, the importance of fitness and ways of keeping fit, and the learners' own fitness. In *Reward Intermediate* (Greenall, 1995: 8–9), learners read a text on 'couch potatoes' and are asked to calculate if they are couch potatoes themselves and to 'check if there are any other couch potatoes in your class'.

In the second module of *Cutting Edge Upper Intermediate* (Cunningham and Moor, 1999b: 18), entitled 'Life's ups and downs', health is depicted as being intertwined with psychological well-being with learners being asked to make lists about 'things that are good and bad for you physically and psychologically'. They are then asked to consider whether certain phrases (including 'having high/low self-esteem', 'feelings of

aggression and hostility', 'a low-fat diet' and 'backache') might relate to 'your physical health', 'your psychological state' or 'both' (p. 18). After a reading text on 'Are you on top of the world?' and a related task, learners are asked whether reading the article has 'made you feel that you should change any of your own habits or attitudes?' regarding 'what you eat and drink', 'how much exercise you get' and 'your work and hobbies' (p. 21).

The notion of personal change continues to be a key motif in the *Speakout* series. In *Speakout Intermediate* (Clare and Wilson, 2011: 49) learners are asked to discuss if their 'ideas, opinions, hobbies, etc' have changed since when they were younger (a similar task appears on p. 108); while in *Speakout Upper Intermediate* (Eales and Oakes, 2011), after discussing their 'hopes and plans for the next five years' and reading an example letter, learners are directed to 'write a letter to your future self to be opened five years from now'. Physical health is less prominent in the *Speakout* books, but there is a considerable focus on emotions and therapy. One of the ten units in *Speakout Intermediate* is entitled 'Emotion' and starts with a lesson on 'Feeling Stressed?'. After reading a short text on 'the six basic emotions' of fear, anger, distress, joy, surprise and disgust, learners are asked to discuss when they last 'felt these emotions' and are then asked to complete a ten-item questionnaire in pairs, which includes the following: 'What makes you angry or annoyed?'; 'What sort of things do you find relaxing?'; 'Is there anything you are frightened of?'; 'What kinds of things make you worried?' (Clare and Wilson, 2011: 68). Later in the lesson learners listen to a recording of a radio programme on 'destruction therapy' and 'laughter therapy' and are asked for their opinions of these and whether they would try them. Finally they are asked to complete five sentences 'so that they are true for you' and compare them with a partner, which include 'If I'm happy, I usually ...' and 'If I'm stressed, I usually ...' (p. 69).

Explaining changing discourses of identity in the UK-published coursebook

Undoubtedly a major reason why learners' lives, personalities, personal qualities, lifestyles and personal change have increasingly become major foci of the UK-published coursebook over this period has been changes in language teaching and learning methodology. The calls for greater learner self-direction and 'autonomy', for 'learner-centredness' and for 'personalisation' have led to greater attention being paid to the learner in published materials. In addition, sophistication in frameworks for

communicative materials and task design (e.g. Cunningsworth, 1995; Willis, 1996; Ellis, 1997, 2003; McGrath, 2002) has clearly impacted on, and continued to impact on, coursebook design. To carry out an evaluation of a coursebook purely according to methodological principles does not, however, provide more than a superficial analysis. Can a broader transdisciplinary approach shed light on why learners' lives, personalities, personal qualities, lifestyles and personal change have become primary foci of the coursebook?

The emphasis on personality and personal qualities in the 'global' coursebook bears traces of a discourse of individualism. Wetherell and Maybin (1996) document a number of assumptions about the individual 'which many people in countries such as the UK and USA would see as simply obvious or true'. These include the assumptions that:

a person is someone with a self-contained mind and consciousness; a unique individual who is separate and distinct from other people; each individual has one personality or a consistent set of traits, characteristics, preferences or abilities which sum up that person's true nature and which could be described and measured.

(Wetherell and Maybin, 1996: 221–2)

An important component of individualism is what Kirkmayer (2007: 241) refers to as 'expressive individualism' which 'defines the person in terms of his capacity to articulate and enact his unique experience, particularly expressions of taste and feeling'. A number of other social scientists (e.g. Burkitt, 1991; Church and Lonner, 1998) have emphasised both the narrowness of such an individualistic construction of self and also the tendency not to see how this construction is partial and particularistic. Kirkmayer (2007: 241) writes that: 'Individualism, with its valorization of the self, seems natural or inevitable' and this leads people in cultures in which a discourse of individualism is dominant to discard the possibility 'that people in other cultures do not understand or experience themselves in the same fashion'.

A discourse of individualism is particularly apparent in the emphasis on 'assertiveness' in the coursebooks surveyed. Research in cross-cultural social psychology (e.g. Furnham, 1979; Matthews and Deary, 1998) suggests that the very notion of 'assertiveness' is context dependent and, for many individuals, may not be considered a desirable personal attribute; Scott (2006: 138), indeed, believes that assertiveness is a 'quality' particularly emphasised in contemporary 'Western society' together with being ambitious and 'communicative'. A comment made by a Japanese high school teacher, in a study carried out by Katayama

(2009: 33) on English language textbooks used in Japanese high schools, certainly suggests that assertiveness may not be a quality that is seen as universally positive:

Su also told me that too much self-expression or self-assertiveness, such as talking about one's personality or talking about their favorite things, can be sometimes too embarrassing.

Even in contexts where assertiveness is generally considered to be a positive personal attribute, the verbal and non-verbal behaviour which characterises 'assertive' behaviour will differ according to the many characteristics of individuals and the variables of the many different contexts that individuals find themselves in (Wierzbicka, 1991).

An emphasis on lifestyle and on consumption has also been seen as a tendency that is peculiarly 'Western'. Chaney (1996: 113), for instance, sees consumerism as the basis of life in Britain, and more generally in the 'West', in the latter part of the twentieth century so that: 'leisure activities and/or consumer habits are becoming increasingly experienced by individuals as the basis of their social identity'. Latouche (1996: 3) believes that this 'Western' model of lifestyle has been exported and imposed on others in a 'worldwide standardization of lifestyles', which has entailed 'domination, with the attendant clashes of views, subjection, injustice and destruction'.

In the field of cultural studies there has been considerable discussion concerning how consumer objects play an important part in identity formation. Sarup (1996: 105–7) refers to 'the new world of consumption' in which there are 'affluent individuals who are no longer surrounded by other human beings, as they were in the past, but by objects', so that there is the belief not only that 'possession and display of the signs of affluence will bring happiness and prestige', but also that individuals are buying into 'an entire system of objects and needs'. For Sarup (1996: 107) in this system one is 'induced to buy not a single object' but also to 'differentiate oneself socially'. In effect individuals define their identity through consumption; it is not simply a question of identity being formed through the acquisition of consumer goods; what becomes of central concern is the 'stories' which individuals 'read into' these goods:

identity becomes vitally and self-consciously enmeshed in stories which are read by consumers themselves into innumerable, relatively mundane, mass produced objects which they buy, use or own.

(Gabriel and Lang, 1995: 89)

For the British sociologist Giddens (1991: 5), the 'stories' that individuals in advanced industrial societies in the 'late modern world' create around consumer objects combine in a process of 'life-planning': "How shall I live?" has to be answered in day-to-day decisions about how to behave, what to wear and what to eat and many other things'. The combination of choices made by an individual and the stories related to these choices entails creating a 'biography':

A person's identity is not to be found in behaviour, nor, important though this is, in the reactions of others, but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going.

(Giddens, 1991: 53)

The use of the term 'narrative' in Giddens' assertion that the search for identity is basically a question of 'sustaining a biographical narrative' reflects other writers' emphasis on narratives being a particularly important feature of the 'late modern' or 'postmodern' age. A key work is that of Lyotard (1984), who distinguishes between, on the one hand, the 'grand narratives' or 'meta-narratives' of modernity, which emphasise coherent and definitive accounts of reality based on notions of scientific, historical, social and psychological movements and progress, and the 'little narratives' of the postmodernity of contemporary life which are characterised by more subjective and experiential accounts of reality.

The examination by learners of how healthy their own and other learners' lifestyle practices are, noted above particularly in the later published coursebooks, can be viewed as a reflection of the increasing medicalisation of everyday life (e.g. Stainton Rogers, 1991; Turner, 1995). This has involved moving from a 'medical' to a 'social' model of health (Gillespie and Gerhardt, 1995). In the former model states of health and ill health are 'biological facts', causes of ill health are identified by diagnosis of physical symptoms by an expert, and treatment is conventional and its aim is to eliminate the symptoms of ill health. In a 'social' model, on the other hand, ill health is caused by social factors which are often controllable by the individual. The discourse is one of self-improvement, which blames individuals for their unhealthy lifestyle practices and puts the onus on individuals to improve their health by changing these practices.

The consideration of psychological well-being in the second module of *Cutting Edge Upper Intermediate* is also part of a discourse of self-improvement that increasingly colonises the coursebooks published in the 1990s that were surveyed. A number of social scientists (e.g. Rose,

1990; Rimke, 2000) have posited that the origins of a discourse of self-improvement that has 'colonised' education (and other professions) are to be found in psychotherapy. A result for Rose (1990: 247) has been the proliferation of 'techniques for examining and evaluating the self: modes of self-inspection, vocabularies for self-description, ways of rendering the self into thought'. Lowe (1999: 82) also writes of how in psychotherapy there is 'the reification of Narrative as a foundational form of knowledge', which can, in turn, 'lead to implicit assumptions about "better" or "more appropriate" narratives'.

On the basis of this chapter's analysis, the global UK-published coursebook for adult learners at the beginning of the twenty-first century can be said to increasingly 'reify' learner narratives and to encourage 'techniques' of self-examination and self-evaluation and 'vocabularies for self-description'. A discourse of psychotherapy can be seen as a contributing factor in the increasing amount of self-disclosure expected of the learner in coursebook tasks. Other possible underlying factors can also be identified; a number of sociologists write of how in British, American and other 'Western' societies the ubiquitous presence of CCTV, the emergence of the internet, particularly social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as reality television, have all played a part in creating a 'surveillance society' (Lyons, 2001, 2007) in which individuals (often willingly) reveal intimate aspects of their lives and identities to public scrutiny. 'Surveillance' is also a key notion in the work of Foucault and a prime example of surveillance for him (1979: 59) is the 'Western' tradition of confession which:

plays a part in justice, medicine, education [...] one confesses in public and in private, to one's parents, one's educators, one's doctor, to those one loves.

Conclusions

I noted at the beginning of this chapter the comments of Lave and Wenger (1991: 52–3) on the situated nature of learning and the importance of understanding the 'broader systems of relations' which give meaning to 'activities, tasks, functions, and understandings'. Without a consideration of discourses of individualism, consumerism, the medicalisation of everyday life and psychotherapy, it is not possible to more than superficially account for the centrality of the learner and the autobiographies that learners are encouraged through activities and tasks to recount in coursebooks published since the late 1980s.

Allowing learners greater scope for relating the content of their own personalities, lives and lifestyles in the English language classroom is a principle that few, if any, teachers would disagree with. However, arguably, too little thought has been given to what it is that learners are asked to recount about these personalities, lives and lifestyles, and how they are directed to do this. Are the narratives learners are asked to recount 'dominant' and 'culturally specific' (Somers and Gibson, 1994: 73) with the result that a significant proportion of learners 'feel alienated and excluded' (Stephenson, 2000: 118)? The view of Sampson (1993: 142), a view that is of particular relevance to a consideration of the coursebook, is that in any discipline: 'dominant groups both wield their power and ensure its maintenance by engaging in monologues masquerading as dialogues'. The global coursebook can indeed be said to 'masquerade as a dialogue' in that, at first sight, it is seemingly devoid of certain dominant images and contexts which reflect and promote a certain cultural worldview and set of values, unlike coursebooks published in the UK for the global market in earlier decades. However, I suggest that the global coursebook remains a 'monologue', which prioritises and encourages certain partial understandings of identity.

How can the English language coursebook embrace and encourage true 'dialogue' in which learners are enabled and encouraged to relate narratives that are not 'channelled'? The potentialities for true 'dialogue' can be found in reactions within psychology to what has been seen as the univocality inherent to psychotherapy. These reactions are located within a movement termed 'critical psychology', of which Parker is a key figure (1999, 2002), and which Sampson describes as being 'dedicated to helping provide voice for those whose versions have rarely been accorded the kind of legitimacy they deserve' (2000: 3). In 'critical psychology' the notion that the therapist is an 'expert' whose role is to direct the therapeutic encounter according to a pre-determined format is challenged, and therapists encouraged to 'help their clients to understand the situated and relational nature of selfhood, to allow them to understand their different voices' (Hepburn, 2003: 83).

ELT is a profession which is truly global in its reach, and in which the coursebook is the most obvious manifestation of that globalisation, with its marketing, adoption and classroom use in a multiplicity of contexts. Not only those who evaluate, but also those who write and publish coursebooks and other materials, as well as the teachers and learners who use the coursebooks, need to address issues of culture and identity deeply, and not assume that there is a logical equation between materials which appear at first glance to be safe and sanitised (in that they

will not appear to offend the cultural sensibilities of any particular user in any particular context) and the notion that these materials somehow do not encode and embed particular culturally situated discourses and perspectives on the individual. A first vital step in such a process is to revisit what has become a rather tired and vacuous mantra in ELT methodology: 'personalisation'. In doing so we need to start with questions of what personalisation might mean and how it might be realised in English language classrooms in different contexts in terms of the tasks that learners are asked to carry out. 'Providing voice' for learners is not simply a question of providing opportunities in the coursebook for learners to talk about themselves in ways that are narrowly channelled by coursebook tasks which impose a certain way of personalizing. A lot of what might be seen as personalisation is what I call 'channelled individual personal response'. I would distinguish between an *individual personal response*, which is an individual response by the individual learner to what the coursebook or teacher asks him or her to do, and an *individualised personalised contribution*, which involves the learner making an individualised choice about what he/she talks or writes about, and the ways he/she does so.

The teacher of English needs to be aware that every choice of material, activity, topic, text and task cannot be divorced from broader discourses of identity. Many teachers of course can, and often do, adapt coursebooks and help learners understand that coursebooks not only present very narrow slices of life, but embody, and often impose, peculiar and partial discourses of identity. They are assisted in their efforts by turning to the field of critical literacy and critical pedagogy (Wallace, 1992, 2001, 2002; Muspratt et al., 1997; Norton and Toohey, 2004), and to an approach which helps learners to 'challenge [...] particular ways of talking about persons, places, events and phenomena and ways of talking to the reader – of positioning him/her in particular ways' (Wallace, 1992: 61).

Appendix

Protocols used in the analysis of the first units of the six intermediate coursebooks:

1. The learner introduced/defined

Are learners asked to introduce themselves at the beginning of the unit? If not, how does the unit begin? What other people and contexts are learners asked to focus on before being asked to introduce themselves? How

are learners asked to define themselves? What aspects of their identities and lives are they asked to talk or write about? Are they asked to place themselves or others in particular categories?

2. Texts

What is the origin of the reading and listening texts? What and who do these texts focus on? What are learners asked to do before, while, and after they attend to these texts?

3. Structuring and sequencing within the unit

How is the unit structured? Is the structuring determined by the reading and listening texts? How far do the tasks serve as adjuncts to the texts and how far do they (help) determine the structure? Can the structure of the unit be explained in terms of narrative?

4. Graphic and visual elements

What part do visual images play in determining the structure of the unit? What other functions do visual images have? What people and places are depicted in the visuals? How are they depicted?

5. Lexis

What lexis is included in the unit? What lexis are learners asked to use in talking/writing about themselves and others? Is this lexis 'factual' or 'evaluative'? Is there a pattern of binary oppositions within the unit? Which lexis is denotative and which connotative?

6. Grammar

What contexts are provided for the presentation and practice of grammatical structures? What are learners asked to talk/write about when using particular grammatical structures?

7. Transitivity/modality

How far are learners agentive and how far acted upon in the unit as a whole and in individual tasks/sections? How are learners allowed choice in directing and talking/writing about themselves as well as actions and events?

8. Discourse and pragmatics

What aspects of discourse are salient in terms of functions, register, speech acts, topic management (including openings and closing, forms of address, directness/indirectness, turn-taking, issues of face and self-disclosure)?

3

LGBT Invisibility and Heteronormativity in ELT Materials

John Gray

Introduction

In a newspaper article published in 2012, the writer and journalist Owen Jones concluded his assessment of the evolving legal landscape surrounding homosexuality and changing social attitudes in the UK as follows:

Thanks to the struggle of gay people, the law no longer writes us off as lesser human beings. It's a tremendous accomplishment that was achieved at great cost. But the struggle for 'normalisation' – to be gay without anyone even raising an eyebrow – may have decades to go.

(Jones, 2012)

Jones is right about the extent of achievement, particularly since the 1960s, and about the inevitability of ongoing political struggle. A similar view is taken by the sociologist Jeffrey Weeks (2007: 3), who argues that in the first decades of the twenty-first century we find ourselves 'in the midst of a long, convoluted, messy, unfinished but profound revolution that has transformed the possibilities of living our sexual diversity and creating intimate lives'. And he adds, 'I believe the long revolution to have been overwhelmingly beneficial to the vast majority of people in the West, and increasingly to people living in the global South whose lives are also being transformed dramatically' (p. 3). It is hard not to agree with Weeks' broadly optimistic assessment of change and what he sees as its global ramifications. In *State-sponsored Homophobia*¹ (Itaborahy, 2012), the most recent report by The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), it is pointed out

that while a total of ten countries (so far) allow same-sex couples to marry and a further 14 allow for some form of civil partnership, 113 of 193 member states at the United Nations do not criminalise or have decriminalised homosexual acts between consenting adults (i.e. nearly 60 per cent of member states). That said, the report makes for chilling reading in its accounts of the worsening and in some cases life-threatening conditions faced by those identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) in many parts of the world.

The social changes described by Weeks have more recently been explored by the sociologist Mark McCormack (2012) with regard to schooling in the UK. In *The Declining Significance of Homophobia*, an ethnographic study conducted in three schools among 16–18 year old males, McCormack concludes that heterosexual masculinity is currently being redefined by modern British teenagers and claims that his informants see acceptance of homosexuality as ‘cool’ and that they openly engage in tactile expressions of affection with each other in the full knowledge that their heterosexuality is uncompromised. McCormack argues that a number of factors have combined to make homosexuality less of an unknown and feared phenomenon for young heterosexual males (and indeed for young women as well). These include: the decline of Christianity in the UK (confirmed in the 2011 census)²; the removal of the anti-homosexual clause in Section 28 of the Local Government Act of 1988 (covering England, Wales and Scotland), which made it illegal for schools to teach ‘the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship’ (Local Government Act, 1988: 27); the heightened media visibility of openly and unashamedly LGBT public figures from all walks of life; and the role of the internet in disseminating information about sex and sexuality. Although the attitudes and behaviour of the teenagers he describes *are* clearly indicative of social change, it is hard not to see McCormack’s broader claims about the near disappearance of homophobia (i.e. the fear and hatred of gay people) as excessively Panglossian. Stonewall, the UK’s most high-profile lesbian, gay and bisexual campaigning group has consistently argued in a series of reports published throughout the early years of this century that homophobic bullying is alive and well in British schools (Hunt and Jensen, 2007; Guasp, 2009, 2012). The most recent of these reports, based on a survey of 1,614 self-identifying lesbian, gay and bisexual young people aged between 11 and 19, was carried out on behalf of Stonewall by the University of Cambridge Centre for Family Research. It concluded that although reported homophobic bullying *had* decreased by 10 per cent since 2007 ‘[m]ore than half (55 per cent)

of lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils have experienced direct bullying' (Guasp, 2012: 4). So although progress is real, at least in some settings, it is also clear that it is uneven.

It is against this background of ongoing struggle and profound social change that this chapter is written – specifically with regard to the treatment of LGBT issues in a variety of different types of paper-based and electronic ELT materials. As pointed out in Chapter 1, the ways in which women, people of colour, the disabled and the elderly are represented in UK-produced materials has changed considerably. However, as Scott Thornbury (1999) pointed out some time ago, these regimes of inclusivity do not extend to the representation of sexual minorities. 'Where are the coursebook gays and lesbians?' he asks, before providing the answer – 'They are nowhere to be found. They are still firmly in the coursebook closet. Coursebook people are never gay' (Thornbury, 1999: 15).

In this chapter I will argue that this kind of erasure can best be understood through the lenses of heteronormativity (explained below) and commercialism. The remainder of the chapter unfolds as follows: in the next section I continue with an extended discussion of heteronormativity – justified, I would suggest, by the pervasiveness of this phenomenon in ELT materials and the implications this may have for students and teachers in a variety of settings. From there I move on to explore LGBT representation in a sample of contemporary ELT materials for use in a variety of different settings. This is followed by an exploration of interview data in which a small group of UK-based lesbian and gay teachers and teacher educators discuss LGBT representation in pedagogic materials, and LGBT issues in ELT more generally. The chapter concludes with a short discussion of what I consider to be the main issues arising with regard to LGBT issues in ELT materials.

Heteronormativity

As the legal scholar Rosie Harding (2011) suggests, the genealogy of the term heteronormativity can most probably be traced to Adrienne Rich's (1980) *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence*, a foundational text in lesbian studies. Although Rich did not coin the term (that would come later in the work of Michael Warner, 1993), she was responsible for focusing attention on the way in which heterosexuality was (and continues to be) repeatedly presented to women (via the media, advertising, education, religious pronouncement, etc.) as the norm and the natural way of things. However, from the second wave feminist

perspective, it is a 'man-made' institution which both demands the adherence of women to its main precepts and penalises their departure from it (although clearly less so today in some settings). It is a short step from the concept of compulsory heterosexuality to that of heteronormativity, which has been described by Deborah Cameron and Don Kulick (2003: 55) as consisting of 'those structures, institutions, relations and actions that promote and produce heterosexuality as natural, self-evident, desirable, privileged, and necessary'. As they point out, while the concept of compulsory heterosexuality is associated with feminist analysis and specifically with the oppression of women by men, that of heteronormativity originates in (but is no longer exclusively associated with) queer theory – namely the assemblage of theoretical positions, all broadly post-structuralist in orientation, that coalesce around the critique of essentialised views of gender, heterosexuality as an institution and the mechanisms by which it is privileged, naturalised, and reproduced. From this perspective, heteronormativity can be understood in terms of what Pierre Bourdieu (1972: 164) refers to as a *doxa* – that is as 'an established order [...] producing the naturalisation of its own arbitrariness', something pertaining to the 'world of tradition experienced as a "natural world" and taken for granted'.

From the Marxist-influenced position I adopt here, the increasing plasticity of human sexuality in the modern period (Giddens, 1992), and the emergence of sexuality-based identities and lifestyles which presuppose a challenge to the heterosexual norm, can best be understood from the perspective of the evolutionary impact of the capitalist mode of production on human sexual relations in general and the 'progressive differentiation of sex from the exigencies of reproduction' (Giddens, 1992: 27). In outlining this position, I will argue that while heterosexuality is far from compulsory for all under capitalism, it can also be strategically privileged at times for a complex variety of reasons and I will also suggest that commercial ELT is particularly vulnerable to this.

In *Capitalism and Gay Identity*, the historian John D'Emilio (1993) argues that it is capitalism itself which permitted the emergence of the homosexual – not in the narrow sense as a type of desire or behaviour (that clearly has a much longer history), but as an identity increasingly assumed by more and more ordinary women and men in industrialised urban settings, particularly from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. This modern 'flourishing of homosexuality' (Giddens, 1992: 28) only became possible, D'Emilio (1993: 470) contends, as 'wage labor spread and production became socialized' (i.e. moved out of the family as a productive unit). Similar points are made by the critic Nancy Fraser

(1998: 147), who argues that capitalism produces a gap 'between the economic order and the kinship order' thereby allowing 'significant numbers of individuals to live through wage labour outside of heterosexual families', and by the Marxist feminist Rosemary Hennessy (2000: 29), who states that 'new forms of identity [were] provoked by capitalism's progressive impulses'. Same-sex desire as a recurring human trait was thus enabled to find greater room for expression and crucially the growth of the industrial city allowed for the initial development of thriving subcultures and the later emergence of increasingly politicised communities (Robb, 2003). At the same time, it needs to be underlined that, while capitalism may have permitted the emergence of homosexuality as an increasingly assumed identity, it does not follow that all elements of the capitalist class (and capitalist society more widely) welcomed this.³ How then, we might ask, given the affordances created by capitalism for the pluralisation of sexual identities, can the pervasive power of heteronormativity, and the heterosexism (i.e. the active discrimination by heterosexuals against homosexuals) and homophobia that can accompany it, be accounted for?

In the first place it is clear that the accumulation of prejudice and taboo against same-sex sex pre-dates the arrival of the modern era and the emergence of the homosexual as a specific kind of identity – the sacred texts (and the interpretations placed on them) of many of the world religions, with their origins in the pre-capitalist past, are a reminder of that.⁴ In the preface to the first edition of *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Friedrich Engels (2010 [1884]: 4) wrote, '[t]he less labor is developed, and the less abundant the quantity of its production and, therefore, the wealth of society, the more society is seen to be under the domination of sexual ties'. In other words, given the importance of the family in pre-capitalist modes of production and its role as a mechanism for the protection and the inheritance of property, sexual ties as legitimised in powerful (and frequently religious) belief systems about the nature of marriage, the secondary status of women, honour and the family have tended to hold sway in such societies. That prejudice and taboo against same-sex sex continue to endure today is evidence, as Raymond Williams (1973) explained (although not writing specifically on the subject of homosexuality), of the complex and indirect relationship between what Marxists refer to as the base (the economic structure of society) and the superstructure (the world of politics, law, religion and culture in general), in which the latter is seen as being 'determined', or more accurately 'conditioned' or 'shaped' (Fraser and Wilde, 2011: 32–3) by the former. Williams (1973: 6) argued that it

was necessary to reconceptualise the relationship between these two as follows:

We have to revalue 'determination' towards the setting of limits and the exertion of pressure, and away from a predicted, prefigured and controlled content. We have to revalue 'superstructure' towards a related range of cultural practices, and away from a reflected, reproduced or specifically dependent content.

From this perspective, the superstructure could be seen to contain what Williams referred to as both residual and emergent cultures. Thus what today might be called 'gay culture' is an example of what he termed an 'emergent-incorporated' culture, by which he meant 'new meanings and values, new practices, new significances' (Williams, 1973: 11), to which we might add new ways of being, that are increasingly recognised as legitimate and which become part of the dominant culture through, for example, heightened visibility, changing social attitudes and legislation (e.g. state recognised same-sex partnerships or the right of gay couples to adopt children). Residual culture, on the other hand, refers to those meanings, values and practices which are 'cultural as well as social' and which pertain to a 'previous social formation' – to which he added, '[t]here is a real case of this in certain religious values, by contrast with the very evident incorporation of most religious meanings and values into the dominant system' (Williams, 1973: 10). Although the term 'residual' connotes something that is left over from a process that is finished, Williams uses the term to suggest that which endures and which may continue to have present relevance (and which, we might add, can be strategically invoked when required).

Thus, we find that the idea of the idealised heterosexual family has been at times strategically invoked by successive right-wing governments when the needs of capitalism (or parties representing the interests of capital) have required it. This was evident during the early days of the AIDS crisis when Margaret Thatcher (1987) famously invoked the family as the first line of defence against the disease. The government which she led also introduced anti-homosexual legislation (Section 28, referred to earlier) as a way of pandering to the right of the Conservative party (and traditionalists generally) at the height of the moral panic generated by the AIDS crisis. This had far-reaching consequences for education in Britain generally and, it has been suggested, may have impacted negatively on the representational practices regarding gender and sexuality in UK-produced ELT textbooks aimed at the global

market (Burke, 2000).⁵ Nonetheless, this same Conservative party, while in coalition government, brought forward legislation in 2013 for the introduction of gay marriage – despite what might be called the residual challenge of various religious groups. The point I wish to make is that political parties representing the interests of capital are far from monolithic in composition and that at different historical moments they may strategically take up apparently contradictory positions.

It should be clear therefore that capitalism does not require *of necessity* the denial of recognition and rights to those identifying as LGBT, despite arguments put forward by critics such as Judith Butler (1998: 41) who has taken the view that the ‘operations of homophobia are central to the functioning of political economy’. In challenging Butler on this point, Fraser (1998: 146–7) argues plausibly that if we were to accept that capitalism *requires* homophobia, then the struggle against it is perforce a struggle against capitalism – a position which, she suggests, flies in the face of actual events:

the principal opponents of gay and lesbian rights today are not multinational corporations, but religious and cultural conservatives, whose obsession is status, not profits. In fact, some multinationals – notably American Airlines, Apple Computer and Disney – have elicited the wrath of such conservatives by instituting gay-friendly policies, such as domestic partnership benefits. They apparently see advantages in accommodating gays, provided they are not subject to boycotts or else are big enough to withstand them if they are.

I will return to some of these points later, but suffice it to say here, other scholars (e.g. Sayer, 2005; Benn Michaels, 2009) have made similar observations, namely that heteronormativity, heterosexism and homophobia are not integral to capitalism. However, as we shall see in subsequent sections, this does not mean that profit cannot be derived from heteronormativity (as indeed Fraser implies), in the sense that specific markets, and in particular educational markets, may be identified as requiring precisely this kind of content.

Methodology

To explore Thornbury’s (1999: 15) charge that ‘[g]ayness is about as omitted as anything can be’ in contemporary UK-produced materials for the global market I examined a sample of ten contemporary textbooks (Table 3.1) from five contemporary popular courses with a view

Table 3.1 EFL textbooks

Title	Author(s)	Year of publication/ publisher
New English File (Elementary)	C. Oxenden, C. Latham-Koenig and P. Seligson	2004/Oxford University Press
New English File (Pre-intermediate)	C. Latham-Koenig, C. Oxenden and P. Seligson	2012/Oxford University Press
face2face (Pre-intermediate)	C. Redston and G. Cunningham	2012/Cambridge University Press
face2face (Intermediate)	C. Redston and G. Cunningham	2006/Cambridge University Press
New Inside Out (Pre-intermediate)	S. Kay and V. Jones	2008/Macmillan
New Inside Out (Intermediate)	S. Kay and V. Jones	2009/Macmillan
New Headway (Elementary)	L. Soars and J. Soars	2011/Oxford University Press
New Headway (Intermediate)	L. Soars and J. Soars	2009/Oxford University Press
Global (Pre-intermediate)	L. Clandfield	2010/Macmillan
Global (Intermediate)	L. Clandfield and R. Robb Benne	2011/Macmillan

to seeing if this remained the case. I deliberately chose to focus on textbooks aimed at the lower level of proficiency as it is here that vocabulary for talking about the family, family trees, the naming of relations and the theme of relationships in general tend to be introduced. The treatment of such thematic content, as Thornbury implied, is indicative of the textbook's implicit stance on normative sexuality. At the same time, as suggested by Stonewall's guidance for the production of materials for modern foreign languages, such content provides a natural context for introducing diversity (whether in terms of representing families with clearly identified LGBT members, families in which the parents may be of the same sex, or teaching terms such as 'civil partnership' alongside words such as 'marriage'). I approached the materials with the following questions in mind:

Are there any representations of clearly identified LGBT characters in these textbooks?

If so, what forms do they take?

Is there any treatment of a topic related to sexual diversity (e.g. gay marriage) or the teaching of lexis related to sexual diversity (e.g. lesbian, gay, straight, civil partnership, homophobia, etc.)?

If so, what form does it take?

By way of comparison, I also looked at three additional publications aimed at students in specific local settings which I knew from my own reading explicitly addressed the subject of homosexuality. These were *Choice Readings* (Clarke et al., 1996), a supplementary reading course produced for migrants to the US; the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) *Citizenship Materials for ESOL Learners* (2010), aimed at migrants to the UK; and *Impact Issues 2* (Day et al., 2009), a discussion-based supplementary textbook aimed at older teenagers in Pacific Rim countries.

As stated above, and in line with the approach taken in Gray (2010a), I also interviewed a number of users of ELT materials – all of whom self-identified as lesbian or gay, and all of whom had worked in a variety of settings in the UK and abroad, teaching, for example, English as a foreign language (EFL), English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), English as an additional language (EAL) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP). As Table 3.2 shows, this was an experienced group of practitioners representing a wide range of different types of teaching in local and global settings. The aim was to explore their thinking on the current state of play with regard to LGBT representation in ELT materials and to elicit what they considered to be the key issues with regard to materials design in the future (see Appendix for interview schedule). As part of the interview, informants were also shown two

Table 3.2 Teachers⁶

Teacher	Number of years experience	Type of experience
Ana	18	EFL (Hong Kong, Indonesia, Thailand), ESOL (UK)
Cathy	23	EFL (Spain), ESOL (UK)
Susan	30	ESOL (UK), EAL (UK)
David	22	EFL (Spain, France, Turkey, UK), ESOL (UK), EAP (UK)
Mark	13	EFL (China), ESOL (UK)
Peter	13	EFL (Spain, Poland, UK), EAP (UK)

pieces of material that included LGBT representation (details provided below) and asked to say what they thought of them.

Textbook analysis

Global materials

For those readers who are familiar with UK-produced textbooks for the global market, it will come as no surprise that the analysis revealed that there is no reference to same-sex sexual orientation in any of the titles listed in Table 3.1. In the treatment of the family and in content on ideal partners, internet dating and relationships, socialising, travelling and meeting new people, there is a blanket avoidance of any representation of clearly identified LGBT characters. Occasional short texts about gay figures (who might be familiar to students in some settings) do feature – for example Elton John (Redston and Cunningham, 2006), Oscar Wilde (Clandfield, 2010) and Gianni Versace (Redston and Cunningham, 2012). However, these are all notable for their avoidance of any mention of homosexuality.

There are no reading or listening activities that suggest the existence of sexual diversity and in no activities that students are asked to do is their being LGBT or knowing anyone who is LGBT in any way implied. Rather what we see is the construction of a completely ‘monosexual community of interlocutors’ (Nelson, 2006: 1) for the contextualisation and practice of the language being taught – a suggestion that families are invariably made up of a mother and a father (with the exception of a profile of a ‘single mother’ in Oxenden et al. [2004]), that uncles and aunts (where partnered) have partners of the opposite sex and that being in a relationship, having relationship problems or finding a partner are exclusively heterosexual matters. For example, in a unit on a recurring textbook theme entitled ‘How we met’ (Redston and Cunningham, 2012: 16–17), students are taught a set of verbs to enable them to talk about relationships. These include ‘get engaged to someone’ and ‘get married to someone’, but not to ‘be in a civil partnership with someone’ – despite the fact that the 2012 edition of this textbook was published seven years after the introduction of civil partnerships in the UK. Students read and listen to accounts of how three heterosexual couples met and then do an exercise in which they are asked to (1) ‘Choose a married couple you know well (you and your husband/wife, your parents, other relatives or friends)’, (2) make notes on the couple and (3) share the information with other students (p. 17). Although students could clearly opt to focus on a same-sex couple they

might know, it could also be argued that this is made less easy for them by the omission of any representation of a same-sex couple from the preceding exercises, and indeed the book as a whole. The message of erasure may well be taken by students as meaning that what is erased is off limits, literally unmentionable in class.

Love as a theme in literature and film is also represented as invariably heterosexual. Thus a reading on romantic films entitled 'Five classic love stories – which one is yours?' (Oxenden et al., 2004: 45) lists *My Fair Lady*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, *An Officer and a Gentleman*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Fatal Attraction* – but not, for instance, gay classics such as *My Beautiful Laundrette* or *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*. On the few occasions when homosexuality could be inferred, the textbook tends to provide clarification to the contrary lest readers get the 'wrong' idea. For example, in a unit on food, students are introduced to male friends Duncan and Nick who appear to live together, are shown compiling a shopping list and going out for dinner together. When the artwork shows them cooking together, the accompanying listening text makes it clear that the meal they are preparing is for their girlfriends (Soars and Soars, 2011). In similar fashion, students are informed that a young man, who goes to a fancy dress party dressed as Marilyn Munroe, did not actually enjoy wearing high heels and lipstick (Kay and Jones, 2009).

At the same time, familiar tropes from the mainstream press and the self-help literature on the supposed essential gender differences between (invariably heterosexual) women and men are recycled without comment – for example, how men and women shop differently (Oxenden et al., 2004; Redston and Cunningham, 2012), how they prefer different kinds of food (Clandfield, 2010) and how they talk differently (Kay and Jones, 2009; Latham-Koenig et al., 2012). With regard to the latter, students are asked to categorise a set of utterances that include 'But I just don't need another pair of shoes', 'Let's switch off the TV, I want to talk about our relationship' and 'Shall I check the tyre pressures when I get to the petrol station?' under two headings: 'Things women *never* say' and 'Things men *never* say' (Kay and Jones, 2009: 76). Although encouraging students to categorise women and men in such essentialised ways can be seen as deeply problematic (certainly from a queer perspective), it also resonates with wider cultural assumptions. Cameron (2007) describes such essentialised views of women and men as myths – on the one hand, patent falsehoods, and on the other hand, part of a set of stories that circulate within contemporary (Western) society that are used by the media to explain heterosexual women and men to themselves and to each other. These stories, Cameron suggests, are

repeatedly told – in books such as *You Just Don't Understand* (Tannen, 1990), *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* (Gray, 1992) and *Why Men Don't Iron* (Moir and Moir, 1999) – at a time when gender differences are in fact being blurred by social, scientific and legislative change. She speculates plausibly that they function as reassuring reminders of the purportedly unalterable differences between women and men that many people have grown up with. Thus, while women may be represented as being equal with men in these textbooks, they are, in content such as this, also represented as being essentially different in ways that are wholly consistent with the heteronormative construction of gender.

As I have shown elsewhere, ELT publishers are far from unaware of the nature of the material they produce in this respect. In interviews carried out with senior figures at a major UK publisher, I was told that a 'love interest' was usually included in textbooks aimed at the teenage market and that 'it's always heterosexual' (Gray, 2010a: 124). The informant, a senior editor, admitted to being uncomfortable with the deliberate erasure of the possibility of same-sex attraction and stated that in doing so 'we're not dealing with reality' (p. 124), which she saw as often entailing uncertainty about sexual orientation, particularly among teenagers. By way of explanation, she added:

I mean we have to compromise all the way down the line. The compromise is very hard and what I'd like to do in a classroom with students, and what I would be able to do with raising awareness, talking through things, you can't expect that your teacher is necessarily going to want to do that, and you can't expect to raise certain, to force your teacher to raise certain issues, because they'll, because I mean the bottom line is we want our course to be bought.

While this sense of frustration was no doubt deeply felt, it can also be seen as an attempt to shift the responsibility for such heteronormativity away from the publishers, as powerful regulators of content, onto teachers as the users (or potential refusers) of content. From this perspective, it is the conservative nature of the market that is to blame for the publishers' reproduction of heteronormativity. However, things may be a little more complicated than this – as I suggested in Gray (2010a), where I referred to the changes imposed by the publishers on the second edition of *Framework Pre-Intermediate* (Goldstein, 2008). Initially aimed at the southern European market, this textbook was first published in 2003 by Richmond, which is owned by the Spanish Santillana company. One unit contained four short texts accompanied by

photographs in which couples described how they met. One couple consisted of two men – Ricardo and Simon. The text simply explained that they had met by accident at a New Year's Eve party and that they had been together ever since. The textbook's commercial success led to its publishers deciding to bring out a new edition and to introduce it into new markets deemed more conservative than those for which it was originally designed. At this stage the gay couple was removed and replaced with a heterosexual couple. As Goldstein pointed out (in Gray, 2010a) rather than produce two editions, the publishers took the decision to produce one edition only. The refusal to produce two editions, one with and one without the gay couple, was motivated entirely by commercial concerns and the incident provides a clear example of how heteronormativity is the default position when profits may be at stake.

The same heteronormative practices are clearly at work in the textbooks listed in Table 3.1. These are all examples of global materials, aimed at the widest possible number of buyers in as many countries as possible – including some of those listed in the ILGA report (Itaborahy, 2012) as sponsoring homophobia. Here too the reluctance to segment markets and include LGBT representation in textbooks aimed at less conservative markets can be explained by the need to maximise profits. Interestingly, the sociologist John Thompson (2005: 89) points out, with regard to Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press (both major ELT publishers), that ELT sales 'have served in many ways as the engines of growth for both organizations in the period since 1980'. And he adds that '[w]ithout the surpluses generated from ELT publishing, the financial performances of both OUP and CUP over the last two decades would have been much weaker' (p.188) (see Gray, 2012a for fuller discussion). In such a scenario, where company profits in one sector are in fact used to subsidise activity in others, LGBT invisibility in ELT textbooks may seem to be a price worth paying. In this way, as I suggested earlier, commercial ELT actively privileges heteronormativity and derives profit from it.

Supplementary and context-specific materials

But as I mentioned above, and as the publication of the first edition of *Framework Pre-Intermediate* shows, LGBT invisibility is not total. In EFL settings, supplementary materials have traditionally been the place where very limited reference to taboo subjects can be found (e.g. MacAndrew and Martínez, 2002). However, this kind of material can sometimes frame discussion in ways that are deeply problematic, as

this recent example shows: ‘Which nationalities do you think are most homophobic?’ (ESL Discussions.com). A particularly problematic framing of homosexuality is found in *Impact Issues 2* (Day et al., 2009), which advertises itself on the publisher’s website as having been designed to develop critical thinking and facilitate self-expression (Pearson ELT). In a unit entitled ‘Ben and Mike’ two young men talk about a rumour circulating among their college classmates that they may be gay – because they spend so much time together. Their conversation makes it clear to readers that they are simply best friends. Students are then asked to read the opinions of four classmates and decide which one makes the ‘strongest’ point. I have added the implicature of each statement in italics below.⁷

Mark: You shouldn’t believe everything you hear about your friends.

[Saying you shouldn’t believe everything you hear implies that what you hear may be negative.]

Anna: It’s wrong to spend most of your time with just one friend.

[People might get the ‘wrong’ idea if a man spends a lot of time with another man.]

Shingo: You have to be careful how you act with your friends. Someone might start a rumour.

[Rumours are generally about negative things, and therefore a rumour about being gay is a negative thing.]

Iris: It’s difficult to ignore rumours. Sometimes they end up being true.

[If this rumour is ‘true’, then the fact that they may be gay is a negative thing.]

(Day et al., 2009: 59)

Students are then asked to give their own opinions, but on those already articulated by the four textbook classmates (e.g. ‘Do you think Shingo is right?’). Two model answers are provided in speech bubbles – ‘I think Mark has the right idea. You shouldn’t believe what you hear. What do you think?’ and ‘Yes, but I also agree with Iris. It really is difficult to ignore rumours’ (p. 59). In framing the discussion in this way the expression of alternative views are potentially restricted – although obviously the teacher or the students could subvert this. Having had their

discussion, students are then asked to consider a list of activities (such as 'hold hands', 'kiss on the cheek', 'kiss on the lips'), and answer the question: 'Is it OK for best friends to do these things in your country? What if they are men? Women? A man and a woman?' (p. 60). Again the activity is framed in such a way that normativity is not questioned, as the model discussion shows:

- A: We usually don't see two men holding hands.
 B: Yeah. That's not very common. What about women?
 C: Sometimes I see women holding hands.
 D: Me, too. I guess that's OK. (p. 60)

The final 'I guess that's OK' carries the implication that while it may be OK for women, it is not OK for men. Gayness as treated in this unit is clearly something for young people to be worried about, a potential source of problems with implications for their reputation within their wider social networks (in fact the initial dialogue makes it clear that one student has already refused to work with Mike on account of the rumour). Overall it is difficult to see how any of the activities encourage critical thinking or, given the framing of discussions, how they could facilitate genuine self-expression around any of the issues raised by the material.

Somewhat different are the materials for migrants to the US and the UK. These are designed to be explicitly informative about changing social attitudes and although they are clearly well meant, and instances of the 'emergent-incorporated' culture referred to earlier, they are not without problems. The NIACE material is linked to the UK government's citizenship agenda and contains information on civil partnerships and diverse families. However, a reading about two men who have a civil partnership is accompanied by advice to the teacher on the potential difficulty of using the material:

This is a very sensitive topic and teachers will need to use their judgment and discretion in deciding which activities are suitable for a specific group of learners.

(NIACE, 2010)

A similar warning accompanies the material on diverse families, which includes a picture of a lesbian couple with their baby daughter. Teachers are told:

This could be a very sensitive topic; learners may be bereaved or separated from their families, and teachers will need to use their judgment and discretion in deciding which activities are suitable for a specific group of learners.

(NIACE, 2010)

That potential student bereavement could be offered (by the materials writers themselves) as a reason *not* to use a set of materials on different kinds of families is an indication of the way in which any mention of gayness in the context of migrant education in the UK is seen as requiring extreme sensitivity (a point I will return to in the next section). Despite the fact that information about sexual diversity has been included, the message to teachers would appear to be that such material may often be too controversial to use.

No such reticence is found in the US material I looked at. Here students read about Elliott, a 4–5 year old who has been adopted by two men. The reading begins as follows:

Elliott's family is his two fathers – his 'Papa', Dimitri, and his 'Daddy', Tom. Dimitri says, 'Families come in all shapes and sizes. We happen to be gay men, two men who love each other, but we do the same things that other families do – we make oatmeal for Elliott, we give him baths.'

'Dimitri and I knew when we first got together nine years ago that we wanted to be parents,' Tom explains. 'We started to prepare for a family long before Elliott was born. That's why we bought our house'.

(Clarke et al., 1996: 44)

The reading is accompanied by a photograph of Dimitri, Tom and Elliott, smiling happily at the camera, in what would appear to be a comfortable middle-class home. The text explains that although the family is fully accepted in the neighbourhood in which they live, they are looking for a bigger house to buy as they also have three dogs and are planning on adopting more children. Apart from the fact that both parents are men, the picture painted is similar to that found in mainstream ELT materials – namely, one of middle-class comfort, in which the characters appear to lead the lives they have freely chosen for themselves and in which their exercise of choice is both unproblematic and unimpeded.

Dimitri and Tom are in fact early examples of what the sociologist Diane Richardson (2004) refers to as ‘good gays’, a phenomenon she locates within the mainstream rights-oriented quest for recognition and the right to be the same as everyone else – but in ways which do seek to challenge the prevalent meanings associated with officially endorsed models of citizenship. That said, this material is a clear attempt to redress an imbalance in the representational practices normally found in ELT materials where, as I have shown, LGBT invisibility and heteronormativity are very much the order of the day. It is also notable that this unapologetic representation of a (middle-class) gay couple dates from a time when gay men in particular were still associated in much of the mainstream media with HIV/AIDS (then still proving difficult to treat), which meant that they were often represented as stigmatised carriers of disease (Sontag, 1989).

I now turn to the perspectives of lesbian and gay teachers and teacher educators with a view to exploring their thinking on the representational practices I have just described. As we shall see, their views suggest that LGBT invisibility and heteronormativity in ELT in general raise issues that go beyond those solely of representation.

Lesbian and gay teachers’ perspectives

As expected, those interviewed thought sexual diversity and LGBT characters should be included in pedagogic materials and that by not including this element, LGBT students and teachers were denied recognition and a somewhat skewed picture of the world was reproduced. Mark was generally typical of the group in making the case for LGBT representation as follows:

We’re part of the world and if the only representation of gays and lesbians that people get are often negative ones, or like ‘I won’t know someone like that’ then people won’t understand each other and there’ll be things that, you know, misconceptions, and people will think it’s not relevant to them, but the student sitting next to them might be gay, their teacher in this case is gay, it is relevant.

In line with Anthony Liddicoat’s (2009) assessment of the limitations of modern foreign language materials, interviewees also took the view that the systematic omission of sexual diversity and the pervasive heteronormativity of the materials they were familiar with meant that LGBT students were frequently silenced or made to feel invisible, with negative

consequences for students' language learning. This was exemplified by Cathy, who recounted how a lesbian friend had dropped out of an ESOL class precisely for that reason. None of those interviewed said they were familiar with EFL materials that included positive LGBT representations and none of them had previously seen the two pieces of material I showed them in the interview – the short text about Ricardo and Simon from *Framework Pre-Intermediate* and the reading about Elliott from *Choice Readings*. However, those with recent ESOL experience were aware of the NIACE citizenship material and David, Mark and Peter also reported being familiar with supplementary EFL materials in which homosexuality was made available as a specific topic for discussion – although all of them stated they found the framing of this generally problematic. By way of exemplification, David gave the example of an EFL supplementary book which asked students to discuss the question, 'Should homosexuality be illegal or punishable in some way or other?'. Peter took the view that, rather than addressing gayness as a problem or as a controversial topic for discussion, it should be included in units on relationships and the family 'because that's where it would naturally occur in conversation'. For this reason he said he liked the reading about Ricardo and Simon – 'it's just presenting things in like a natural context'. This was similar to the view expressed by Mark, who saw it as a way of normalising diversity:

Just like that activity you showed me, if you've got four couples, have one of them as an LGBT couple, have, you just make things like normal, commonplace, so you don't have a big lesson on we should be, we should all respect LGBT people, but it's just, that idea of normalising, and therefore it should come through, sort of, teaching material.

This is certainly the 'mentioning' approach (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991) recommended by Stonewall in their materials for modern foreign languages. Here it is suggested that in learning how to talk about families, students can be given model sentences which include references to diversity, for example 'Le mari de mon oncle s'appelle Keith' (translated as 'My uncle's partner is called Keith') (Stonewall website). In this way, it is suggested, LGBT recognition becomes part of the fabric of the lesson – LGBT students may feel included and the legitimacy of an LGBT orientation is signalled to the whole class. Mark's final point about the focus coming *through* the materials themselves is important as it means the individual teacher (and in particular the individual LGBT teacher who

may feel vulnerable in introducing the topic) does not have to engineer discussion – and run the potential risk of being seen to bring their own concerns into the classroom.

At the same time, all the informants made it clear that LGBT representation raised a number of issues that went beyond the words or the images on the page of a textbook or piece of material, particularly in certain contexts. For example, Cathy, who referred mainly to ESOL settings, saw LGBT erasure as ‘part of the kind of infantilisation of the classroom especially for adults’ which she saw as typifying ELT pedagogy generally. However, she added quickly that in her view ‘it isn’t enough to just bung it in to a set of materials and presume that’s going to be the matter sorted out’. While discussing the reading on Elliott, she outlined her overall position more fully:

I would use it, I think it’s pretty interesting, but it’s pretty unbelievable in terms of its absolutely kind of aspirational, positive, no problem here, there’s no discrimination, there’s no homophobia and nobody gets any comments made about them [...] I think this could be really interesting if you kind of handled it in a dialogic way, if you had an interesting kind of discussion arranged around it, and you had a lot of trust in the group, and you had a diverse group, you know there’s a lot to be done with that, but you would have to question how it was being presented as this completely unproblematic story of two guys who just have this amazing life with no problems [laughing] or with this kid [laughing] [...] this is as unrealistic in a way as some of the ELT stuff that pretends gays don’t exist, like some of the gender stuff is as unrealistic, just because they’ve turned the roles round, this is a role reversal and it’s actually deeply conservative.

Rather than simply normalising the topic, Cathy is clearly more concerned with challenging representations she finds unrealistic or otherwise problematic, and exploring the associated meanings with students in ways which are congruent with her overall subscription to critical pedagogy and a desire not to talk down to them. Cathy’s concern is not with ‘mentioning’ as such, but rather with the form the ‘mentioning’ takes. Her comment about the importance of trust and the kind of group is significant though – as the kind of dialogic talk she sees as integral to teaching is potentially challenging for both teacher and students. It also resonates with comments made by the other informants who discussed this in greater detail with reference to the homophobia of some students – an issue to which I now turn.

David told the story of how he had been working in a UK university language centre with a group of students over a period of time and had come to feel that a degree of trust had been built up between him and the group. When asked in class if he was married, he told them he was not. The students, who were all from a country in which homosexuality is a punishable offence, then asked him about the ring on his wedding finger. He took the decision to tell them that he was in a civil partnership – something he had never done with a group before. On sharing this information he said ‘the whole thing crashed’ as the rapport and ‘the respect’ he had built up with the class disappeared. One of the consequences, he said, was that ‘you also sort of connect with your own internal homophobia’. When I asked him to elaborate on this, he said:

My own internal homophobia is sort of brought to life sometimes by, by the class or given, given voice [...] we’ve grown up in a society which is predominantly straight, so we’re outsiders anyway, so I think you, you keep that with you for a long, long time, maybe a very small amount but it’s there and I think that classes can sometimes trigger that.

In this situation, David found himself misrecognised (described by Andrew Sayer [2005: 52] as ‘part refusal of recognition and part stigmatised recognition’) in such a way that residual stigma acquired earlier in life was reactivated (Goffman, 1968). Although none of the others mentioned ‘internal homophobia’, they were all aware of the dangers associated with this kind of disclosure. Perhaps not surprisingly, of the six teachers I interviewed, none of them (with the exception of David) had come out to an entire class. Several had done so on an individual basis and often to LGBT students who had come out to them, or who they wanted to reassure in some way.

What then are the conclusions to be drawn from these exploratory interviews? Overall this group of informants accepted that there should be LGBT representation in ELT materials, and that LGBT students were frequently silenced and rendered invisible by the overwhelming heteronormativity of what was on offer. The inclusion of LGBT representation was not seen as entailing a pedagogy in which disclosure was to be expected. As Cathy put it, gayness should be examined ‘as a set of discourses’ rather than ‘as personal experiences and disclosures’ – unless of course, as reported by Liddicoat (2009), LGBT students actually want to be able to talk about their personal life or say who they had been

to the cinema with at the weekend, in which case, materials which did incorporate LGBT recognition could play an important role in signalling the legitimacy of that.

At the same time, the informants all agreed that LGBT recognition entailed developing the ability to manage potentially difficult situations and that homophobia directed towards themselves or other students was a potential risk in some teaching situations. For this reason, Susan, Ana and Mark underlined the case for institutional support that went beyond inclusivity in textbooks. As Ana put it:

If you don't have that drive from senior management to say we're going to stamp on homophobia, then if you are the teacher who tries to do something and you don't have the support from either your line manager or senior management, you're, you're setting yourself up to fail [...] even if you had like gazillions of material available [and] every single coursebook's got a section on gender.

She also felt that homosexuality would always be misrecognised by some students and, precisely for that reason, took the view that it was her job to teach what she called 'the language of opinion', rather than 'the language of insult'.

In the next section I consider briefly what I take to be some of the implications for ELT publishing in the light of the analysis of the textbooks and the views of these informants.

Conclusion

Since the 1990s a steady stream of publications on LGBT issues aimed at language teachers (e.g. Nelson, 1993, 1999, 2005, 2006, 2009, 2010; Curran, 2006; Dumas, 2010) and those working in education generally (e.g. Harris, 1990; Pinar, 1998; Kumashiro, 2002; Toynton, 2006; Shelly, 2007; Meyer, 2010) has been accompanied by the appearance of specialist journals such as the *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education* and the *Journal of LGBT Youth*. What these publications demonstrate is that LGBT issues are increasingly being researched and discussed in ways that commercial ELT can no longer continue to ignore. As the ILGA report referred to earlier shows, and as scholars such as Weeks (2007) who take a historical perspective have argued, the movement (however sluggish and backsliding at times) is towards greater recognition of the legitimacy of those who self-identify as LGBT. And yet, as I have argued, LGBT invisibility and pervasive heteronormativity remain

entrenched in mainstream ELT materials, largely because of commercial considerations and the refusal to segment markets.

However, evolving legal frameworks in the UK may help to facilitate change. The 2010 Equality Act lists a variety of settings, including the provision of education, in which discrimination on the basis of nine 'protected characteristics' is deemed illegal. Of the nine, three are directly relevant to those identifying as LGBT – sexual orientation, being in a civil partnership and gender reassignment. In turn, the government's education inspection agency OFSTED has responded by updating its *Handbook for the Inspection of Further Education and Skills* (2012: 38) by identifying LGBT learners as a group whose 'needs, dispositions, aptitudes or circumstances' may mean that they 'require particularly perceptive and expert teaching and, in some cases, additional support'. What this means is that institutions will have to demonstrate that LGBT students are not being denied recognition. This is clearly in line with the view taken by scholars such as Fraser (1998: 141), who argues that the denial of recognition is a kind of harm 'that any morally defensible social order must eradicate'. Similarly Sayer (2005: 52), who points out:

Repeated refusal of recognition to an individual can produce serious psychological damage and refusal of recognition to a group also damages its well-being and ability to function in wider society.

The changed inspection framework in the UK presents institutions offering ESOL and ESOL practitioners with a set of challenges that are wide ranging – but it is also an opportunity. As suggested in this chapter, inclusivity in materials is one way in which redressive action can be attempted and clearly UK publishers have a role to play (although institutional support and teacher education will also have important contributions to make). That said, it would be naïve to assume that LGBT recognition can be incorporated into UK-produced textbooks aimed at those markets in which homophobia is institutionalised or state sanctioned (although the ethics of catering for such markets should also be questioned). But not all markets are equally conservative when it comes to LGBT representation – the success of *Framework Pre-Intermediate* (Goldstein, 2003) reported earlier was proof of that. Market segmentation is possible and *does* take place when it is considered financially worthwhile – see for example North American editions of popular global courses. Given that textbooks of the kind listed in Table 3.1 are also used in ESOL classroom, it surely now behoves the industry to move with the times, to rethink their representational practises with regard

to LGBT invisibility and heteronormativity in materials, and begin to segment markets along lines which are no longer determined by the entrenched prejudices of their most conservative customers.

Appendix

Interview schedule

1. Do you agree with the assessment of some commentators that, although ELT materials aimed at the global market are less sexist than previously, they continue to marginalise those who identify as LGBT – in terms of who gets to be included?
2. Do you think it is important that there is LGBT representation in ELT material?
3. What do you think of these pieces of material? [extracts from *Framework Pre-Intermediate* (2003) and *Choice Readings* (1996)]
4. Do you see any problems with regard to incorporating LGBT representation in ELT materials?
5. What do you think is the effect of LGBT invisibility in ELT materials on LGBT teachers/teacher educators – and on those who are not LGBT?
6. What do you think is the effect of LGBT invisibility in ELT materials on LGBT students – and on those who are not LGBT?
7. Can you think of a moment/incident/experience from your own teaching when an LGBT issue became important – and if so, can you tell me what it was, and how you dealt with it?
8. What is the way forward – given the commercial nature of ELT publishing and the diversity of contexts in which English is taught?

Notes

1. Itaborahy (2012: 5) points out that the draft report was reviewed by experts from Leiden Law School, The Netherlands, King's College, London and Birkbeck College, London.
2. McCormack has nothing to say about the increase in non-Christian forms of religious belief in the UK and the way in which being religious can in some instances be understood to entail homophobic attitudes.
3. Nor indeed does it follow that the so-called socialist states of the twentieth century were any more enlightened in their treatment of those identifying as homosexual. One only has to look at Cuba, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, or Russia under Stalin for this to become clear. In fact, capitalist and so-called socialist states have both at specific historical moments legislated against homosexuality and actively penalised homosexual activity.
4. Clearly I do not wish to suggest that all religious people are homophobic.

5. Henry Burke (2000) speculated that the climate of caution created by Section 28 was such that UK publishers chose to avoid the topic altogether. While this may have been an element, given that textbooks produced for the global markets were also used within the UK, it is also certainly the case that commercial motives played a significant role in determining representational practices.
6. Pseudonyms have been used.
7. I am grateful to David Block for pointing this out to me.

4

The 'Neoliberal Citizen': Resemiotising Globalised Identities in EAP Materials

Christian W. Chun

Introduction

Neoliberalisation is a globalising political project that has imposed painful economic measures on millions of people in numerous countries. Vital social care budgets have been eliminated and, particularly in North America, services such as public education are targeted for defunding and privatisation as part of neoliberal restructuring policies at local levels. The consequences include students suffering from larger class sizes and fewer teachers due to school programmes being closed and staff lay-offs, all of which result in far less attention to individual learners at risk, particularly English language learners.

In the past 35 years, neoliberalism has become an 'everyday discourse' (Leitner et al., 2007: 1). This discourse has circulated a vocabulary in redefining our social interactions: phrases such as 'flexibility', 'accountability' and 'best practices', regularly featured in corporate discourses, have now been adopted in educational settings. With its aim to commodify education, the neoliberal project has aimed to foster a complicit depoliticised citizen/educational subject, which Brown (2005: 43) termed 'the neoliberal citizen'. The concept of neoliberal citizenry represents the attempted eradication of socio-political concerns and issues in its reducing active 'political citizenship to an unprecedented degree of passivity and political complacency' (Brown, 2005: 43). By defining every aspect of human life 'in terms of a market rationality', neoliberal discourse is intent on 'extending and disseminating market values to all institutions and social action' (p. 40). This extension of market or

economic rationality aims to produce the 'model neoliberal citizen [...] who strategizes for her- or himself among various social, political, and economic options, not one who strives with others to alter or organize these options' (p. 43).

However, neoliberal policies have generated numerous contestations at various local levels such as worker cooperatives, community enterprises and organised challenges in urban areas (Leitner et al., 2007; Gibson-Graham, 2008). In the case of several English language classrooms, neoliberal discourses have also been debated, including English language learners' varying roles as either passively complacent or as democratic activists articulating their own learning needs (e.g. Morgan, 1998; Benesch, 1999, 2001, 2006; Stein, 2004; Janks, 2010). What is at stake then is the need to challenge these culturally politicised re-articulations of individuals as neoliberal citizens. Although neoliberalism has claimed the notion of 'individual choice' as its defining feature, its policies are fundamentally anti-democratic in their attempts to deny people their own voices in organising and altering their options in society (Couldry, 2010).

Equally important is how particular neoliberal conceptions and portrayals of the economy, or what Ruccio (2008: 7) terms 'economic representations', affect 'how we understand [...] the consequences of those representations in terms of reproducing or strengthening the existing economic and social institutions and of imagining and generating new ones'. The economy is viewed here as being 'both determined by, and a determinant of, the social (including political and cultural) and natural elements that make up the rest of the world, such that there is no clear line that can be drawn between economy and non-economy' (p. 10). As Ruccio points out, we need to consider both the role 'diverse economic representations play in how [...] subjectivities and identities are constituted' (p. 15), and how these representations are 'produced, how they circulate, and the manner in which they are contested in sites and practices throughout society' (p. 15).

In contrast to the extensive research on neoliberalism in sociology, anthropology, geography, urban studies and political economy in the past 25 years or so, it has only begun to be directly addressed in the TESOL/applied linguistics field (e.g. Gounari, 2006; Holborow, 2006; 2007; Chun, 2009; Gray, 2010b; Clarke and Morgan, 2011; Block et al., 2012). Clearly, further exploration is needed, particularly the ways in which these discourses are taken up in an English language classroom. This chapter explores how discourses of neoliberal cultural identities and economic representations in English for academic purposes (EAP)

classroom materials were mediated in an advanced reading and writing class in a university-level intensive English programme (IEP). The materials include both an EAP textbook and YouTube videos selected by the instructor.

Viewing language and discourse as a social semiotic¹ (Halliday, 1978; Kress, 2010), I examine three strands of neoliberal discourses found in these EAP materials: (1) the neoliberal citizen as entrepreneur of the self; (2) neoliberal globalisation as economic representation; and (3) neoliberalisation as multiculturalism. These first two will be addressed in an analysis of the participants' viewings of the YouTube videos and their recontextualising these discourses in classroom interactions. I discuss the instructor's and students' varying levels of critical engagement with the EAP materials' invested notions of neoliberalisation by examining the particular pathways of their meaning making. For the third strand, due to space limitations, selected passages from the EAP textbook unit used in the class will be analysed. I conclude by arguing that critical literacy pedagogy can be used to deconstruct representations of neoliberal identities in EAP materials, and to help students find ways to critically situate their own learning within the current global contexts of people reclaiming their roles as democratic citizens.

What is 'neoliberalisation'?

Watkins (2010: 7) argued that despite neoliberalism being 'a dismal epithet [...] imprecise and over-used', it is necessary to have a term 'to describe the macro-economic paradigm that has predominated from the end of the 1970s'. Due to its dynamic, highly uneven and contested developments, the term 'neoliberalisation' is used hereafter to emphasise these policies and processes as a 'syndrome' rather than 'neoliberalism', which suggests 'a singular entity, essence or totality' (Brenner et al., 2010: 330). Inasmuch as neoliberalisation is a complex 'reorganization of capitalism' (Campbell, 2005: 187), one could ask, what is gained from labelling these reorganising dynamics as such rather than simply using the term capitalism?

There are several important developments that have emerged since the 1970s that warrant this use of 'neoliberalisation' in naming specific phenomena that have restructured capitalist systems. One development is the increasing 'extension of market-based competition and commodification processes into previously insulated realms of political-economic life', which have been 'accelerated, and intensified in recent decades' (Brenner et al., 2010: 329). The promotion of the market

as an objective or neutral social mechanism is apparent in many governments' 'market-based, market-oriented, or market-disciplinary responses' (p. 329) to the systemic crises in capitalism in the past 30 years. Secondly, the attendant attempts to deregulate and privatise formerly state-owned enterprises and defund social services have resulted in private capital accumulation through dispossession of public wealth (Harvey, 2005). Lastly, both the massive deregulation of finance capital (particularly in North America, the UK and Europe) and the outsourcing of manufacturing jobs by companies searching for cheaper labour elsewhere have been integral to the dismantlement of post-1945 social contracts in Europe and North America. Thus, employing 'neoliberalisation' can serve as a 'means of *denaturalizing* globalization processes' (Peck et al., 2009: 97), and this act of denaturalising involves examining how this particular face of capitalism has been constructed both ideologically and politically.

Neoliberalisation as hegemonic rationality

Neoliberal discourse attempts to construct a 'hegemonic rationality' through its 'embedding [...] as rationality in everyday social organization and imagination' engendering 'a whole way of life for which neoliberal discourse provides the organizing metaphors' (Couldry, 2010: 5). One central metaphor, as Couldry observed, is the 'market' as the organising frame for society that serves to delimit and marginalise other ways to imagine alternatives. Furthermore, in basing its rationality on defining freedom only in terms of what the market has to offer, individual freedoms are redefined as being solely the 'capacity for self-realization and freedom from bureaucracy rather than freedom from want, with human behavior reconceptualized along economic lines' (Leitner et al., 2007: 4).

For Williams (1977: 109–10), hegemony involves 'not only the conscious system of ideas and beliefs, but the whole lived social process as practically organized by specific and dominant meanings and values' that saturates 'the whole process of living [...] of the whole substance of lived identities and relationships'. Viewing how people mediate their lived experiences through the lens of hegemony enables us to examine in detail the neoliberal cultural dynamics at work in making its discourse one that is 'not regarded as dominant discourse, but as the natural way of thinking and doing things' (Gandin, 2006: 195). Considerable energy is expended in renewing, recreating, defending and modifying (Williams, 1977) a discourse so that it becomes the natural way of

thinking, or as Gramsci (1971) termed it, 'common sense'. However, this common sense should not be regarded as 'false consciousness' because 'it contains elements of truth as well as elements of misrepresentation' (Forgacs, 2000: 421). It is because of this unstable, fluid tension between the two that common sense is 'an arena of ideological struggle' (Gandin, 2006: 196). As I will illustrate, these tensions are highlighted in the classroom participants' mediations of the various discourses as they accept and adopt naturalised ways of thinking congruent with the videos, while also at times resisting and challenging these views. It is precisely in these moments that a counter-hegemonic pedagogy can help facilitate the students, situating and connecting their curriculum materials with socio-political concerns that affect them all.

An EAP classroom ethnography

The research is from a nearly year-long EAP classroom ethnography that began in February 2009 and concluded in December 2009. The data collection included 74 classroom observations, field notes, audio and video-recordings, interviews with the participating instructor and students, photos, and curriculum materials including course videos. It was conducted in an IEP, at a North American public university located in a major urban area, which has been rapidly diversifying in the past 20 years. The programme's EAP classes run for 12 weeks, and are offered four times a year in the winter, spring, summer and fall terms. The IEP's enrolment was approximately 300 students at the time the study was carried out. The programme faculty numbered 35 instructors, many of whom were non-tenured and on a contractual basis depending on enrolment. During my research, the instructor was granted a permanent tenured faculty position. She started teaching at the programme in 2005; previously she had taught at several ESL schools and community colleges since 1999.

For the winter 2009 and fall 2009 terms, the instructor was assigned to teach the advanced-level reading and writing class. Upon completing this advanced-level class, the students would be able to matriculate at the university if granted admission and provided they passed the programme's exit examination. However, not all the students who passed this examination left the programme immediately thereafter. For various reasons, such as scheduling conflicts or waiting to hear from other schools, several of the advanced-level graduates elected to enrol in the programme's post-advanced-level class. In the spring and summer 2009 terms, the instructor was assigned to teach this post-advanced-level class

in reading and writing. The data in this chapter are drawn from these two terms.

During the spring 2009 term, in her post-advanced-level reading and writing class, the instructor had 11 students: six female and five male. They came from China, Japan, Taiwan, Russia, Peru, Mexico and Saudi Arabia. All were planning to pursue graduate studies in North America in disciplines such as accounting, marketing and political science. In the following summer 2009 term class, the instructor had only two students, both male, one from the UAE and the other from Saudi Arabia. They were also planning to pursue graduate degrees; one student in political science and the other in business and marketing. These students, both in their roles in an EAP class and in their lived identities as part of a global network, should be seen as partly embodying some of the discourses that found their way into this particular classroom.

To account for how socially situated meaning makings are co-constructed through classroom-mediated texts and videos, it is important to examine the process through which these meanings become recontextualised in the classes I observed. Iedema (2003: 41) called this process 'resemiotisation', which is 'how meaning making shifts from context to context, from practice to practice, or from one stage of a practice to the next'. This involves analysing how specific meanings are made in this classroom via the instructor's evolving teaching practices, the classroom participants' engagements with curriculum materials, the students' particular meaning-making processes and the institutional discourses that help create the context in which these actions take place. Furthermore, the resemiotising process does not end there, but continues in my own data analysis reflecting my own lived experiences.

In addressing how social actors make meanings from resemiotising texts and discourses in specific contexts, I employ a mediated discourse analysis (MDA), a critical analysis of discourse rooted in an ethnographic approach. MDA is appropriate because its central task is 'to explicate and understand how the broad discourses of our social life are engaged (or not) in the moment-by-moment social actions of social actors in real time activity' (Scollon, 2001: 140). It is therefore necessary to see how these discourses are transformed semiotically 'across a wide variety of times, places, people, media, and objects', or their 'discourse itineraries' (Scollon, 2008: 233–4) as they are mediated by the instructor, the students and myself. The discourse itineraries examined here include the participants' resemiotising the YouTube videos in their classroom mediations, upon which my unit of analysis is based.

The neoliberal citizen as entrepreneur of the self

In the spring 2009 term, acknowledging the increasing multimodal aspects of the academic curriculum (Cope and Kalantzis, 2009), the instructor began using videos in conjunction with the course textbook. She had the students view two YouTube videos on globalising companies as part of the unit on business. One video, entitled 'Future of paper, pulp and packaging industry' (Pjvdixon, 2008), features a business futurist, Patrick Dixon, speaking on global trends of paper product consumption trends. The video was part of the instructor's objective in having the class analyse globalisation narratives in the context of the global economy. The extract from the video transcription begins at three minutes 15 seconds into the video:

1. Patrick Dixon: As these countries in Asia and Africa continue to generate economic growth, as the number of middle class people in these countries aspires and gradually develops Western-style lifestyles, you will see that their use of paper and cardboard will increase dramatically. Now, I'm not saying that in India you're going to get populations using 300 kilograms of paper a year as in the US, after all, the US is becoming more efficient with recycling. The US is on a downward curve, as is the European Union, as is Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the rest. What I'm saying is that India will, at the top end, eh, in its wealthy population, will certainly achieve a likely target of 100 kilograms per person of paper per year, maybe even 150, maybe even 200 kilograms of paper a year. And that's going to be a very different scenario than today when it's played out in the global market. Now, when we look at =² (*instructor pauses the video*).
2. Teacher: = Is that information valuable?
3. Student 1: Yes.
4. T: Why?
5. S1: We have to invest in Kimberly-Clark!
6. T: OK.
7. Student 2: This guy must be really, really rich.
8. T: You must be?
9. S2: This guy must be =
10. T: = Really, really rich?
11. S2: If he can predict trends like that, he must be rich.
12. T: So why is it important, for the rest of you now, what do you think? How would you profit from this information? Why is it important information? Why is it useful?

13. S2: If you would consider =
14. T: = Wait, wait, wait. Don't. The rest of them. Let's give everybody else a chance. (*eight seconds elapse*) Maybe a better question is to whom is it useful? (*six seconds elapse*)
15. S2: To anyone who invests money?
16. T: To anyone who invests money? So just investors. The rest of you, you have anything to say? What do you think? (23 seconds elapse) OK. (the instructor resumes playing *the video*)

The instructor's opening move frames Dixon's paper consumption forecast as being 'valuable' or not. The first student's suggestion that 'we have to invest in Kimberly-Clark!' (an American corporation that sells paper-based products including facial tissues and toilet paper) appears to signify his interpreting 'valuable' in this context to mean Dixon's ability for profitably forecasting investment trends. The instructor may not have intended or anticipated this direction as she responds in turn 6 with only an 'OK'. The second student in turns 7 and 11 reinforces this by presuming Dixon 'must be really, really rich' based on his ability to 'predict trends like that'. The instructor continues their framing by asking 'how would you profit from this information?' and 'Why is it useful?'. Her choice of the word 'profit' seems to be positioning her students as potential investors, or as if they were business majors, although only three students (out of 11) in the class intended to study business-related subjects.

However, in turn 14, the instructor recontextualises the issue when she asks 'maybe a better question is to whom is it useful?'. There is a six-second silence. Although she attempts to shift the focus to whose interests this information might be of use, no student offers a response until the second student says, 'to anyone who invests money?'. Her response, 'so just investors' seems to make a move to address alternative audiences for this video. After the instructor asks, 'the rest of you, you have anything to say? What do you think?', a 23-second silence elapses before she resumes playing the video.

I would like to highlight several aspects in this classroom exchange. Is the instructor here positioning herself as someone who may be knowledgeable about business in her question to the students on how they would profit from the video's information? Is she addressing students, not all of whom were interested in pursuing business-related degrees, as if they were future entrepreneurs? In working with content material that features a globalising world of business and commerce (Block and Cameron, 2002), how do teachers address the

subject positions these materials offer in their neoliberal discourses of entrepreneurship and economic mobility? This raises the issue of how EAP instructors relate to and position themselves with regard to EAP content materials (see Hyland, 2006). For some teachers, their passive deferral to these texts and their discourses can actually serve to prevent students from fully learning academic discourses. In order for EAP students to join a specific academic discourse community, they first need to understand how its discourses work at every level. Teaching students how forms of power and knowledge are constructed through disciplinary language and discourse using a critical language approach (Janks, 2010) can enable them to deconstruct and demystify academic texts they often find difficult and intimidating.

To what degree are these students receptive to these discourses of entrepreneurship since some of them intend to become global players in their own right, while others express alternative ambitions? This issue is raised by the silences in turns 14 and 16. A 23-second silence might not be all that long in some classroom contexts, while in others it might be an uncomfortably long pause. One explanation might be that some EAP students may have difficulties in articulating their responses given that the video content was not related to their academic interests or planned fields of study. As mentioned previously, there were three students who were planning to pursue business-related degrees, only one of whom (Student 1) responded in this exchange. In the context of this spring 2009 class, in which several students were very active in class discussions, it is noteworthy that only Student 2 responded to the teacher's question in turn 14, and none following her question in turn 16. In this class, a 23-second silence appears to be significant in that there were no comparable silences of that length during my observations of her classes that term. Thus, in terms of how this video text was received and understood in this classroom exchange, it can be asked to what extent are these silences indexing a resistance to this video's addressivity, and the instructor's mediated framing? Were the majority of students resisting the subject positions of being an investor or a forecaster created in part by the resemitotising by both the instructor and students?

The first student's comment in turn 5 ('we have to invest in Kimberly-Clark!') adopts the position of a neoliberal citizen in strategising economic options presented in the video and in his interpretation of the instructor's initial question. Neoliberal subjectivities are constructed in part around the notion of human beings as their own capital, their own producers of their satisfactions, their own sources of earnings or entrepreneurs of themselves (Gordon, 1991; Foucault, 2008), rather than being seen as partners in forms of communal exchanges. The ways

in which neoliberal discourses are reproduced in everyday domains can be seen in this view of actively pursuing skills designed to make oneself a more marketable commodity through investing in oneself. In shifting responsibility for public well-being away from the community and their representatives, the neoliberal mode of governance puts the onus onto individuals themselves; it is up to them to continually improve and adapt themselves in becoming flexible as part of its 'indirect techniques for leading and controlling individuals without at the same time being responsible for them' (Lemke, 2001: 201). The student's resemiotising of the futurist Dixon's forecasting trends in global paper consumption helps to construct a hegemonic market rationality through his viewing of this trend in market terms only. It forecloses possibilities and alternatives in considering how these consumption patterns might adversely affect ecological balances, for example in the clearing of forests for paper and for farming. It achieves perhaps a level of common sense for some in that Dixon's forecasting is read only in terms of potential positive market opportunities and outcomes, rather than for possible negative impacts.

However, in viewing the itinerary of the video's discourse as it was mediated through the participants' various meaning makings, we can see how this hegemonic rationality can possibly fracture through the trajectory of the instructor's questions: 'Is that information valuable?' > 'How would you profit from this information?' > 'Why is it important information?' > 'Why is it useful?' > 'Maybe a better question is to whom is it useful?'. This last question, although it garnered only one student response, signals a possible opening up or rupture in the discourse that was at first taken up somewhat unproblematically by the first and second students in their comments on investing in paper companies and wealth based on predictive abilities. The extended silence that followed the instructor's last question here, in addition to possibly being resistance from the rest of the students in their rejecting of the addressivity and/or their unfamiliarity with business discourse, could also have had the potential to explore the ramifications and implications of the question – indeed, to whom is this information useful, and why? Gently prodding through follow-up questions might have helped to construct a counter-hegemonic alternative way of looking at the Dixon video so as to denaturalise the 'common sense' interpretations of investment opportunities as necessarily equating with the public good. Drawing on the students' lived experiences, a discussion can be held on issues of recycling, paper uses and the ways in which recent electronic reading devices have dispensed with need for paper-based textual materials.

Neoliberal globalisation as economic representation

The instructor used the second YouTube video to accompany the EAP textbook unit on business: 'Globality: Why companies are competing with everyone from everywhere for everything'. This video was posted by KnowledgeAtWharton (20 November 2008), an online business journal affiliated with the Wharton School of Business of the University of Pennsylvania. The video profiles several emerging companies from India and China now competing on a global scale, and which several spokespeople in the video claim are challenging previously dominant Western-based companies:

Globality is what comes after globalization. For the last 20 years we've heard about the global economy emerging, but for the first time, we're seeing it happen. We're seeing companies from India, China, Russia and Brazil emerging to become real competitors. That's the sign we've entered the era of globality. Going global is no longer a choice. If you don't capture the low cost, you will be at a significant cost disadvantage. If you don't capture the large markets, you will miss tremendous scale benefits. And if you don't capture the earnings, you will remain behind your competitors. Going global, participating in the world of globality is no longer a choice. It's a must for survival.

(KnowledgeAtWharton, 2008)

Just prior to the following extract of classroom interaction, the instructor asked the class if the video's claim regarding the increasing global competitiveness from Indian and Chinese companies was true or not. A student from Mexico responded with an example of two Mexican companies that recently made inroads in the US market. He discussed it at some length until the instructor turned her attention to the rest of the class:

1. Teacher: What about the rest of you? What do you think?
2. Student 1: Where is your laptop computer?
3. T: Uh, I don't know, is it supposed to say somewhere on the laptop?
4. S1: I think it's somewhere in China or Asia or something like that.
5. T: One would think. And =
6. S1: = I guess it's *not* made in Canada or the United States?

7. T: No.
8. S1: So that's a great example.

The student resemiotises the instructor's laptop here as part of the global circulations of products, and in doing so recontextualises the classroom as a particular space of economic representation – that of the commodity. Since this EAP classroom is located in North America, the presence of an object that was manufactured elsewhere in the world is construed by him to mean that global competition has been brought home to this particular locale. In this case, where the laptop was made is clearly not the 'everywhere' the video maintains, but rather a specific region – 'China or Asia or something like that'. The student's presumption that the laptop was not made in North America indicates that competitive practices materialised in this object (a ubiquitous feature on university campuses in North America) to a certain extent empirically prove that emerging countries' economies are spreading, or rather garnering market share – as he argues in turn 8, 'that's a great example'.

However, in considering how economic representations play a role in constituting subjectivities, and how they are produced and circulated (Ruccio, 2008), the issue is more than simply the student's viewing the laptop as a litmus test of the video's claims. Indeed, given the fact that systemic processes facilitating global flows have been occurring on a significant scale since at least the fifteenth century (Wallerstein, 2004), the video's assertion that 'for the last 20 years we've heard about the global economy emerging, but for the first time, we're seeing it happen' not only seems rather unremarkable given there have always been inter-connecting and competitive global economies – colonialism is but one example – but also, given historical patterns, patently false. Rather than reading the video's claim as true or not, we need to view its particular economic representation of 'globality' as several things: first, it promotes an image of the market as existing only on a worldwide scale, and ignores how local and small scale economies function without having to go global. Second, the video's economic representation strengthens the notion (and perhaps practice) of a hyper-capitalism in which everyone must compete with the entire planet or else perish. Lastly, in doing so, it certainly attempts to prevent imagining alternative economic and social interactions, both locally and globally. What is also left out of the conversation is how people who are working for global corporations may not necessarily be invested in their companies' larger ambitions:

9. T: Mm-hmm. OK, but most computers are made where? I have no idea. Are they made in China? =

10. S1: = Taiwan, Mexico, Korea.
11. T: OK, but the fact that it says 'Made in China', does that mean that the company is owned in China, owned by Chinese people?
12. Student 2: No.
13. S1: Probably it isn't.
14. T: Probably it isn't? What makes you think that?
15. S1: Probably it's not but I don't think that's important, actually. The [people]³
16. T: [Where =
17. S1: = in China getting jobs, the people in China getting money anyway.
18. T: OK, so the Chinese economy is prospering, but ... is it important to own the industry?
19. S2: Depends.
20. T: It depends?
21. S2: Depends. If you are the one that is developing the technology?
22. T: Mm-hmm?
23. S2: And you have a good uh, business system? You can own the business, but, if you don't, it's senseless you own the business.

The instructor's question in turn 11 poses an attempt to have the students consider not only the processes involved in producing a commodity such as her laptop, but also the global flows of capital and profits. By reframing the laptop in terms of who owns the means of producing this object, she contests the economic representation of the 'Globality' video. In response, Student 1 seems to imply in turns 15 and 17 that if people there are working and receiving money, whoever is employing and paying them is of no concern or consequence for the employees. The instructor concedes the point that the Chinese economy may be 'prospering' but then reiterates the question if it is important who owns the industry. Student 2 replies that it depends if the company develops the technology and has a good business model ('good uh, business system?'). The instructor responds:

24. T: OK, but that's a, that's a whole other, uh, issue is maybe uh, but in this case, I just want to get back to the labor aspect for a moment, right? If you have an entire country that's used as labor, right, look at it from the Chinese perspective. Is it a good idea for China to have so much foreign ownership? =
25. Student 3: = No =

26. T: = [Uh, within the
27. S1: [Yes.
28. T: country so that, yes, your workers make money, but if we look at what's happening to the US economy right now, right? So, if the US economy is in crisis, and I'm not an economist, I'm just sort of looking at this from my layman's point of view, um, the layman's point of view is, you know, you and me, Joe Public, as we say. Uh, OK, the layman is not an expert, just an ordinary person, OK? So, from the layman's point of view, it seems to me, because Canada has gone through this as well, so I look at this as a parallel to the Canadian situation probably now and some time ago. Uh, we have a situation in Canada where we have a problem with a company that is foreign-owned, the workers are here, but the ownership is in the States. Does that ring a bell?
29. S2: GM.
30. T: GM.
31. S2: Chrysler.
32. T: Yeah, the car companies, right?
33. Students: Mm-hmm.
34. T: So if, let's say, we're talking about China, and China has a huge workforce because of the population, but they don't um, they provide the labor, but they don't own their own industries =
35. S1: = Yeah.

The instructor shifts the focus back to 'the labor aspect' in her response in turn 24. After asking the question if it is a good idea for China to 'have so much foreign ownership', she continues her line of inquiry in turn 28 (ignoring for the time being Student 1's affirmative answer to her question) by comparing the situation with Canadian workers who work for foreign-owned companies such as GM that were in danger of collapse. In this turn, she positions herself as speaking from a 'layman's point of view', which can be seen as a challenging, dialogical response to the business professionals showcased in the video. Her adopting the persona of 'Joe Public' as the everywoman, 'an ordinary person' who speaks back to the experts about the costs of mobile global capital leaving is an interruption of the narrative that 'Globality' is attempting to establish. By rescaling this discourse down to the local, she draws attention to how this local works 'as a parallel to' (in her words) another local that is perceived as the global, which in this case is China. The possible interconnections between the two, and how this is obscured in the

'Globality' discourse on the 'emerging challenges [...] and global ambitions' (KnowledgeAtWharton, 2008) of China (and other countries such as India and Brazil) is articulated in the instructor's move to examine the impact of neoliberal globalisation on those who have little stake in its competition 'with everyone from everywhere for everything'. What, she is asking, do the global ambitions of either China, or its relatively new companies, have to do with the local everyday concerns of people who may not have the mobility that foreign capital possesses? In the following turns 36 and 40, the instructor continues by asking related questions:

- 36. T: Is this a problem for an economy?
- 37. S1: I don't think so.
- 38. T: Don't think so?
- 39. S1: No.
- 40. T: OK, so you can, but what if the other economies start to collapse? That means your labor force is gone, and you =
- 41. S1: = But if they, it's like if there are no ... foreign companies in the first place, so the foreign company will make situation better and now it's gone.
- 42. T: Yes, but now it's gone.
- 43. S1: It's not worth it. There would be no company at the beginning.

Here, it could be argued that a potential teaching and learning moment was lost when, instead of asking the latter question, the instructor had simply said, 'why not?' in response to Student 1's 'no' in turn 39. Would the dialogue have taken a different trajectory? Perhaps. But in turn 41, Student 1's response to her question reiterates his earlier position when he says 'if there are no ... foreign companies in the first place, so the foreign company will make situation better and now it's gone.' His phrase, 'make the situation better', suggests the positive effects of the presence of international capital in its creation of jobs for the local populace. However, the instructor goes on to repeat his last phrase, 'now it's gone', to remind him of the precariousness of capital mobility, but the student responds 'there would be no company at the beginning'.

Approximately five minutes later, after completing the video and then discussing the current global financial crisis and how it affected the students and their families, the instructor asks if there any useful lessons to be learned from the information presented by the video:

1. Teacher: What do we actually learn?
2. Student 1: Uh, that it's good to invest in foreign markets?
3. T: OK. So it's good to invest in foreign markets, why?
4. S1: Because they are growing?
5. T: Because they're growing =
6. S1: = And they uh going to be uh, competitive enough?
7. T: OK, so if you're investing in stocks, you might want to invest in what they call 'emerging markets'? Markets that are just starting to um, gain in popularity or to emerge as being interesting, powerful financial forces? Do you think that, um, do the rest of you think that as well? What do you think? What else has been interesting, for what other aspects does this video touch on in society?
8. Student 2: One of the aspects I, because I have saw that in my country, is that the video says that the, that the companies that begins in the in under-development countries get a stronger because in development countries it is very difficult to start a company. And I know that by my own, for example, in Mexico, it's a bureaucratic mountain that you have to climb to obtain your own, how it is called, your own unlimited corporation.
9. T: Mm-hmm =
10. S2: = instead of investing by your own.
11. T: So it's easier in developing countries, but it's more difficult [in the?
12. S2: [No, it's more difficult in developing countries to set up your own corporation, that is the most difficult part =
13. T: = It's easier in developed countries.
14. S2: Yes. It is more difficult to set a, a stable business system the, the, uh, in developing countries, the difficult part is the salary and all the labor regulations.
15. S1: In developing countries there are usually less freedom and the government is going to make more problems for you.

Student 1 adopts the marketing perspective of the video by answering what he learned was that 'it's good to invest in foreign markets' because 'they are growing'. The instructor in turn 7 makes a move in asking the students to consider or focus on other aspects of the video. This question initiates in the following turn discussion of the difficulties in starting a company in developing nations and the obstacles entrepreneurs face in the supposed intransigence and the interference of the government: 'it's

a bureaucratic mountain' and 'all the labor regulations' as Student 2 argues. Student 1 seconds this view in turn 15 when he states that 'the government is going to make more problems for you'. The instructor then asks the rest of the class:

16. T: Yeah, do you find that as well? Do the rest of you agree, what do you think? Do you find that, in the countries where uh, you come from and the countries you visited, that bureaucracy is different in each country? Do you understand what bureaucracy is?
17. S2: A group of people that don't let you work?
18. T: The people that what?
19. S2: Don't let you work?
20. T: Uh, it's a noun. And it can be countable and not countable, so, if it's a big idea, it's non-count. It's an abstract, and if it's a bureaucracy, it's one particular example of bureaucracy. So we can say that uh, for instance, I don't know, the Ministry of uh, any government ministry has a certain amount of bureaucracy to deal with, and bureaucracy means what?
21. S2: The government of [the office.
22. Student 3: [Policy.
23. T: Sorry?
24. S3: Policy?
25. T: Policy? Policies have something to do with it, yes. Have you ever gone to a government office? Do, does, do things happen, like really quickly?
26. Students: *(laughter)*
27. S1: Noooo.
28. S2: Quickly? No!
29. T: No? Why not?
30. S1: Because government isn't effective?
31. T: Because the government isn't effective? Why not?
32. S3: No, it's depends on the Ministry and the people who work there. Some people think, 'Oh, yeah, I work in the government, in the institution, I don't care'.
33. T: And so they don't care?

The instructor attempts to involve the rest of her class in the discussion in turn 16 by asking the students from other countries (Student 1 is from Russia and Student 2 is from Mexico as he indicated in turn 8) about the nature of bureaucracies they have encountered, and their understanding

of the term. Before any of them can respond, Student 2 answers 'A group of people that don't let you work?' He repeats his definition after the instructor seems not to hear it clearly. In turn 20, it appears at first she does not react or respond to the student's definition but instead chooses to focus on his truncated repeating 'don't let you work?' by giving a grammar explanation on the forms of countable and uncountable nouns of bureaucracy, and then finally repeats her question of the meaning of bureaucracy. Both Student 2 and 3 answer, but she focuses on the latter, most likely because she wanted others to have a chance to participate. After Student 3 defines it as 'policy', the instructor in turn 25 seems to take up Student 2's definition of bureaucrats interfering with people's wish to work by asking if things happen 'like really quickly' in a government office, setting off howls of derisive laughter from the class. Student 1 continues his discourse of government causing problems for individuals by citing its ineffectiveness. However, Student 3 interjects by arguing that this is contextual, depending on which ministry, and the personnel. She makes an observation shared by many that some with government jobs seem less inclined to care, perhaps basing it on a comparison with some who work for enterprise-based companies, or the fact that in several countries government workers may be protected by their unions. In any event, she continues ventriloquising an imagined worker by addressing an imagined frustrated visitor.

In this exchange, the various adoptions of the neoliberal discourse of government interfering with the workings of the market is aligned with the 'Globality' discourse of a winner-takes-all unfettered market. The neoliberal hegemonic rationality involves notions of freedom as consisting of freedom from bureaucracy, rather than freedom from want. It presents bureaucracy as inhibiting not only individual freedoms ('not letting you work') but also the efficiency of an ideal market-run society ('government isn't effective') that would allow those individuals to become fully entrepreneurs of themselves in the neoliberal mode of self-governance. However, in the students' resemiotising of the video's market discourse, they draw upon several discourses that appear to be contradictory. If, on one hand, government is seen to be 'ineffective', it also appears to be able to 'make problems for you' with 'all their labor regulations'. Their ideological common sense comprises elements of truth for those who have experienced bureaucratic delays, but also elements of misrepresentation in the notion that government is actively not interested in facilitating economic development. Their discourse draws upon the neoliberal rationality which states that government is

not the solution to our problems but the problem itself in not allowing markets to be supposedly free.

Neoliberalisation as multiculturalism

I now turn to the third strand of my analysis, which is conducted in a somewhat different manner.⁴ Here, I examine the inter-animating discourses of a racialised, global consumerist identity articulated in the textbook unit entitled 'Consumer behaviour and innovation' (Williams, 2005) through the mediations of my personal lived experiences and identifications (Scollon, 2008).

EAP materials at times draw upon so-called model minority discourses in portraying racialised achievements (e.g. stories about enterprising immigrants). These discourses are often presented in superficial ways ignoring (and thus denying) how power is used to construct, define and delimit specific cultural identities. The racialising discourse of the 'model minority' in its seemingly celebratory multicultural embrace of selected immigrant groups functions to position other community members who are labelled 'minorities' as something less than being 'model' with the implicit accusation: these people have succeeded, what's your excuse now?

This type of multiculturalism has been called 'the ideal form of ideology of global capitalism', whose attitude 'treats each local culture the way the colonizer treats colonized people – as "natives" whose mores are to be carefully studied and "respected"' (Žižek, 1997: 44). As someone who might be regarded by some as a model minority – a term I emphatically reject – in that I am a third-generation Chinese-American with a doctoral degree, and a faculty member at a well-known university, my uptake of the unit's discourses will be mediated through my at times painful and burdened lived experiences in encountering and contesting these very perceptions, expectations and oppressions contained in this ideologically bound construct.

The unit's main reading passage, entitled 'Characteristics affecting consumer behaviour', portrays a hypothetical consumer who is considering buying a motorcycle: 'Jennifer Wong'. Jennifer Wong is meant to represent an increasingly mobile generation whose ancestries reflect a dynamic multicultural society. This imagined consumer is examined through the lens of four influential factors (which the unit cites from a marketing textbook) which are purported to predict and explain consumer choices and buying behaviour: psychological, personal, social and cultural. These factors are intended as a guide to answering the unit's opening questions: 'Why do people buy DVDs? What desire are

they fulfilling? Is there a psychological or sociological explanation for why consumers purchase one product and not another?' (Williams, 2005: 44).

A central feature of neoliberal subjectivities has been the construction of desire for imagined lifestyles that are now marketed internationally to worldly consumers (Rofel, 2007). Indeed, the intensifying modes of consumer cultures have accelerated with the advent of neoliberal policies and practices in the past 30 years, in which consumption has been promoted to offset the loss of production in the outsourcing of jobs. The notion of democracy has been resemiotised by neoliberal discourse to mean freedom of consumer choice, functioning as a guarantor of this democracy so that 'the ideal citizen is the purchaser' (Apple, 1999: 204). This ideal neoliberal citizen is now constructed as an unbridled consumer having the freedom to choose from a wide range of goods in the commodified spaces of malls and shopping arcades rather than as an active and vocal participator in creating a more democratic society.

The instructor had her students read the main passage in class. It begins:

Consumer purchases are influenced strongly by cultural, social, personal, and psychological characteristics. For the most part, marketers cannot control such factors, but they must consider them. To help you understand these concepts, we apply them to the case of a hypothetical consumer – Jennifer Wong, a 26-year-old brand manager working for a multinational packaged-goods company in Toronto. Jennifer was born in Vancouver, but her grandparents came from Hong Kong. She's been in a relationship for two years but isn't married. She has decided that she wants to buy a vehicle but isn't sure she wants to buy a car. She rode a motor scooter while attending university and is now considering buying a motorcycle – maybe even a Harley.

(Williams, 2005: 49)

The unit then discusses culture as a factor that exerts 'a broad and deep influence on consumer behaviour' (p. 50). In the left margin, the textbook offers a definition of culture: 'The set of basic values, perceptions, wants, and behaviours learned by a member of society from family and other important institutions' (p. 50). Throughout this unit, this concept of culture is elaborated to provide an explanatory frame to present a portrait of a society seen as rapidly changing to a globally connected, multicultural landscape in which consumer identities now provide the main threads to stitch together a national identity.

The textbook unit goes on to construct the model-minority stereotype: Chinese-Canadians may share values such as ‘trust family, work hard, be thrifty, save, and have liquid and tangible goods’ (Williams, 2005: 52). These values, which are supposedly ‘rooted in their ethnic history’ (p. 52) and can easily be projected onto any other imagined community similarly positioned as being model minorities, embody the model-minority discourse of exemplary behaviour. However in this context, in addition to these ethnic-historical values being part of what Hobsbawm (1983) called ‘an invented tradition’, they are intended to illustrate the assumed tensions between Jennifer Wong’s parents and herself, who is an unabashed consumer eschewing her parents’ antithetical values:

Let’s consider our hypothetical consumer. How will Jennifer Wong’s cultural background influence her decision about whether to buy a motorcycle? Jennifer’s parents certainly won’t approve of her choice. Tied strongly to the values of thrift and conservatism, they believe that she should continue taking the subway instead of purchasing a vehicle. However, Jennifer identifies with her Canadian friends and colleagues as much as she does with her family. She views herself as a modern woman in a society that accepts women in a wide range of roles, both conventional and unconventional. She has female friends who play hockey and rugby. Women riding motorcycles are becoming a more common sight in Toronto.

(Williams, 2005: 52–3)

The parents are represented as practising values of thrift and ‘conservatism’ (which is at first somewhat ambiguous in this context but will soon be made clear), and thus in the ideological logic of this cultural discourse ‘certainly won’t approve’ of Jennifer’s choice to buy a motorcycle. Instead of framing their disapproval as due to other possible concerns such as safety because of winter road conditions in Toronto, for example, the textbook presents the stereotyped portrait of the model-minority parents wanting their daughter to save money (take the subway – it’s cheaper!), and entertaining old-fashioned views of how women should behave in society – implied by Jennifer viewing ‘herself as a *modern* [italics added] woman in a society that accepts women in a wide range of roles, both conventional and unconventional’.

These unconventional roles of women are defined by their playing hockey and rugby, and, indeed, riding a motorcycle through the streets of Toronto. This supposed feminist rendering of Jennifer Wong

as being a 'modern woman' serves to imbricate notions of freedom of lifestyle choices unrestrained from culturally conservative parental concerns within a neoliberal culture of consumerism that disseminates images of commodities (a motorcycle) as standing in for a freer, more tolerant society. Jennifer's participation is indicated in her desire to buy this globally branded commodity – a Harley-Davidson that needs no introduction to the EAP reader as evidenced by the lack of a footnote or parenthetical explanation in the unit. Jennifer's desire to buy a motorcycle, which is an obvious metaphor for the freedom of consumer lifestyle choices that now act as markers of a neoliberal-defined democracy, also signifies a facile feminism that is supposedly demonstrated in the mere act of riding a motorcycle and which is used in opposition to the 'conservatism' of an immigrant culture that the textbook implies is inimical to women living without constraints.

The textbook representation of Jennifer Wong is meant to convey a particular notion of multiculturalism as it relates to globalised cultures of the neoliberal citizen consumer. As Žižek (1997: 40–1) observed, 'the "real" universality of today's globalization through the global market involves its own hegemonic fiction (or even ideal) of multiculturalist tolerance'. In the construction of neoliberal rationality to constrict notions and practices of freedom so that they are tied to market choices and consumer participation, and the embedding of consumer market values in the specific cultural formations in this unit, multicultural tolerance is in the embrace of a model-minority consumer. Jennifer Wong is the ideal neoliberal citizen: strategising for herself among her many social and economic options, which, in the commodity image of the Harley, allows her the capacity for a consumer self-realisation unrestrained and liberated from her parents' cultural conservatism. In this way, the model minority behaviour has shifted from the parental values of thriftiness and saving to the terrain of having the freedom to buy high-end goods, and in doing so signifies the neoliberalised democracy of consumer culture – open to all people, regardless of ancestral background, who have the means to participate.

Conclusion

Neoliberalisation has been heavily contested recently with the advent of mobilisations around the world. At the time of this writing (2012), people are reclaiming public spaces as sites of resistance, and demonstrating a critical language in action in their calls to have a voice in the way all aspects of society including the workplace can be organised differently.

Why not second language education as well? English language learners, particularly immigrant students, have a tremendous stake in how their educational and attendant life trajectories are contoured by socio-political contexts. Critical literacy approaches in the classroom can help these students engage with curriculum materials that portray, reflect and disseminate images and representations of the world that students may find incongruent with their own lived experiences. For others who may accept these multimodal discourses unproblematically, connections can be made in the classroom that call attention to how their new situational positionings in another country reflect how different power distributions can impact them directly as well; for example, in the form of high-stakes testing and increased tuition fees.

In this classroom context, we can see how intertextual dynamics reproduced or reshaped the constructing of hegemony so that spaces of questioning and a denaturalising of a certain common sense emerged. Because of this, there were openings through which a pedagogy can facilitate dialogical processes with students to deconstruct neoliberal discourses in EAP materials by critically engaging with curriculum materials' motivated modes of representations attempting to organise our sense of the everyday world. However, the instructor did not always enlarge the spaces of questioning and encourage interrogation of these discourses. This was partly due to time constraints and the pressure to get through the curriculum. It was also due to her finding her way in developing alternative approaches to texts and drawing upon counter-discourses to neoliberal ones.

It is important to counter neoliberalisation and its discourses that champion the so-called free market as the only social mechanism worthy of organising and shaping our everyday interactions and experiences. What is at stake is how we can imagine and generate new ways of organising our societies so that we can fully participate democratically to change existing options. I maintain that to be truly democratic is to contest the myriad ways that aim to reshape and constitute our own identities contrary to what we may desire and know so that we can fully realise our voices in society. Only then will the democratic project truly begin.

Notes

1. 'Social semiotic' refers to the ways in which social contexts help to determine, and are determined by, the various meaning-making resources we use to create meanings. Additionally, it also attends to whose interest and agency are

involved in the making of particular meanings that construct and privilege specific forms of knowledge and discourse (Kress, 2010).

2. The symbol = indicates that the next utterance follows seamlessly.
3. The symbol [indicates overlap.
4. During the summer 2009 term, the instructor continued using her course textbook, *Learning English for Academic Purposes* (Williams, 2005). Due to space limitations, I am unable to feature the classroom interactions mediating this unit; I have addressed this in detail elsewhere (Chun, 2010).

5

'This activity is far from being a pause for reflection': An Exploration of ELT Authors', Editors', Teachers' and Learners' Approaches to Critical Thinking

Denise Santos

Introduction

This chapter explores how key participants in the development and implementation of an ELT textbook series for young learners in Brazil conceptualise pedagogical practices aiming at the development of critical thinking. Following Luke's (2004: 26) view that 'to be critical is to call up for scrutiny, whether through embodied action or discourse practice, the rules of exchange within a social field', I discuss how co-authors, editors, a group of teachers and their students positioned themselves in interactions about or around opportunities created in those textbooks to trigger critical thinking about key 'rules of exchange' in their social world.

The stance adopted in this chapter has theoretical roots in critical approaches to language pedagogy (e.g. Benesch, 2010; Canagarajah, 1999; Norton and Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 2001) and is guided by the assumption that characteristics of the contemporary world such as mass migration, growing multicultural contact in everyday life and ample access to virtual communications have created conditions that call for new ways of making sense of ourselves, of 'the other' and, consequently, of how we participate in the world. Also underpinning this chapter is the belief that 'being critical means something more than simply fault-finding. It involves understanding the sets of historically contingent circumstances and contradictory power relationships that create

the conditions in which we live' (Apple, 1993: 5). These assumptions, it must be stressed, also guide the teaching of English in many parts of the world including Brazil, the focus of the study reported in this chapter: in that context, the teaching and learning of English is expected to be less about uncritical skills development, and more about learning how to think critically about the world and participation in it.

There are number of reasons why these issues matter for professionals involved in the development and implementation of ELT materials: firstly, in line with the increasingly widespread subscription to a socio-cultural perspective on education, which holds that it is mostly through language that the development of new concepts is achieved (Vygotsky, 1978), the language class can be seen to provide the perfect scenario for teaching and learning about pressing issues in the social world. Secondly, given that the spread of English in the world is not a neutral phenomenon (Phillipson, 1992; Block and Cameron, 2002; Edge, 2006), the historical conditions and ideological implications surrounding the teaching and learning of that language have to be part of the very content to be taught in English lessons (Fabrício and Santos, 2010). Finally, because textbooks play a central role in the teaching of English in the world (Canagarajah, 1999; Gray, 2002), if they are to provide learners with an educational experience that enables them to engage in critical thinking about key issues in their social world, they must move beyond the bland content and trivial procedures characterising tasks found in so many mainstream materials and incorporate scrutiny into those issues.

It is not difficult to react to these arguments with scepticism: after all, they bring about a number of challenging questions, such as: is it possible, or even desirable, to discuss pressing issues in the social world through the mediation of the English textbook? If yes, what topics should be prioritised? What procedures should be recommended? What type of language should be privileged in the student's and the teacher's books? In class, what types of responses should be encouraged? When designing or adopting materials for the development of critical thinking, should description and analysis of key issues be the main objectives or should there also be a more interventionist focus pointing to social change?

Those are all complex questions and there are no easy answers for them. My approach to tackling those questions in this chapter is not to try to present definitive answers to them but rather to take up a reflexive positioning raising 'a host of new and difficult questions about knowledge, politics, and ethics' (Pennycook, 2001: 8). In that regard, I must point out at the outset of this chapter that there are two inter-related

levels of reflexivity orienting this work. The first level is projected towards my readers: after all, I expect to raise issues that might inform and inspire materials writers, editors and teachers alike in their own ways of scrutinising how critical thinking can be operationalised in their professional practice. The second level of reflexivity at the background of this study is projected towards my own practice, given that I am one of the co-authors of the materials in focus. By repositioning myself as a researcher, and looking at the writing and editing stages from a novel perspective, which includes a larger cycle that encompasses classroom interaction mediated by those materials, I engage in a self-reflexive positioning which allows me to scrutinise my own work as an educator, and to consider lessons for the future. I will resume this issue in the concluding section of this chapter.

EFL textbooks and critical thinking

'Ethnographies of materials production', (Harwood, 2010: 18) that is, accounts of textbook production from writing through to implementation and selling are not available in the realm of ELT. As far as investigations into the ELT textbook are concerned, three main perspectives are most frequently observed: content analyses are the predominant research approach, followed by not so frequent investigations into the implementation or the development of those textbooks. In this section I will explore the literature about ELT textbooks in these three areas with a special focus in how those studies approach – if at all – the notion of critical thinking.

Content analyses of the ELT textbook have been around for decades, and their focus seems to fluctuate around three main areas: the linguistic (what type of language is presented?; does it match the language used in face-to-face interactions?), the pedagogical (what types of activities are proposed?) and the ideological (what implicit messages are being given through visual and verbal content?; how are issues of socio-political relevance such as nationalism, gender, learning, work or the environment represented?). Studies representing the latter trend (e.g. Jones et al., 1997; Hino, 1988; Santos, 2002; Gray, 2010b) tend to take up a more critical stance in their conceptualisations of textbooks in that they approach those books as cultural artefacts which present particular versions of reality that in turn might have an impact on how learners come to understand themselves and the world around them.

Of relevance to the study being reported on here are Matsuda's (2002) and Yuen's (2011) content analyses of, respectively, representations of

English uses and users and representations of foreign cultures. Matsuda (2002) analysed seven beginner textbooks approved by the Japanese Ministry of Education for adoption in junior high schools, and concluded that there was an emphasis on the representation of English uses and users representing the 'inner circle' (Kachru, 1985). Yuen (2011) examined two ELT series produced for (and widely used in) junior secondary schools in Hong Kong, and concluded that foreign cultural products (e.g. Hollywood movies, foreign merchandise, literary works or places) were more frequently represented than foreign cultural practices, perspectives and people in those textbooks. Such an emphasis, Yuen argued, reflects what Paige et al. (2003) have described as a 'tourist's perspective' on cultures, emphasising fragmented images and generalised norms of behaviour.

An important conclusion coming from content analyses of ELT textbooks is that regardless of whether or not socio-politically relevant issues are included, activities favouring the development of critical thinking tend to be omitted. In their content analysis of 17 English as a foreign language (EFL) textbooks published in the last decade of the twentieth century, Jacobs and Goatly (2000) examined both the inclusion and the pedagogical treatment of environmental themes in those materials, and concluded that, although those textbooks included environmental concerns (especially the ones for learners with higher proficiency), student participation tended to focus on the exchange of ideas rather than on what they term 'real participation' (Jacobs and Goatly, 2000: 262) involving, for example, the writing of adverts and/or letters urging people to participate in conservation groups.

Perhaps due to constraints imposed by that very research design, the critical thinking generated through content analyses of textbooks is mainly concentrated in the thinking done by researchers themselves. There is no systematic discussion in the literature about the impact these critiques may have had on materials development (an exception seems to be the area of gender representation, as reported in Jones et al., 1997). A related gap in the literature is found regarding how teachers and students make sense of the critiques generated by content analyses, although there has been acknowledgement of the need for research in that area (Sunderland, 2000; Santos, 2002; Harwood, 2010).

Research into materials-in-action are important because, as Gray (2010b: 715) points out, 'the meanings which are inscribed on the page cannot ultimately be guaranteed'. The claim that 'what is there' in textbooks does not necessarily coincide with 'what happens in the classroom' is also put forward by the few investigations looking at the

implementation of textbooks in the ELT class. Both Hutchinson and Torres's (1994) and Bonkowski's (1995) studies show that teachers often reshape and reinterpret what is proposed in textbooks, with the latter also claiming that there is similarity in the patterns displayed in the ways teachers change, add to and/or omit elements of textbook content. A similar result is described in Santos's (2004) investigation into literacy events mediated by the EFL textbook, whose results indicate that even when the textbook rubrics suggested that some thinking activity should be carried out by learners, teachers and students tended to jointly reconfigure those events within a 'getting things done' frame, prioritising 'doing an activity' at the expense of 'thinking'.

What those studies suggest, then, is that even if the textbook indicates a clear focus on thinking, teachers and students may ignore that focus during their interaction with and through the textbook. Conversely, there is evidence in the literature that a text with no particular focus on critical thinking may lead to reflection, analysis, questioning and even contemplation of social change when approached critically in the English class. Drawing on critical discourse analysis, Wallace (1992) shows how a group of EFL learners can interact with texts critically by discussing conditions of text production and the implications of those conditions. More recently, Santos and Fabrício (2006) demonstrated how a group of EFL young learners engaged in critical thinking starting from an initial response to naturalised – that is, perceived as 'natural' – dualisms about gender and moved on to a de-familiarisation process which led to a reconstruction of concepts supported by joint reflection, ethnographic work and assessment of the reflective experience.

What the points outlined so far in this section suggest is that there seems to be no cause-and-effect relationship between textbook content and classroom interaction as far as the development of critical thinking is concerned. This can be seen as good news for teachers who have autonomy (and know how to exercise that autonomy) in their classes: after all, even in the absence of textbook-oriented opportunities for critical thinking such teachers should be able to come up with topics and activities that might lead in that direction. Nevertheless, the same cannot be said about a large number of teachers who, due to limited professional development and/or lack of time, do not possess the resources required to create opportunities for critical practices. Such a diverse audience of teachers in very different settings poses important challenges for those involved in textbook development (typically, writers and publishers): on the one hand it is important, even desirable, to contemplate teacher autonomy while designing textbooks; on the other

hand, there is some indication that certain teachers (and students) may need stronger levels of guidance from those materials. In that sense, and as argued by some (e.g. Richards, 1998: 125–40), textbooks may become tools for professional development.

Accounts of how ELT textbook writers deal with such diversity are rare. In their discussion of how they contemplated flexibility in the materials they developed, Bell and Gower (1998) argue that because textbook implementation is necessarily mediated by teachers, rubrics should avoid prescriptive orientations as to how something should be done. They go on to argue that their publishers did not share that view, and that their editors ‘overemphasised the need for rubrics to be intelligible to students’ (Bell and Gower, 1998: 125). Although these comments do not refer specifically to textbook content focusing on critical thinking, they suggest important discrepancies that may occur at the development stage of textbooks.

If textbook writers’ accounts are rare in the literature, publishers’ views are even rarer. Writing about the piloting process of an ELT series for young learners, Donovan (1998: 184) comments on publishers’ concern both with the appropriateness of the material in terms of level, content and approach and with the effectiveness of those materials in terms of their expected aims. Writers Bell and Gower (1998: 125) share a different view, arguing that, in their experience, editors ‘gave more attention to the first impression the material would make (the ‘flick-test’) than its long-term usability’. How attention to critical thinking fits into this debate is unclear, but it would be fair to argue that given publishers’ concerns with textbook revenues (Richards, 2001: 257; Harwood, 2010: 15), unless critical practices becomes an ‘expected aim’ in mainstream ELT there will be reluctance from publishers to incorporate those practices systematically into new textbooks.

This study: The setting and the data

Brazil is rapidly becoming one of the world’s strongest emerging economies and boasts some impressive statistics: at the time of writing, the country is the eighth largest economy in the world and it has the sixth largest labour force (CIA, 2013). There are more than 20 million youngsters (from seven to 14 years of age) in secondary, compulsory education (INEP, 2011) and more than 75 million internet users in the country (CIA, 2012), the fourth largest national group of internet users in the world. Also impressive, though in a different direction, are Brazil’s figures regarding social inequality: 8.5 per cent of the population (about

16 million people) live in extreme poverty, with monthly income per capita of up to approximately US\$35 (Census, 2010). The country ranks 84 out of 187 in the Human Development Index (United Nations, 2011) and has an overall illiteracy rate of 9.6 per cent, reaching a staggering 26 per cent in some parts of the country (Census, 2010).

These figures highlight some contrasts characterising Brazil as well as the massive challenge facing education in the country: how to prepare those dozens of millions of young citizens to participate in and contribute to the development of a country that has increasingly gained global visibility is something that has been debated by Brazilian educationalists for decades. These concerns led to the proposal in the late 1990s for an interventionist agenda which conceptualises foreign language education as a means for empowerment, freedom and social inclusion at national and transnational levels. The following excerpt, taken from the main document orienting education in the country, gives further details about the interplay between ELT and critical pedagogy in that scenario:

To use a foreign language is a way of acting in the world to change it. However, the absence of critical awareness [about the hegemonic role of the English language in international exchanges] in the teaching and learning process of that language helps to maintain the status quo rather than to cooperate for its transformation.

(Secretaria de Educação Fundamental,
1998: 40, my translation)

The ideas outlined above point to some very complex issues, which involve equally (or perhaps even more) difficult decisions at the level of classroom dynamics: how to talk about the hegemony of English to ten to 14 year old students? How to approach the teaching of a foreign language as a way of transforming the world? How to raise learners' awareness about key issues in the contemporary world (all embedded in the quote above) such as oppression, exclusion, the relationship between the local and the global? Granted, those are all pressing questions which ought to have a place in educational guidelines in the developing world, but how to make the leap from those guidelines to textbook development and implementation was something unexplored, at least not systematically, until more than ten years after the publication of that document in Brazil.

Up to 2011, foreign languages were not included in the Brazilian National Programme of Textbooks, a governmental initiative whose aim

is to evaluate, purchase and distribute textbooks to students in state schools around the country.¹ Up to then, in most state schools foreign language teachers and students had to resort to a 'patchwork of hand-outs' typically composed of teacher-made activities and photocopies from published materials. The news, in late 2007, that pupils attending the final four years of compulsory education were to have access to foreign language textbooks in the near future was well received by the academic community and publishers alike. The schedule for development of the textbooks to be submitted for evaluation was demanding: submission of those books was expected to occur in April 2009 (to go through a one-year evaluation process to be done by a team of academic experts, and to be distributed to schools in the academic year starting in February 2011) but the publication of the detailed guidelines about what was to be included in those materials did not occur until December 2008, four months before submission. In other words, textbooks for submission had to be produced by teams of writers and publishers who were constrained by time and who also worked, at least initially, with little knowledge of the evaluation criteria.

The study described in this chapter focuses on one of the textbooks submitted for that programme. Specifically, it examines how my co-author and I, in addition to the editorial team as well as a group of teachers and learners, approached a section entitled 'Let's Stop and Think!' which was included at the end of each of the ten units comprising the four volumes of the series. The rationale guiding the inclusion of that section in the textbook was to provide learners with the opportunity to wrap up the work done in each unit by reflecting about a situation which somehow problematised an aspect of everyday life related to the topic of the unit. For example, in a unit about entertainment, learners were asked to observe a scene in which a teenager examined some Brazilian video games whose titles were in English (and not in Portuguese, the country's official language) and to reflect on the reasons leading to that choice of language. In another unit whose main topic was music, learners were encouraged to observe a situation in which a group of teenagers talked about their musical preferences and to react to the negative, sometimes even offensive, remarks made by a couple of those youngsters after a member of the group expressed interest in classical music.

By creating opportunities for learners to observe, describe and discuss 'problem situations' in their social world, the 'Let's Stop and Think!' sections were expected to engage students in what Dean (1994, as cited by Pennycook, 2001: 7) described as 'problematizing practices'.

Specifically, it was hoped that these problem situations could help learners to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions, to de-naturalise unquestioned rules of understanding and participating in the world, to try and understand the historical conditions and social relations that led to (and perhaps perpetuated) those scenarios, and eventually to come up with alternatives for dealing with the problems posed by similar situations.

It must be said, though, that in spite of the fact that my co-author and I wished to include that section in every unit, and to use it as spring-board for the development of students' critical thinking about a number of key issues, at the time of writing we did not have a clear idea of the structure of the section, nor of the topics we wished to cover through the series. We followed a rather unsystematic approach to the development of the section: we knew that we wanted to present a 'problem' in each of them, and we knew that the problem had to be somehow related to the topic of the unit. However, specific decisions about what to discuss and how to deal with the topic in focus were made as we moved along in our writing. That explains the relevance of the post hoc evaluation made in this study, examining not only how other key people (editors, teachers, students) conceptualise the opportunities for critical thinking offered in this set of materials, but also how we, the writers, understood them and gave shape to them.

Of the 40 'Let's Stop and Think!' sections found in the series, the one used for analysis in this study is entitled 'What's Brazil for you?'. The section starts with the following instructions for students: 'Observe the conversation and discuss: what do you think about this representation of Brazil?'. Two photos can be seen below the rubric: one of them shows an outside view of the 'It's a small world' ride in Disneyworld, US; the other one depicts the representation of Brazil in that ride. For the sake of clarification, the 'It's a small world' ride involves 'a tour around the world': in small boats, visitors are taken on a journey from which they can observe a sequence of scenarios representing different parts of the world. In the ride, and as seen in the second photo in the 'What's Brazil for you?' section discussed here, Brazil is represented in a setting framed by palm trees and characterised by Portuguese colonial architecture in its façade and pavement stonework. The latter is represented by the black and white wave pattern which is found in Copacabana beach, in Rio. The audio-animatronic dolls representing Brazilians are either playing music or dancing: the male musicians wear black and white striped shirts, straw hats and white trousers, an image which has become stereotypically associated with Brazil's supposedly bohemian and idle lifestyle

since the 1940s, following Hollywood productions such as Disney's *The Three Caballeros* (1944). The other characters in the scene wear colourful clothes and dance joyfully around the musicians.

In addition to the rubric and the images described above, the section used for analysis in this study included a fictional conversation between three people. In that conversation, one of the interactants asked the others' opinions about the representation of Brazil in the 'It's a small world' ride, generating two conflicting responses: whereas one of the interlocutors described the scene as 'cute', the other one reacted to it with bemusement: 'I don't understand. Why these clothes? Why these hats?'. As explained in the teacher's book, the objective of the section was to 'encourage a debate about representations of Brazil and Brazilians'. Additional commentaries for the teacher were very brief: they suggested that students should express their views about the conversation and subsequently design posters displaying a representation of their choice for the country.

The video recordings of five classroom interactions analysed for this study revolved around this section and they took place in a private language school in a big city whose mission statement stresses its aim to go beyond the teaching of linguistic skills and to include broader educational concerns including the development of students' critical thinking about current issues. Three teachers and their students participated in these interactions: all of the observed teachers had been working in the institution for more than ten years; the students had been learning English for at least two years and their ages ranged from 9 to 11. Teachers were asked to implement the work with the section as they normally would and were given no additional instructions apart from the contents from the notes for teachers.

Data analysis

Two datasets represent the development stage (namely, the writing and editing processes) of the 40 'Let's Stop and Think!' sections analysed in this study: these datasets include the multiple drafts produced by my co-author and me for each of those sections and the written exchanges between us and the editors during the editing stage of the textbook. All the section drafts were then initially coded for *topics* (the issues proposed for scrutiny, e.g. English in Brazil, individual preferences and world-views), processes (how those issues were presented, i.e. including or not different perspectives and/or conflict through the form of, for example, stated disagreement, arguments or criticism) and outcomes (what

was expected of learners, i.e. reflection and discussion only, or reflection and discussion followed by a proposed reconfiguration of the problem situation). This initial coding aimed at identifying what had been the key priorities in the design of the section, and to gather some quantitative data that could be further explored qualitatively in the analysis of the written comments made by my co-author and me in our drafts. That subsequent analysis aimed at identifying the areas which underwent revisions, as well as the concerns underlying those changes. In a similar way, editors' comments on the versions submitted to them were initially analysed quantitatively for their frequency (how many interventions there were per section) and for their focus, namely the content of the student's book (rubrics, scenes and their accompanying texts), the guidelines for the teacher or the proposal in the section in broader terms. After this initial coding I carried out a qualitative analysis of those comments, in order to identify themes emerging in the data.

A third dataset provided information about the implementation stage of the textbook in focus: the video recordings and corresponding transcriptions of five classroom interactions around the 'What's Brazil for you?' section. This set of data was analysed qualitatively for themes emerging in teachers' and students' participation during those interactions. In my analysis I was particularly interested in how teachers oriented students' attention to the elements present in the textbook: which elements they prioritised, which they neglected. I was also interested in when and how teachers provided scaffolding to the classroom interactions around the problem situation, as well as in how students reacted to it both in their initial debate and in the posters they designed after the discussion.

The writing process

Table 5.1 presents a summary of the topics, processes and outcomes identified in the analysis of the drafts: the figures shown in the table indicate the number of sections illustrating each of these categories, per volume. Out of the five topics found in those drafts, 'individual preferences and worldviews' is the predominant one, appearing in five out of the ten units in the first three volumes; similarly, half of the sections in the final volume of the series deal with the topic 'social inclusion and participation'. It is also worth noting that the five topics tended to appear in all the four volumes, exceptions being the absence of 'English in Brazil' in volume 3 and 'social values' in volume 1. The analysis of processes indicated that most of the problem situations (38 out of 40)

Table 5.1 Topics, processes and outcomes contained in the drafts

		Volume 1	Volume 2	Volume 3	Volume 4	Total
Topics	Unity in diversity	2	1	1	1	5
	English in Brazil	2	1	0	1	4
	Social inclusion and participation	1	2	1	5	9
	Individual preferences and worldviews	5	5	5	2	17
	Social values	0	1	3	1	5
Processes	General situation, no different facts nor views, no conflict	0	0	0	2	2
	Situation presenting different facts and/or views but no conflict	6	5	3	4	18
	Situation presenting different facts and/or views and conflict	4	5	7	4	20
Outcomes	Debate only	10	6	8	10	34
	Debate and reconfiguring	0	4	2	0	6

include scenes and/or conversations displaying different facts and/or worldviews, although conflict is not always evident. Only two sections in the whole series present scenarios where there is no focus on difference or worldviews, both in the final volume: one of them shows two job adverts in a Brazilian newspaper specifying that applicants needed fluency in English; the other one presents a poem about teenagers and their power to contribute to a better world. As to the outcomes expected in those sections, the majority of them (34 out of 40) involve debate only, with a minority of sections expecting some type of reconfiguration of the problem situation through the creation of alternative scenes or re-writing of the text presented in the textbook.

The topics, processes and outcomes listed in Table 5.1 were identified in the first drafts of all the problem situations examined in this study. In spite of the subsequent editing and revising of these drafts, there were no changes leading to a different categorisation of topics, processes and outcomes. This is not to say that there was no debate between my co-author and me regarding particular decisions. For example, when reacting to my proposal for the 'What's Brazil for you?' section described above, my co-author expressed some scepticism towards the usefulness of that discussion by writing the following comments: 'This stereotype has deep roots, which doesn't mean we shouldn't show it and

try to fight it. But all Latin American is seen as coffee, sex, and drugs producer, according to the world atlas distributed by the internet. It's sad, but true ...'.

Scepticism may characterise my and my co-author's positioning in relation to some of the sections we ourselves created, but that is not the main theme found in my post-writing analysis of our multiple drafts and accompanying comments. That analysis indicated that linguistic adequacy was our main priority in the revisions made, by which I mean that when redrafting those sections our main concern seemed to centre on the appropriate language to be used in the rubrics and main part of those sections. Those concerns were manifested in different ways in our drafts. They might, for example, deal with the choice of the appropriate linguistic variant (replacing 'football' with 'soccer' or 'on the street' with 'in the street' to maintain the American English standard that was expected to orient the collection). A concern with linguistic adequacy was also evident in various revisions made in later drafts by the avoidance of vocabulary and/or structures not yet presented in the series so as to minimise students' difficulties.

The concerns above could be seen as 'simplifications' in their attempts 'to make things easier for or more accessible to the learner' (McGrath, 2002: 74). Another way of making sense of those concerns is to perceive them as attempts to simplify the language presented and, in parallel, to simplify the work proposed. Another example from the data supports this interpretation: it revolves around my and my co-author's exchanges about the section showing Brazilian job adverts for which 'fluent English' was required. The question originally drafted for the triggering of the reflection ('Why is English needed for those jobs?') generated debate between us as to whether it was unrealistic to expect students to respond to such a question in English, or whether the section should include instead yes/no-type questions that could be more easily handled by the learners.

Concerns with simplification in the writing process can, therefore, be characterised as attempts to pasteurise the language presented to or expected from students, that is, to make that language 'cleaner' by removing elements that might confuse or distract students. Linguistic pasteurisation in the data also occurs through manifestations of 'verbal hygiene' (Cameron, 1995) in, for example, the co-authors' discussions about what should be the most appropriate forms to refer to the elderly or the disabled in Portuguese in the notes for teachers. A similar concern is found on an occasion when my co-author and I engaged in discussion about (to paraphrase Cameron) 'paralinguistic hygiene': when

interacting about a problem situation whose aim was to present a gesture that could be considered inoffensive in some cultural groups but offensive in others, we ended up deciding to avoid focusing on a gesture that is considered offensive in Brazil (the American OK gesture, made through a connection of the thumb and forefinger forming a circle), and to replace that with the thumbs-up gesture (which signals 'OK' in Brazil unproblematically but is considered offensive, for example, in Nigeria).

In sum, the analysis of the writing stage of the pedagogical practices in focus in this study suggests that although my co-author and I wanted to approach the 'Let's Stop and Think!' sections as a trigger to the development of critical thinking about key issues in the social world, there is little evidence in the data that we, at the time of writing, spent a lot of time thinking about how we conceptualised critical thinking or its development. The comments accompanying our various drafts focus mainly on the suitability of the language for the level of the students rather than on the stated rationale/aims of the activities we devised. In terms of the content of these drafts, the analysis carried out suggests we did have preferred topics and ways dealing with them: regarding topics, there is a focus on the presentation of diversity (of opinions, of worldviews, of culturally endorsed values and norms of behaviour, of ethnic configuration) in a way that encompasses not only cultural products, but also practices, perspectives and people (to use Matsuda's 2002 categories). However, because this mosaic of diversity is not systematically accompanied by conflict, the approach taken up in the data could be described as 'liberal multiculturalism' (Kubota, 2004: 38) in its presentation of differences as taken-for-granted and stable realities, rather than dynamic and socio-historically situated ways of making sense of the self and the world. Acceptance of stability and lack of need for change can also be inferred from the data given the predominance of debate (as opposed to debate leading to reconfiguration) as expected outcomes of the sections.

The editing process

The initial quantitative analysis of the editors' comments revealed that interventions in the drafts submitted by the authors varied from nil to seven per section. However, those figures do not mean much in isolation given that a section with few comments might include one that requested the rethinking and re-doing of the whole section. This occurred, for example, in a section involving the topic 'English in Brazil' whose main aim was to trigger reflection and debate about the areas

in which the English language became the norm in Brazil in lieu of Portuguese. For that, students were asked to observe uses of English in their social world and to categorise them into areas (for example, music, fashion, information technology, economy). The original idea had to be eventually abandoned because, in the editors' opinion, 'this activity is far from being a pause for reflection'.

Some clarifications may be relevant at this point regarding how my co-author and I responded to the editorial comments in general and to the one mentioned above in particular. In principle, there was always scope for negotiation when dealing with any type of editorial request; however, because our communication with editors followed a unit-by-unit cycle, when we got to the comments about the 'Let's Stop and Think!' section we had already responded to (sometimes in agreement, sometimes in disagreement) an invariably large number of comments about the respective unit. That is likely to have had an impact on how we reacted to those comments and on how much we were willing to compromise by then. In the case above, we eliminated (with no further discussion) the categorisation idea, but we maintained the request for observation of the various uses of English in students' social world, adding a note in the teacher's book advising teachers to foster discussion about the presence of the English language in students' lives, including in areas other than the ones displayed in the section (namely, sports, computers and music).

So, while the counting of editors' comments may not have been able to reveal some important details, it allowed an overview of where those comments were made most frequently. In fact, editors responded more frequently to the 'Let's Stop and Think!' sections from the first two volumes of the series: out of the ten sections in the third volume, only the first one triggered some type of reaction from the editors; the ten sections in the fourth volume received no comments at all. There are at least two possible explanations for that unequal distribution of comments: either the development team (authors and editors) had reached a common understanding of the content and format of the section by the time they were halfway through the process, or constraints imposed by the challenging production schedule of the series forced editors to minimise or even avoid adding their comments. In hindsight, and drawing on the results of this study as well as on personal experience from the production of other textbook series, I believe that the time pressure may have played a more significant role in the decreasing presence of comments.

Editors' comments applied almost exclusively to material in the first two volumes of the series. The quantitative analysis of this set of data also revealed that those comments were mostly about the notes for teachers (56 per cent) rather than the content of the section in the student's book (26 per cent) or the overall idea of the section (18 per cent). Editors' comments about the notes for the teachers performed two main functions: the first one involved requests for authors to clarify what they had written ('What procedures are you talking about?'; 'what do you mean by "effects"?'; 'who's supposed to say that?'). The second main function of editors' comments was to ask for amendments in the original text which clarified or simplified the teacher's notes: an example of the former is the suggestion to replace the use of 'points of convergence' with the word 'similarities', while an example of the latter is the request to eliminate content from the teacher's notes that duplicated what was already in the rubric. In fact, editors were frequently concerned about the size of those notes, once advising the authors not to use more than four lines for them.

Overall, clarification and simplification were the main orientations characterising editors' comments about the content of the sections in the student's book. Their interventions included the request for the addition of rubrics and headings when they were missing and, like the comments about the teacher's notes, requests to decrease the amount of text or to make the rubrics more specific and/or concrete.

In terms of content, the analysis revealed that editors' reactions to the various sections aimed at triggering critical thinking about the interplay between 'differences' and 'similarities' were usually negative: commenting on a section which showed two teenagers of more or less the same age who described similar interests (in music, in sports) and which was designed to trigger debate about what they had in common, the editors wrote: 'Are you sure you want to explore this? Those teenagers have more differences than similarities. Rethink'. The fact that the two teenagers came from different parts of the world (one was from Australia, the other one from South Africa) and represented different genders and ethnicities (the former was a white girl and the latter, a black boy) may have contributed to the editors' adverse reaction, in spite of the common grounds found in the teenagers' stated preferences. A similar comment was made by the editors about a section whose artwork consisted of a patchwork of human faces representing different ages, sexes and ethnicities framed within a map of Brazil: worried about the fact that students were expected to discuss the similarities and

differences about the people represented in the scene, they commented: 'black people and indigenous people can't be similar'.

Other topics did not generate such strong reactions. Overall, the editors were happy with the topics, processes and objectives proposed. Unlike Bell and Gower's (1998) report on editors' priorities in their textbook writing experience, there was no evidence in the data of editors' concerns with the appearance of the page. Rather, their main concerns, as discussed in this section, seemed to centre on the linguistic content of rubrics and notes to teachers – in particular regarding their length and clarity, so that students and teachers could understand clearly what was expected of them.

The lessons

The five classroom interactions analysed for this study revolved around the 'What's Brazil for you?' section described earlier. Students were invited to 'observe the conversation' and discuss what they thought about the Disneyan representation of Brazil. However, that orientation was not followed in any of the classes in the data: the data show that in all instances after reading the rubric and the dialogue, teachers reoriented students' attention to the image instead, as shown by the two examples below:

Example 1

So do you agree with this representation of Brazil? What can you see in the picture? How can you describe the picture?

Example 2

OK, so my question is, do you think that those dolls represent or ... represent Brazil? [a brief period of silence, with no response from students] What's your opinion? When you see those dolls, what comes to your mind?

In these two extracts, which are typical of the dataset overall, the teachers redirect the students' attention away from discussion of the image (and scrutinising the nature of representation) to the image itself (and description of the representation) – thereby undermining the critical thinking the activity was designed to provoke. Although this movement has the advantage of creating, at least in principle, more favourable conditions for students to unpack the elements highlighted in the

representation, it also involves the risk of becoming the very aim of the discussions. This is precisely what happens in the data, as the following two examples illustrate²:

Example 3

1. T: you can start discussing, giving your opinion. Is this, does this symbolise Brazil for you?
2. All: no
3. S1: could be the carnival. Ah! It's *forró* [a Brazilian-originated music genre and corresponding dance]!
4. S2: *it shows the beach, Copacabana beach*
5. S1: it's the... *the... the pavement*
6. S2: I think it symbolise, I think this, I think it symbolise Brazil
7. S3: no, I think Brazil is more... football!
8. S4: I think Brazil... no, I think, I think Brazil is more, I don't know, I think Brazil is more... soccer
9. S5: I think the picture show us all, a lot of things we do in Brazil.
10. S2: I think this picture symbolise Brazil, the street of Copacabana, the *baianas*³
11. S1: I think the picture symbolise Brazil, if only, if only saying about the carnival, but in Brazil there are parties and... how do you say *paisagem*?
12. T: landscapes
13. S1: and landscapes
14. S2: but carnival is the more important party in Brazil
15. S4: and Brazil is more happy too!
16. T: OK

Example 4

1. T: what can you see in the picture?
2. S1: violin players
3. S2: why... why... how do you spell *palmeiras*?
4. T: palm trees? palm trees? does this represent Brazil?
5. S1: *more or less*
6. T: in English, so...
7. S1: so, so... the people, so, so
8. T: uh-uh. OK what do you think of the people? what do you think of how people are represented here? do you agree with this?

9. S1: the people are more Mexicans than Brazilians
10. T: do you agree with Samuel?
11. S3: yes
12. T: uh-uh, what else?

In the data in general (and as shown clearly in Examples 1 and 4, comments 1 and 10) teachers seemed to prioritise descriptions which did not problematise the origins and the implications of the essentialist, stereotypical view of Brazil and Brazilians as symbols of an easy life characterised by samba and carnival. This 'insistence on description rather than a more sustained critique of the conditions one is describing' (Pennycook, 2001: 51) clearly constrains the critical work that could be achieved through the exploration of that problem situation. Even when there were attempts by those teachers to elicit student opinions about whether the image represented Brazil adequately (as seen in Example 3, comment 1; in Example 4, comment 4), students' responses revolved predominantly around descriptions of 'what they could see' (Example 3, comments 4 and 5; Example 4, comment 2), descriptions which in turn were used as a basis for the justifications of their agreement (Example 3, comments 6, 10 and 11) or disagreement (Example 3, comments 7 and 8; Example 4, comments 5, 7 and 9) with the given representation.

The absence of teachers' concern with the problematisation of the situation may explain the lack of follow up to students' contributions which might be said to have the potential for taking the discussion in a more critical direction: as seen in Example 4, comments 5, 7 and 9, when a student expresses discomfort with the Disneyan, reductionist and exoticised version of Latin America as a homogenous Other place devoid of differences. The teacher's scaffolding of these responses by insisting on the use of L2 (comment 6), by articulating a general check for agreement (comment 10) and by eventually aborting those reflections through the elicitation of new descriptions about the scene (comment 12) clearly does not facilitate the articulation of any critical thinking.

The analysis of how teachers scaffolded student discussions also brings about insights into how they conceptualised preferred activities in the development of critical thinking. Examples 3 and 4 illustrate, respectively, teachers' two ways of scaffolding the conversation around the problem situation: they either distanced themselves from the discussion, allowing students to jointly construct their own conclusions (evidenced by Example 3), or they took on a more interventionist

role asking continuous questions of students (Example 4). Either way, their decisions about *when* and *how* to provide scaffolding reveal their main concerns and priorities in the unfolding discussions. In the data, when support was given by the teachers, it predominantly served one of the following functions: orienting students' field of vision and eliciting descriptions of what they saw (for example, in Example 4, comment 1), involving all the group in the discussion (as seen in Example 4, comment 10), reminding and/or enabling students to use L2 (as in Example 3, comment 12, and Example 4, comments 4 and 6) or asking students' opinions on the given representation (Example 3, comment 1; Example 4, comment 8). Yet those interventions did not, across the data, lead students to articulate deeper reflections about why the representation of Brazil in the 'It's a small world' ride could lead to conflicting reactions: on the one hand, the images triggered recognition and appreciation (hence, connectedness) by some, as evidenced in Example 3, comments 3–6, 9 and 10; on the other hand, they triggered incomprehension (hence, a feeling of strangeness), as seen in Example 3, comments 7, 8 and 11; and Example 4, comments 5, 7 and 9). In fact, students articulate this tension very clearly across the data when they react to the image: in the other three classes, connectedness was expressed by means of mentioning the musical instruments, the architecture, the landscape and the black and white wave mosaic of the pavement along Copacabana beach. At the same time, other students reacted to the Disneyan representation with bemusement in several ways, for example: 'I think of South America, not specifically Brazil. [...] Colombia, Venezuela...'; 'The hat is different' (another student describes hats in the scene as 'crazy'); 'Brazil isn't like that'; 'These clothes are very old'; 'It's all so perfect!'.

The comments above raise a number of important issues. They show that, when prompted to talk about the problem situation, young learners are able to identify some potentially problematic issues, although they do not seem to be able to explain why they are problematic. Curiously, students' reactions in the classroom data mirror the conflict presented in the conversation from the textbook, where one speaker reacts positively to the scene (describing it as 'cute') whereas another expresses incomprehension (by saying 'I don't understand', and pointing to the hats and clothes as the cause of such lack of understanding). However, in the same way that the conflict in the textbook conversation is not prioritised by the teachers, so too the students' often conflicting reactions to the problem situation are not followed up as a topic for debate in the data.

Also not followed up for discussion are students' own representations of the country. After the discussion, and as suggested in the teacher's notes accompanying the section, students are asked to draw their own representation of the country. Interestingly, and with no exception, they come up with stereotypical images of Brazil portraying carnival, football, tropical beaches, the samba, the Amazon forest and some more local symbols such as the statue of Christ the Redeemer or the Sugar Loaf.

What the points outlined in this section suggest is that by inviting students to describe the scene presented in the textbook teachers seemed to create favourable conditions for learners' to carry out an initial unpacking of the representation. Those invitations triggered some responses that, if further problematised, could lead to critical thinking, which, sadly, is not evidenced in the data. One possible conclusion to be reached from the analysis of the classroom interactions is that description may be a good first step for the development of critical thinking – but it is a first step which clearly needs to be followed up by other practices questioning the conditions that have led to what is described, and their implications. Another plausible conclusion to be reached here is that teachers' reorientation of the focus of attention (from the conversation, which illustrated a conflict, to the accompanying image) might have signalled their failure to grasp the importance of exploring conflicts, differences and discrepancies surrounding problem situations if critical thinking about those situations is expected to be achieved. Clearly, students would need more careful scaffolding – especially at such an early age – if they were to explore inherent tensions in the materials. In what follows I discuss these points together with the other findings of this study.

Conclusions and possibilities for the future

The analysis in this study confirms Gray's (2002: 157) claim that 'what [textbooks] contain is the result of the interplay between, at times, contradictory commercial, pedagogic and ethical interests'. The key players involved in the development of the materials discussed here positioned themselves in often conflicting ways as to what they considered possible topics for reflection or how they envisaged the treatment those topics should be given in the textbook. Even when priorities and concerns were shared by those participants (for example in writers' and editors' common focus on 'linguistic adequacy'), there was discrepancy in how those participants oriented to that focus: whereas my co-author and I seemed to focus mainly on the learners, the editors tended to focus on both

teachers and learners in their emphasis in making the teacher's notes concise and the activity rubrics self-explanatory.

The extent to which these editorial interventions had an impact on teachers' and users' understanding of the pedagogical practices proposed in the textbook is unclear: they may have, indeed, enabled those individuals to understand what was presented 'on the page' more clearly. Nevertheless, the analysis of the classroom interactions demonstrate that it was the teachers' orientations which defined the students' focus of attention and their preferred reactions when responding to the problem situation. By eliciting descriptions of what learners 'could see' on the page (at the expense of what they could read, or even what they could *not* see on the page), teachers minimised the 'problem' characterising the situation offered for debate and framed that situation as a taken-for-granted snapshot to be responded to by means of a descriptive stance.

Despite being important, such a stance is not enough for the development of critical practices. In the specific case of the 'What's Brazil for you?' section, for example, for learners to understand why the Disneyan (and possibly others') interpretation of Brazil and Brazilians is such a composite of Latin American scenarios displaying ways of dressing and behaviours that suggest a carefree lifestyle, those learners need to become acquainted with the socio-political conditions which have generated and legitimised (i.e. 'naturalised') those interpretations. Obviously, the issues at stake here, and those surrounding other problem situations that could be offered for learners' scrutiny, cannot be tackled in the limited space of a textbook page – let alone in constraining allowances of 'four lines or so' in the teacher's notes.

Although there are no recipes which could guarantee successful scrutiny of the social world, there are possibilities: perhaps key players in the development and implementation of textbooks should include 'problem situations' more regularly, and more systematically, in their practice; perhaps we should (as teachers, materials writers, editors, teacher educators and so on) come up with ways of making connections between the debates around those problem situations and intervention in the social world. Perhaps we should make of critical thinking a topic for reflection and debate in literacy events mediated by the textbook.

These uncertainties do not hinder the critical enterprise. After all, critical practices are bound to lead to the emergence of questions, disturbances and queries which might not have been available prior to the engagement in those practices. This has certainly happened with me, during the process of carrying out and writing about this study. Now

it is up to me to transform those reflections into praxis in the materials I write and the classes I teach in the future. If my ponderings have contributed to the development of further questions, disturbances and queries in my readers, then, at the very least, the seeds for further critical practices have been sown.

Notes

1. The Brazilian government is in charge of purchasing and distributing textbooks for Brazilian public schools, but textbook selection is carried out by schools or school districts. That selection, however, can only include textbooks which have been previously approved by the National Programme of Textbooks.
2. In the classroom interaction transcriptions I adopt orthographic conventions to indicate pauses: commas indicate short pauses; full stops, longer pauses; ellipses, even longer pauses or reticence. Exclamation marks indicate emphasis and question marks denote questions. Italics are used to show that the original utterance was produced in participants' L1 (Portuguese). Students are indicated by S followed by numbers; teachers are indicated by T.
3. In the classroom interaction transcriptions I adopt orthographic conventions to indicate pauses: commas indicate short pauses; full stops, longer pauses; ellipses, even longer pauses or reticence. Exclamation marks indicate emphasis and question marks denote questions. Italics are used to show that the original utterance was produced in participants' L1 (Portuguese). Students are indicated by S followed by numbers; teachers are indicated by T. *Baianas* are, literally, any females from the Brazilian state of Bahia. However, the term is usually deployed to refer to women (typically, African-descendent) who wear long, multicoloured and richly decorated dresses as well as turbans holding fruits or flowers. This image has been epitomised in popular culture by Hollywood pop star Carmen Miranda.

6

Critically Evaluating Materials for CLIL: Practitioners' Practices and Perspectives

Tom Morton

Introduction

This chapter presents a critical perspective on materials selection, adaptation, design, use and content in one second language education context, content and language integrated learning, or CLIL. CLIL is an educational approach in which curriculum subjects are taught through a language which is not the one normally used by teachers and students. Although any language can be used in CLIL or related approaches such as immersion,¹ English has become the dominant language to the extent that it has been suggested that a more accurate acronym might be CEIL – content and English integrated learning (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2010). Indeed, in terms of English language education, Graddol (2006) predicts that CLIL, along with the teaching of English to young learners and English as a lingua franca will be the dominant trend and will eventually replace English as a foreign language. The implementation of CLIL where it involves substantial teaching of non-language subject matter through a foreign language goes well beyond the introduction of new language teaching methodologies or approaches. It involves a 'reculturing' (Fullan, 2007) of not only the field of language teaching, but right across the curriculum as non-language subjects are involved. This reculturing affects all components of the system, and educational materials are central to this.

The chapter presents an overview of CLIL as a European and global educational phenomenon, and then goes on to critically review the research on CLIL and immersion in which materials have been a focus. This is followed by a report on a small-scale empirical study focusing

on practices and perceptions in relation to materials of CLIL teachers working in Europe, where the approach has been gaining ground since the early 2000s. Two data sources are used for this: an online survey in which CLIL teachers from four European countries (Austria, Finland, Spain and the Netherlands) were asked about their practices and perceptions regarding CLIL materials, and a multicase study of four teachers in a British Council/Spanish Ministry of Education Bilingual Project, in which their perceptions and uses of materials emerged as issues. These data were collected in the European context, where CLIL has become a policy issue in that governments have been taking steps to implement the approach in response to EU initiatives such as the 2004–2006 Action Plan (see below). However, the issues of concern to these teachers are likely to resonate on a wider scale. European CLIL and bilingual education experiences are attracting increasing attention beyond Europe, particularly in Asia, as more and more countries see increased English language teaching provision as a route towards social and economic development (Coleman, 2011; Powell-Davies, 2009), with CLIL seen as one way of providing this (Shamim, 2011).

CLIL as a European and global phenomenon: A critical perspective

From its origins in various European projects in the 1990s, CLIL has grown from a largely small-scale ‘bottom-up’ endeavour to become a key component of the EU’s policy for plurilingualism among its citizens. According to the EU’s 2004–2006 Action Plan for promoting language learning and language diversity, CLIL

has a major contribution to make to the Union’s language learning goals. It can provide effective opportunities for pupils to use their new language skills now, rather than learn them now for use later.

(European Commission, 2003:19)

However, CLIL is not only a European phenomenon. As CLIL gathers strength as a trend in English language education (Graddol, 2006), it is more and more taking on the role of solution to the ‘problem’ of low English language levels in many educational systems around the world. As Shamim (2011: 303) points out:

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and the use of English have moved from experimental research to the centre of

global education. As pressure grows on governments and education planners to raise English language levels, the promise of teaching the language while teaching other subjects is hard to resist.

However, the introduction, or in some cases the re-introduction, of English-medium instruction in education systems under the banner of CLIL is not without serious problems, not least the concern expressed by a participant in a Guardian-Macmillan debate that CLIL is a 'Trojan horse' which will lead to English occupying more and more of the curriculum in national education systems (Shamim, 2011). Coleman (2009), in a study based on observation of classroom practices, identifies a range of problematic issues with adopting a CLIL approach in two Asian countries, Indonesia and Korea. Overall, he claimed that 'The rationale for wanting to teach other subjects through English is unclear' (Coleman, 2009:83), and identified a range of problematic issues, which included:

- The use of L2 English as a medium of instruction in primary education may have an adverse effect on children's ability to process information and interact with the teacher, with possible negative consequences for their conceptual development.
- There is a lack of analysis of the specific language needed for teaching other subjects.
- There are problems with teacher quality and retention.
- Some teacher-produced materials emphasise language tasks at the expense of conceptual understanding of topics and include vocabulary beyond the pupils' level.

The problems of introducing English-medium instruction in contexts where more than one language may already be used for this purpose, or where the language(s) of instruction are not those spoken by students in their communities, are also relevant to Europe. Doiz et al. (2011: 356) describe some of the 'linguistic strains' where English is being introduced as a medium of instruction at a Basque university, where Basque and Spanish are both well established as media of instruction. Both of these cases illustrate that, where CLIL is introduced as a 'top-down' innovation, it can have unforeseen effects on both the linguistic and educational ecologies. CLIL initiatives increase the already high stakes of planned language education change that does not sufficiently take into account local stakeholders and conditions (Wedell, 2009).

Another problematic issue, and one that needs to be given more attention by CLIL researchers, is the fact that English is the predominant language in CLIL initiatives around the world, both at the levels of practice and research. The fact that English is overwhelmingly used in CLIL contexts in Europe, such as Austria, Spain and Finland, would seem to be in conflict with the EU's drive for a multilingual Europe. In fact the Action Plan specifically addresses this issue in its description of the Socrates programme's funding of projects 'for the development and dissemination of new, specific methodologies for teaching subjects through languages other than *lingua francas*' (2003: 16). Beyond Europe, especially in developing countries, there is an assumption that increased English language provision, with CLIL often mentioned as a vehicle for this, will increase social and economic wellbeing (Shamim, 2011). However, as Coleman (2010) and Wedell (2011) point out, there is a lack of hard evidence that increased English provision does have a positive effect on development.

Apart from the issue of *which* or *whose* language is chosen as a medium of instruction in CLIL programmes, there is also an emerging critique of the assumptions about the relationships between content and language inherent in the CLIL acronym. Coyle et al. (2010: 4) describe CLIL as

an approach which is neither language learning nor subject learning, but an amalgam of both and is linked to the process of convergence. Convergence involves the fusion of elements which have previously been fragmented.

While terms such as 'amalgam', 'convergence' and 'fusion' are very suggestive, it is debatable to what extent CLIL practices, including the selection and design of materials, are bringing together elements which were previously considered to be disparate. Although it is considered to be a 'dual-focused' approach, it is often the case that CLIL research highlights one or the other of language and content. This exposes CLIL practice and research to twin dangers. When the focus is on language, as it is in most applied linguistics-based CLIL studies, there is a tendency to assume that it is possible to determine and measure second language development without taking into account the socio-cultural contexts, activities and identities in and through which CLIL is enacted. When the focus is content-learning (much less frequent than language-focused studies), the danger is to ignore the socially constructed nature of subject-matter knowledge, seeing it as monolithic blocks of content rather than as negotiated in and through interaction (Barwell, 2005).

Bringing about a genuine integration or ‘fusion’ of content and language is a challenging task, and CLIL research is only just beginning to confront it. Dalton-Puffer et al. (2010) are clear about the need for such a theoretical endeavour for CLIL. As they put it, ‘While a comprehensive CLIL theory might be premature, there can be little doubt about the need to begin developing one’ (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2010: 288). They go on to suggest some promising ways forward, in the form of socio-cultural approaches to language and learning which see both as mediated activity (e.g. Lantolf and Thorne, 2006), and the kinds of socially situated theories which see learning as a jointly constructed process negotiated in interaction (Evnitskaya and Morton, 2011; Seedhouse et al., 2010). Whichever theoretical approaches are eventually taken in the development of an overarching theory (if such a thing is possible or desirable), there are likely to be implications for the role of materials in CLIL. At any rate, one thing is clear. In a more truly integrated or ‘fused’ approach to content and language, CLIL materials would look rather different from the way they do now.

Materials in CLIL: What is(n’t) there and what should be there

Harwood (2010: 3) provides a broad definition of materials as a term used ‘to encompass both texts and language learning tasks: texts presented to the learner in paper-based, audio, or visual form, and/or exercises and activities built around such texts’. In this chapter, CLIL materials are taken to be any L2 texts used for the teaching of non-language subject matter, presented to the students in paper-based and/or digital form, and the tasks and activities built around them. Following the distinction between ‘what is there’ and ‘what should be there’ approaches to ELT materials (McGrath, 2002; Gray, 2010a) it could be said that, in CLIL and immersion, this distinction is between ‘what *isn’t* there’ and ‘what should be there’. As Coyle, Hood and Marsh put it, ‘In contrast to the vast English Language teaching coursebook and resource market, there are very few ready-made CLIL materials available’ (2010: 86). Where materials emerge as a focus in CLIL or immersion literature, it is often in terms of what isn’t there or what should be therein the form of lists of criteria to be applied in selecting and/or designing them. In the rest of this section, both of these dimensions are addressed in turn, starting with the issue of access to suitable materials, then continuing with the existing and desired characteristics of the materials themselves.

It is a common observation among CLIL researchers that teachers often comment that they do not have access to suitable materials. Coyle, Hood and Marsh observe that ‘CLIL teachers in the early stage of course development often comment on a shortage of ready-made resources and a consequent need both to find and to create learning materials’ (2010: 87). Moore and Lorenzo (2007) also comment on a “dearth” of commercially produced CLIL coursebooks’ and outline three options that CLIL teachers have. They can:

- produce their own original materials from scratch;
- employ ‘undiluted’ authentic materials;
- adapt authentic materials in line with their teaching goals. (Moore and Lorenzo, 2007: 28)

Moore and Lorenzo point out that each option has its advantages and drawbacks, but conclude that the third may be the most promising. Indeed, according to Lasagabaster and Sierra (2010: 372) this is what is already happening, as they claim that

the materials used in CLIL programmes are not the same as those used to teach a subject in an English-speaking country, as CLIL on many occasions requires a pedagogical adaptation, especially in the initial stages.

They distinguish between what they term ‘immersion’ contexts such as teaching through Basque in the Basque Country, where all the students use materials produced for native speakers regardless of their first language, and CLIL, where teachers ‘often use abridged materials’ (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2010: 372). However, this distinction may not be so clear-cut, as there certainly is evidence that CLIL teachers do use materials designed for native-speaking contexts, sometimes abridging them, sometimes not.

While not having access to ready-made resources or a commercially produced coursebook may be a matter of complaint for some CLIL teachers, this has been seen as an advantage by some researchers in bilingual education. For example, Cloud, Genesee and Hamayan (2000) recommended that immersion and content-based teachers should not rely solely on the textbook as a resource, but should supplement it with other sources in order to meet the needs of L2 learners in content-based contexts. This is the philosophy of the Spanish Bilingual Education Project, as the project manager made clear to me in interview:

What you don't need is a textbook. What you don't need is a series of textbooks. What you need are turned-on teachers who are looking at their own kids and can develop resources according to what is needed.

However, such an approach can put enormous pressure on teachers, both in terms of workload and expertise. Lyster (2007) points out that preparing their own materials involves exponential growth of the workload of teachers, as they strive to develop a wider range of creative ways of balancing content and language. In terms of expertise, Coyle et al. (2010: 87) point out the demands of CLIL materials design for teachers:

The design process involving what is needed to meet content-subject concepts is especially skilled in CLIL lesson preparation, but so is the task design which steers how this material is processed and how understanding is expressed (the output).

In other words, asking CLIL teachers to be the designers of materials which meet both language and content learning outcomes is a rather big ask, both in terms of demands on their workload and on their expertise. Given the problems identified elsewhere in the CLIL literature relating to the quality and retention of teachers, placing so much responsibility on the shoulders of CLIL teachers would need to be accompanied, at the least, with theoretically and methodologically well-grounded and adequately resourced teacher development programmes. This seems to be the case at least in the Spanish Bilingual Education Project, but not all CLIL projects by far have the same amount of resources dedicated to them as this high-profile one.

One solution to this 'dearth' of materials is to increase the skills and knowledge bases of CLIL practitioners, and open up channels of communication so that resources can be shared and readapted to specific contexts. Increasing the expertise of CLIL teachers in materials preparation will involve subject teachers becoming skilled in adapting the linguistic level of the texts they use and using a scaffolding approach to the communication of content-relevant concepts. Moore and Lorenzo (2007) give useful examples of three approaches to adjusting the linguistic level of texts. These are reducing the text to its basic meanings (simplification), adding paraphrase and explanation (elaboration), or adjusting the textual message to a pedagogic genre (discursification). Guerrini (2009) shows four ways of scaffolding instruction in CLIL materials: using illustrations with labels and captions; explicitly teaching

about content area text types, vocabulary and language; using graphic organisers (that is, visuals such as charts, tables and diagrams); and using ICT applications. Approaches such as these can be incorporated into teacher development for CLIL teachers, to empower them to be producers and adaptors, rather than consumers, of CLIL materials. However, as will be seen later in this chapter, this has significant implications for teachers' workloads.

When CLIL practitioners are producers of materials adapted to their particular contexts, they can then share these resources with other CLIL teachers in similar contexts. Many CLIL teachers get together in groups to develop and share materials, often putting these materials up on a website for others to use. This can happen on a small scale, as in the case of a Spanish history teacher who runs a website on which he constantly updates materials in English for the history curriculum he is teaching (available at <http://www.historiasiglo20.org/bilingual-intro.htm>). Or it can happen on a much wider scale as in the education section of the Andalusian government's online resources, which contains entire teaching units at both primary and secondary levels across a range of subjects in three languages: English, French and German (available at (<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/webportal/web/aicle/contenidos>)). Both these sets of resources use the internet as a means of providing teachers with access to materials. Indeed, in the external evaluation of the Spanish Bilingual Education Project, the authors highlight the role of ICT in facilitating access to resources: 'There is a case for considering ways and means of helping teachers by means of ICT to access, adapt and share materials and ideas for teaching their students' (Dobson et al., 2010: 143).

In any case, whatever the source of CLIL materials, there is no shortage in the CLIL literature of prescriptions about 'what should be there' in terms of their contents and design. These can take the form of recommendations about what characteristics the materials should have, and what their role or function should be. Prescriptions about desired characteristics of CLIL materials can be presented as checklists of criteria, as in this one from the CLIL module in the Teaching Knowledge Test (Bentley, 2010), which is given as the answer to the question, 'what should we ask about CLIL materials?'

Are the materials:

- appropriate for the age of the learners and the stage of learning?
- fit for purpose? Do they match the learning outcomes?
- linked to CLIL aims? Do they consider content, communication, cognition, culture?

- progressive in subject content, in language, in cognitive demands, in task demands?
- supportive? Do they have word banks, language frames and visuals?
- varied in skills, tasks, interaction?
- collaborative, challenging and achievable?
- motivating and complete? (Bentley 2010: 52)

What is noticeable about this kind of checklist is that most of the items could be applicable to any educational context, whether the teaching of language or any other subject. Perhaps only the third and fifth bulleted items are restricted to CLIL as an educational approach. Another noticeable feature is the lack of a broadly social, cultural or critical dimension, as most of the desired elements, while useful, represent a cognitivist and individualistic approach to learning. Culture is mentioned as one of the four C's identified in a well-known approach to CLIL pedagogy (Coyle et al., 2010) and the only vaguely social element is the reference to collaboration. Similar features can be seen in an online checklist of criteria for producing CLIL materials (Mehisto, 2010). The checklist consists of the following items, which are elaborated on when clicked on the web page:

- making the learning intentions (language, content, learning skills) and process visible;
- systematically fostering academic language proficiency;
- fostering learning skills development and learner autonomy;
- including self, peer and other types of formative assessment;
- helping create a safe learning development;
- fostering cooperative learning;
- seeking ways of incorporating authentic language and authentic language use;
- fostering critical thinking;
- fostering cognitive fluency through scaffolding of a) content, b) language, c) learning skills development;
- helping to make learning meaningful.

Again, this list highlights many useful features of learning materials, but many items could apply generally to any educational context, with perhaps more influence here from key themes in second language pedagogy (learning skills, learner autonomy, authentic language). Others are staples of current pedagogical thinking (an emphasis on formative assessment, cooperative learning, critical thinking, scaffolding). Of course, this may be an inevitable consequence of CLIL, as it does

take place in schools and other educational institutions, and the kinds of processes highlighted and desired learning outcomes will inevitably reflect current pedagogical thinking. However, it would be possible to adapt or augment such lists to include other criteria which might highlight a more critical and socio-culturally aware perspective on CLIL, as well as the need for a more principled 'fusion' of content and language. Such ideas might include: a greater focus on learning as socially constructed in interaction, moving beyond 'meaningfulness' to a critical perspective on *which* meanings are activated, ways of bringing about a closer integration of content and language, and a more reflexive attitude towards the appropriateness of pedagogical approaches to the teaching and learning context.

Apart from suggestions about what characteristics CLIL materials should have, there are recommendations about the *role* of materials in facilitating learners' access to authentic language. Materials are seen as a way of counteracting a deficit in some CLIL contexts: students do not have contact with speakers of the language they are learning, and often their only contact with such a speaker is with the teacher. The team evaluating the Spanish Bilingual Education Project (which they refer to as the BEP) had clear recommendations on this, advocating

investigating ways and means of enabling BEP students to gain greater exposure to and interaction with English-speakers additional to their BEP teachers (on whom our findings show they are at present heavily dependent), and making use of ICT networks and recorded materials in the process.

(Dobson et al., 2010: 145)

Thus, CLIL learning materials are seen to have a function beyond the facilitation of academic subject knowledge and skills, this additional role being that of enabling greater exposure to the language being learned. While this might be a feasible, and indeed inevitable, outcome of interacting with well-designed learning materials across a range of subjects, there is a danger that what Bernstein (2000) terms a 'competence' model of learning lies behind this approach to language. In such an approach, language learning is seen as a tacit process, which will take place naturally without much intervention being necessary. Thus, the main role of materials would be to facilitate the language learning process by providing 'exposure', while the content objectives in these materials would presumably be more rigidly classified and framed (Bernstein, 2000). As Leung (2001) and Creese (2005) point out, 'exposing' second

language learners to materials and activities in content classrooms may not be enough to ensure adequate second language development.

A key question for designers (and users) of CLIL materials is, then, how to ensure that they both meet the requirements for achieving content learning outcomes *and* foster second language development, whether this is seen as the learning of academic language or a much wider functional range. In terms of the criteria for language learning materials which reflect what is known about second language acquisition (SLA), CLIL materials seem to fit the bill very well, in comparison with ELT materials. Tomlinson (2008) has provided a critical list of ways in which language teaching materials do not reflect the state of the art in SLA theory, and may thus inhibit opportunities for language learning. If we take a selection of key points from this list, and reverse the polarity, it is possible to suggest ways in which CLIL materials can overcome the shortcomings of many ELT materials. CLIL materials:

- can avoid underestimating learners linguistically and cognitively, by, for example, not treating linguistically low level learners as cognitively low level learners;
- can use other tactics apart from the simplification of language (see Moore and Lorenzo [2007] on 'elaboration' and 'discursification');
- do not use a presentation, practice and production approach as language is embedded in content learning activities;
- include listening and reading activities that are not used to teach language features but are content meaning focused;
- can avoid the use of bland, safe and harmonious texts by engaging students affectively and intellectually with stimulating texts relating to aspects of content;
- can provide ample experience of 'language in fully contextualized use';
- can provide opportunities (especially, but not exclusively, in subjects like art and literature) for the types of aesthetic listening and reading which stimulate engagement and enjoyment of language and thus greater learning opportunity;
- can use tasks and projects to encourage learners to make fuller use of language experience outside the classroom (but see the Bilingual Education Project evaluation on the need for more of this, especially through ICT);
- can involve learners in activities in which they cognitively engage with conceptual content, thus enabling them to use the full resources of the brain. (list adapted from Tomlinson, 2008: 8–9)

It can be seen from this list, then, that combining language learning with the learning of other subjects has clear potential to help materials designers produce materials that better meet the needs of language learners, at least according to Tomlinson's understanding of the findings of SLA research. The problem would then be, of course, whether these materials also meet the needs of learners in acquiring the knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to the subject. Researchers on immersion and content-based language teaching have long pointed out that good content teaching is not necessarily always good language teaching (Swain, 1988; Pica, 2002). However, in CLIL, it is just as relevant to ask whether materials, tasks and activities which might meet the SLA-based criteria in the list above, will always meet the needs of learners who have to achieve curricular learning outcomes in other subjects. In a relatively rare example of an analysis of 'what is there' in CLIL-type materials and activities, Coleman (2009) points out some serious flaws with materials used for English-medium instruction in Korea and Indonesia. He analysed worksheets used for primary mathematics and science teaching in English-medium education in Indonesia. In the mathematics materials, he found that the concept of mass is introduced earlier than would be normal in the Indonesian national curriculum, and, in the worksheet, inappropriate terms (used for measuring weight) are used to discuss it. In the science materials, he noted that they 'are heavily concerned with language rather than with getting children to look at and understand the real world around them' (p. 74). The worksheets switch between English and Bahasa Indonesia, with the language in both at the same level of complexity, thus making no allowance for the fact that English is not the learners' first language. He argues that using the two languages in this way is likely to constitute a 'major hindrance' to their learning, given that language is the mediator of conceptual development.

Thus, apart from providing a richer environment for L2 acquisition and development, CLIL materials need to make links with the wider world of education, especially the education of young learners. As Arnold and Rixon (2008: 43) point out, CLIL for young learners 'operates not only at syllabus level but very much at the level of teacher skills in mediating language, curriculum content and the development of inquiry and research skills in children'. However, for CLIL to be, as they claim, 'an approach to language teaching that is fully embedded in wider educational values' (Arnold and Rixon, 2008: 43), it may need a much more principled approach to the integration, or fusion, of language learning objectives drawn from work on SLA and the need to foster conceptual development and achieve curricular learning

outcomes. Approaches and materials that focus on the identification or correction of errors of grammatical form, for example, will not be up to this task. As Mohan and Beckett (2003: 423) point out, there is no evidence that ‘the correction of errors of grammatical form is a sufficient condition for the development of oral and written language as a medium of learning’. Again, the implication is that materials and activities that may be ‘good’ in SLA terms, may hinder the learning of content knowledge and skills.

Mohan and Beckett suggest that a functional perspective on language offers a way of providing for a more principled integration of content and language in content-based approaches. Focusing on the registers and genres through which content knowledge is construed can, at the level of task and materials design, ‘fuse’ the two objectives. A ‘genre’ approach would also allow a social, and indeed critical, perspective on the deconstruction and joint construction of texts (see Martin, 1999). As Martin (2009) argues, the time is ripe for a genre approach to language education to move into L2 teaching and learning. CLIL provides an appropriate context for this to take place, as it places students in the roles of ‘text users’ (Luke et al., 2000) of L2 subject-specific genres. Llinares et al. (2012) and Morton (2010) offer suggestions as to how this might be achieved.

The ‘state of the art’ as outlined in this review suggests we are still some way from achieving a more principled integration or ‘fusion’ of content and language in CLIL materials, or reflecting the sociocultural, contextual and even political factors that impinge on the selection, creation and use of curricular materials for learning subject matter in an additional language. However, in the chapter so far, one major voice has not been heard, that of the teachers who have to select, adapt, create and use CLIL materials. The next section examines the practices and perceptions of European CLIL teachers as they meet the challenges of finding, creating and using materials to teach their subjects through English.

CLIL teachers’ practices and perceptions in finding, adapting, creating and using materials

In order to investigate European CLIL teachers’ practices and perceptions regarding the materials they use, an online survey was carried out. The purpose of this survey was exploratory in that it was meant to provide a snapshot of current practices in relation to CLIL materials and to allow CLIL teachers to express their own concerns about materials in a fairly open manner (see schedule in Appendix). Fifty-two CLIL teachers

from four European countries (Austria, Finland, Spain and the Netherlands) responded. This was supplemented with data from a multicase study of four secondary teachers' classroom practices in the Spanish Bilingual Education Project. These teachers taught history, geography, science and technology in English throughout the first four years of secondary education. The survey was divided into two parts: the first part was designed to collect information about the teachers' reported practices regarding the types of material they used. The second part consisted of four open questions which allowed the teachers to identify their own concerns about CLIL materials. The concept of 'concerns' is taken from a research tradition initiated by Fuller (1969) and more recently elaborated by Conway and Clark (2003) to refer to issues or problems that teachers think and talk about, either negatively as fears or positively as hopes. Thus, CLIL teachers may have positive or negative responses to the tasks of finding, creating or using materials and link them to hopes or fears about themselves or meeting the needs of their learners. The responses to the last four questions were analysed qualitatively, by coding them using a procedure for the analysis of open-ended survey items in which responses are first coded for surface content and then divided into categories reflecting the topic under investigation (Sapsford, 2007). From this process, four categories of teachers' concerns about materials emerged: materials and learners' needs, design and content of materials, materials and workload, and cultural and contextual issues. These concerns also emerged in the observed classroom practices and perceptions as reported in interviews with the four teachers in the case study. The analysis begins with the results of the first part of the study, which asked teachers to report on which kinds of materials they used and how frequently.

Table 6.1 shows the responses to question 3, in which teachers were asked about the frequency of use of CLIL textbooks specially written for their subjects in English.

While a majority, nearly 54 per cent, reported low use of specially written CLIL textbooks, a substantial minority reported frequent use of this type of material. This provides some evidence that, in these

Table 6.1 Frequency of teachers' reported use of specially written CLIL textbooks

Most of the time	23%
Quite often	23.1%
Not very often	21.2%
Hardly ever or never	32.7%

Table 6.2 Frequency of teachers' reported use of textbooks written for native-speaking students

Most of the time	5.8%
Quite often	23.1%
Not very often	44.2%
Hardly ever or never	26.9%

four countries, the dearth of specially produced textbooks for CLIL as reported in the literature may be changing.

Table 6.2 shows responses to question 4, which asked about frequency of use of textbooks written for native speakers.

This question produced a rather striking result in that an overwhelming majority of the teachers (over 70 per cent) reported low use of this type of material. This finding supports Lasagabaster and Sierra's assertion that CLIL teachers, as opposed to immersion teachers (in their definition) do not generally use materials designed for native speakers. As will be seen in the qualitative analysis below, this may be at least partly accounted for by teachers' awareness that such materials do not always match the curricula that they have to teach.

In question 5, teachers were asked about the frequency with which they collected materials from different sources (apart from textbooks), such as the internet, newspapers, magazines, and adapted them for their classes. Table 6.3 shows the responses to this question.

Here the result is strikingly clear. The CLIL teachers in the four countries overwhelmingly report taking Moore and Lorenzo's third option, that of adapting authentic materials in line with their teaching goals. This finding suggests that these CLIL teachers are willing to put in the extra time and effort involved in finding and adapting authentic materials. However, as will be seen in the qualitative analysis, the extra time and effort involved in this is a clear concern of these teachers.

When asked about Moore and Lorenzo's first option, preparing their own materials from scratch, the results were also startlingly clear, as can be seen in Table 6.4.

Table 6.3 Frequency of teachers' reported use and adaptation of authentic non-textbook materials

Most of the time	48.1%
Quite often	40.4%
Not very often	9.6%
Hardly ever or never	1.9%

Table 6.4 Frequency of teachers' reported practice of making their own materials from scratch

Most of the time	48.1%
Quite often	42.3%
Not very often	7.7%
Hardly ever or never	1.9%

An even more overwhelming majority (over 90 per cent) reported that they frequently made their own materials from scratch. This provides further evidence of the willingness of CLIL teachers (at least in their reported practices) to put in a great deal of time and effort in designing and creating their own materials. As with adapting authentic materials, teachers identified this as a concern in their open responses, but some also mentioned the professional satisfaction they gained from producing materials suited to their own teaching contexts.

In their responses to questions 7–10, many of the themes identified in the review of the literature were picked up by the teachers in the shape of their concerns about materials in their teaching. These questions were deliberately chosen to be open and to allow for overlap, so that the teachers could identify issues as freely as possible. As it happened, the same themes and issues appeared in different guises in responses to the four questions. Four clear categories of concerns emerged from the analysis:

1. learner-focused concerns: the suitability of materials to learners' age, cognitive and language levels, motivation and interests;
2. contextual and cultural concerns: appropriateness of materials to educational context (local curriculum) and to national or regional culture;
3. content and design focused concerns: pedagogic approach, range and variety of task-types, flexibility, attractiveness, use of visuals;
4. teacher-focused concerns: accessibility, time and effort involved in finding, adapting and creating materials.

These four groups of concerns were represented across all the teachers' responses to the four open questions as shown in Table 6.5.

The table shows that the area of concern mentioned most was that of the appropriateness of materials for learners, both in terms of content and language. The next most frequently mentioned area related to the content and design of the materials themselves, with very frequent references to the need for more visual support. This was followed by the

Table 6.5 Distribution of areas of concern in teachers' responses to open questions

Area of concern	Number of mentions in responses	%
Appropriateness of language and content for learners	94	37.4
Appropriateness for educational and cultural context	45	18
Flexibility, design and pedagogic approach	61	24.3
Availability and convenience	51	20.3
TOTAL	251	100

teacher-focused concerns, with teachers referring to the time and effort involved in finding and preparing materials. Cultural and contextual factors was the least mentioned category, but only comparatively, as it still accounts for a considerable number of mentions, with suitability to the local curriculum and its goals being the most frequently cited. These areas of concern also appeared in the multicase study, in the teachers' responses to interview questions and in their classroom practices. Each of these areas of concern is now expanded in turn with extracts from the teachers' survey responses, along with additional evidence from the interview data in the multicase study.

Concerns with appropriateness of materials for learners were most evident in responses to the negative questions (8 and 9). This suggests that when teachers think about what is most difficult and problematic about the materials they use, they frequently see these problems in terms of a lack of suitability to the students they teach. This could be in terms of the appropriateness of the language in the materials, often in relation to the age of the students:

Textbooks I use are made for British or American native speakers, so language is difficult for bilingual students, and language level and age level are not matching (language ok, but texts are geared to younger students).

(Kaarina, Finland)

I teach students between the ages of 12 and 15 years old. It's often difficult to find ageappropriate speaking materials.

(Julia, Netherlands)

The maths language is far too academic for the age-group at times.

(Mikael, Finland)

These responses suggest the range of issues regarding language which emerged. Appropriateness for the age-group was the most commonly voiced concern, as can be seen in the three responses. Using materials designed for native speakers also presented difficulty as the language often makes no allowance for the fact that CLIL students are learning through a second language. When the language was at the right level often this was because the materials were for younger learners; otherwise, the language could be too academic/technical for the age group, perhaps because it was directly translated from the L1. Apart from a specific focus on language, many teachers raised more general concerns about the suitability of materials for their students:

To find videos and interactive activities according to the level of my students. Some of them are very easy, some quite difficult. In this case they don't enjoy nor learn properly.

(Eva, Spain)

[Materials] are either too easy or too difficult for my students.

(Manuel, Spain)

Some books written for native speakers of English have been a bit childish for our students.

(Anna, Finland)

Many of the responses in this category linked a concern with the relationship between the cognitive level of the materials and affective factors such as motivation and enjoyment. If materials are too difficult or too easy ('childish') then the students will lose interest and motivation, and will not enjoy using them. The responses in this category overall pointed to a major critical factor in CLIL materials: if CLIL teachers do not make their own materials, or at least adapt heavily, they are likely to end up with materials that do not meet the linguistic, cognitive and affective needs of their learners at their specific ages and levels of development. As one teacher in the multicase study pointed out, in order to meet the students' content and language needs, it is important to have 'good sources':

I get my information from good sources. I make sure that the English is good. If they've got good stuff to get information from, for sure they'll end up by learning constructions, expressions, verbs, collocations, things like that.

(Isabel, Spain)

Implicit in this teacher's statement is the idea that if the information is sound (i.e. the content is appropriate), then the materials will also meet the students' language learning needs.

Moving to the next most frequently mentioned area of concern, the contents and design of the materials themselves, there were many mentions of the importance of visual support in CLIL materials:

Lots of pictures, British teaching style.

(Ana, Spain)

Good graphic support – maps also.

(Ingrid, Austria)

I like graphs, tables, photos, short texts with exercises.

(Juan, Spain)

Easy to read, not too much information, visual support, useful for creating communicative tasks.

(Michael, Austria)

Mention of aspects of the content or design of materials, such as references to visual support as in the examples above, was often accompanied by references to different pedagogic approaches. The reference to 'British teaching style' in the extract above is an example of this. A range of different aspects of methodology was mentioned in relation to the contents or design of materials:

Visual support, interactive materials, materials that promote investigation and research. Materials to promote cooperative learning, to work in groups.

(María, Spain)

They are mostly based on the 'from context to content' method which improves my students understanding of my subject.

(Jan, Netherlands)

English physics textbooks are written concerning the latest results of science education research. More concrete assignments for students and real test items – make learning easier.

(Julia, Austria)

Materials that help students to research or investigate. Hands on activities. ICT materials to project. Posters to explain and flashcards.

(Francisco, Spain)

The responses here suggest that the CLIL teachers saw working with materials produced in another context as an opportunity to expand their repertoires of pedagogic options. Differences in pedagogic approach were not seen as problematic, rather the opposite, as the 'native' materials exemplified a range of positive pedagogic options, such as researching and investigating, cooperative learning and group work, and up-to-date research-informed methodology.

In the multicase study, the teachers used a mix of textbooks written for native speakers, specially written CLIL textbooks, authentic materials (adapted or not) and their own materials. The same concern with the pedagogic approach in the content and design of materials came up in the interviews, as when this teacher compares two specially written CLIL history textbooks:

Interviewer: Is it very different from the other one?

Clara: Yes it is, this is very much different from the other one. It is very simple, but this part is quite interesting, it's not bad. The activities are not very good, but they have got here an activity about medieval cathedrals and they have to investigate and write. So they have got an example investigation and I am going to use this. I don't use many because in the other book there were lots of activities and some of them were very good and they had a lot of sources and documents. But in this book I think not. In this unit, it is quite good, but in other units it's not so well finished, in my opinion, as this one.

This teacher critically evaluates the current textbook she is using in comparison to the older one, and does so in terms of the quality and quantity of the activities they contain, particularly the use of historical sources and investigations. However, she mitigates this by pointing out that the activity she is going to use is in fact quite useable, in contrast to other units. This is evidence that a CLIL teacher can be a critical and discerning user of specially prepared materials, as she takes into account the types of activity they contain and the pedagogic approach, in order to meet her own teaching purposes.

The third area of concern emerging from the analysis, and the third most frequent type, is focused on the teacher, particularly the time and effort involved in finding, adapting and creating materials. Teachers pointed out how time-consuming it was to find appropriate materials, especially on the internet:

I would say the problem of using materials found in the Internet, is the huge amount of time I have to use for finding anything suitable for the topic at hand. There is so much stuff in the Net, most of which is not of high quality.

(Kriistina, Finland)

The internet is full of exercises, but finding the right ones is hard work and takes too much time. Usually I have to make a lot of alterations in every worksheet to make it suitable for my students.

(Jussi, Finland)

The extra time I have to spend finding the right materials. Adapt materials to the language level. Coordinate the science topics with English subject.

(Carlos, Spain)

In these responses, what is seen as problematic is the very proliferation of material available on the internet, and its variable quality. This results in a huge investment of time in seeking out suitable material. This is such a burden that it may not be worth the effort and a teacher may indeed save time by making the materials herself:

Most of the time I do everything myself – even if I do it myself, I still save time compared to endless surfing in the Internet.

(Jukka, Finland)

The teachers also commented on the extra workload involved in having to adapt and/or make their own materials, and on how having ready-made materials would make their lives easier:

Generally it would make life easier to have more CLIL materials easily available.

(Inge, Austria)

About books, they are 'easy' to use, I mean, you open the book and there we go! You don't need too much planning beforehand.

(Marisa, Spain)

The fact that there are no books that I can easily use but I have to create the material myself.

(Yrjö, Finland)

The workload that making materials naturally leads to.

(Mari, Finland)

In the multicase study, there was also evidence that creating one's own materials was a considerable part of a CLIL teacher's workload. A teacher of technology described how he 'customised' his materials:

Interviewer: What do you think are the main challenges in teaching your subject in English?

Carlos: Making my own texts, preparing. From the very beginning I have to prepare everything in English. So the texts I have to work on, every text, every project every instruction I have to give the children, I have to prepare everything in English. And then, I customise my lessons very deeply in the sense that I do it just as I want to do them, because when I'm working with a standard textbook you have to work on those exercises. Or if the children buy those books because they have to, they are mostly quite expensive. They have to do the exercises there, they have to. They want to use the book because they have paid for it.

Interviewer: Do the children in your courses buy the book or do you tell them not to?

Carlos: No, I prepare the texts, I prepare everything and I make copies for them.

Implicit in this teacher's long response to the first question is a critical perspective on the standard textbooks for his subject, technology. When children buy these books, there is an obligation to use them, given that money has been spent on them. But, if he wants to do things just as he wants to do them, he needs to 'customise', down to the level of 'every instruction'. However, there is no tone of complaint about the workload involved, and indeed in the case study, this teacher's practices were characterised by his use of detailed worksheets and materials that he had produced himself. Indeed, he fits the project manager's description of the 'turned-on teacher' who does not rely on a text book. Overall, the evidence from both the survey and the multicase study is that of teachers who were very aware of the extra workload involved in finding, adapting and creating materials, but were prepared to put the extra work in for the benefit of their learners – with some expressing a wish that more ready-made materials were available.

The fourth category of concerns is that of the appropriateness of materials to the cultural or educational contexts teachers were working in. Although quantitatively it was the smallest category, there was evidence

that this was a clear concern for many of the teachers. Teachers from all four countries highlighted the problem of finding materials that were suitable for their national curricula:

Some materials are too culture-tied, not suitable to Finnish school system.

(Tarja, Finland)

They sometimes do not match the Dutch curriculum.

(Josine, Netherlands)

The programmes in other English-speaking countries do not suit the Spanish programme. They are quite simple.

(Carmen, Spain)

The most difficult thing is to find material which is suitable for the Austrian curriculum.

(Annemarie, Austria)

A subject in which issues of curricular fit and cultural bias are particularly sensitive is history, as can be seen in these comments:

In history textbooks are also focusing on each country's history, which makes the use of books difficult, have to choose the world history parts, which often are biased according to nation's official history writing.

(Tapio, Finland)

Depending on the source of the materials they can be one-sided (give only one view of a certain event) and biased.

(Theo, Netherlands)

History is problematic because materials can be biased towards a national culture's worldview, as in these comments, or curricular content that is important in one context may simply not appear in another. For example, the history teacher (Clara) in the case study commented in interview on how the topic she was teaching, Romanesque art, was not a feature of the British curriculum:

I am teaching now art, starting art, Romanesque and Gothic art, this is art in medieval and the Middle Ages and it is Romanesque and Gothic because in the Spanish curriculum art is very important. I guess that in English they don't have this topic, never seen that. Not

even in the GCSE, no topic at all. They start with the Renaissance, and there are lots of things about Renaissance but nothing about Gothic or Romanesque, I suppose because in England they don't have many. They have got some cathedrals but Gothic cathedrals.

This teacher, teaching this topic in English in observed lessons, used Spanish websites on iconography and Romanesque art where the text was in Spanish, but the classroom talk around the texts and images was in English. This is an example of there not being suitable L2 materials to teach a topic due to a lack of curricular fit, and of a teacher adapting not the materials themselves, but the way in which she uses them in class. Adapting authentic materials or creating one's own are thus not the only strategies open to CLIL teachers when there are no L2 materials that fit the curriculum being taught.

Conclusion

Both the literature review and the survey findings suggest that CLIL may be in a transitional phase from being a bottom-up experimental educational approach to becoming the object of more centralised planning at regional and national levels. In its more experimental phase the approach to materials has been one of bricolage, as teachers put together texts and activities from various sources and made them their own. In this sense, the 'dearth' of commercially produced materials may have worked to the advantage of students' learning in CLIL, as the lack of ready-made resources has encouraged the production and sharing of materials tailored to the needs of specific classes, schools and programmes. However, as CLIL becomes an ever-increasing global trend, and is seen as the solution to 'problems' of low English proficiency around the world, the temptation for the major ELT and educational publishers to move in will likely prove irresistible. Initial attempts to produce coursebooks were problematic, as the books were simply translations of the L1 materials. This has changed as publishers have become much more aware of the needs of CLIL learners, and books are being published with a more scaffolded approach, using much less dense texts and with more visual support.

The survey results suggest that these new commercially produced materials would be welcomed by some teachers. But there is a danger that CLIL materials for English will go down the same road as the wider ELT world, creating a dependence among teachers on ready-made resources that may not be appropriate for their educational and

cultural contexts. This could be doubly pernicious, as CLIL materials, by necessity, need to embody a pedagogical approach to the subjects being taught as well as being appropriate to learners' stages of language development. As has been extensively discussed in the TESOL literature, the application of pedagogical approaches such as communicative language teaching can be at the least problematic in some contexts (Holliday, 1994; Ellis, 1996; Kramsch and Sullivan, 1996; Bax, 2003). If to this is added assumptions about the teaching of subjects such as history or science (e.g. constructivist or conceptual change approaches), there is a clear risk that commercially produced materials, especially if they are influenced by ELT publishing practices, may unquestioningly foist pedagogical practices on contexts where they do not help to meet the educational objectives already established. As Stigler and Hiebert (1999: 11) argue, teaching is a 'cultural activity', and in their extensive comparative study they were 'amazed at how much teaching varied across cultures and how little it varied within cultures'. As one CLIL history teacher put it in a seminar, 'I'm happy to use the English language in teaching history, but I'm less happy about using English methodology'. CLIL advocates assure us that 'although CLIL does involve a new approach and a certain degree of change, it can easily fit into the parameters established by the national or regional curriculum' (Mehisto et al., 2008: 27). However, as the checklists discussed above suggest, CLIL may come as a package already heavily loaded with assumptions about good pedagogical practice, some of which may not be appropriate to all contexts. If we add to these pedagogical concerns the kinds of issues of representation and identity that have been the focus of ELT materials analysis (Gray, 2010a), then there is a clear danger that future CLIL materials could contribute to a homogenisation and commodification of educational practices well beyond language education.

Appendix

1. What subject do you teach in English?
2. Which country do you work in?
3. I use a textbook specially written for teaching my subject in English
 - Most of the time
 - Quite often
 - Not very often
 - Hardly ever or never

4. I use one or more textbooks written for native-speaking students (e.g. British or American textbooks)
 - Most of the time
 - Quite often
 - Not very often
 - Hardly ever or never
5. I collect materials from different sources (apart from textbooks), such as the Internet, newspapers, magazines, and adapt them for my classes.
 - Most of the time
 - Quite often
 - Not very often
 - Hardly ever or never
6. I make my own materials (worksheets, exercises, tasks, etc.)
 - Most of the time
 - Quite often
 - Not very often
 - Hardly ever or never
7. What do you like about the materials you use for teaching your subject in English?
8. What do you NOT like about any materials you have used for teaching your subject in English?
9. What do you find most difficult/problematic about finding/using materials for teaching your subject in English?
10. What are the most important factors for you in choosing materials for teaching your subject in English?

Note

1. The Canadian French immersion programmes are in many ways precursors of European CLIL, and they share many pedagogical principles. Some researchers, such as Lasagabaster and Sierra (2010) stress differences between the two approaches for example in terms of the role and status of the language of instruction (local versus foreign or international) and the objectives in terms of L2 competence (near native in the case of immersion, but a functional competence in the case of CLIL). However, Cenoz et al (2013) argue that attempts to define CLIL by distinguishing it from immersion may be misguided.

7

Communicating Constructions of Frenchness through Language Coursebooks: A Comparison

Simon Coffey

Introduction

French is the most studied foreign language in the UK and, despite its reported decline as a subject of study in some countries, it retains a strong position in the world as a taught language. The association of French with particular cultural representations of Frenchness, which are both metropolitan and global under the auspices of *la Francophonie*, remains strong in learners' imaginary. This strong language-culture association can favour the promotion of French but can also generate an image problem of French as elitist, outdated, even feminised, and inaccessible. In this chapter I compare a UK-produced coursebook, which is linked to the specific aims of the English national curriculum culminating in the French General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination, with a more globally targeted French-produced coursebook designed to teach *français langue étrangère* (FLE) in a variety of contexts. I consider the implications of the specific curriculum constraints of a restricted UK schools market versus a more open global market, how communicative contexts are conveyed through the language presented as well as how images, topics and storylines position different users in narratives of Frenchness. In the highly contested space of modern language learning, where different languages compete for cultural, educational and communicative significance, this type of analysis can extend our understanding of how coursebooks construct and package language and cultural identities in ways which attract or exclude.

The objective of the comparison presented here is to look at how communicativeness is represented in different contexts of French learning. The books I have chosen to focus on are *Tricolore Total 2* (aimed at the GCSE market) and *Alter Ego* (aimed at the FLE market). These are both leading publications in their respective markets and, although they are written for different age groups, assessment structures, nationalities and institutional settings, they are both vehicles for the teaching of French and, by implication, the teaching of French culture. The link between teaching language and teaching culture, be this tacit or explicit, is generally assumed to be integral to MFL teaching and learning and has been widely theorised (Byram and Grundy, 2003; Kramsch, 1993; Risager, 2007; Zarate, 1993; Zarate et al., 2011).

Given the ongoing debates about what constitutes communicative language teaching (CLT; see Leung, 2005; Littlewood, 2011) and if this is even still a valid term (Bax, 2003), I was interested in investigating what communicative contexts are presented to learners. The ideology of communicative 'usefulness' may be especially complex when the foreign language is not English, given the almost universal perception that 'English is useful' (Weenink, 2008).

In the first section below I briefly trace the trajectory of CLT up to the recent call to revise our framing of communication and communicativeness in language teaching (Leung, 2005). I then provide some background information on the specific context of French study, showing how French has continued to enjoy (in most parts of the world) sustained popularity and expansion as a taught language. After providing a brief description of each of the coursebooks chosen for analysis, I consider in greater detail how instances of communication are presented in the different books (what is being communicated to whom) by comparing and contrasting the whole range of topics on offer within each course.

I then zoom in to look at how one particular topic is presented in each of the two books. The goal of this critical analysis is to examine how students are ideologically positioned to adopt certain roles in the communicative contexts presented. I followed a critical discourse analytical approach, concerned with contesting idealised representations of communication, which in turn marginalise alternative positions actual students might want to adopt. As expressed by Van Leeuwen 'critical discourse analysis is concerned with discourse as the instrument of the social construction of reality' (1993: 193). Specifically, the student learner is offered particular positions through the construction of Frenchness and the communicative scenarios on offer. The presentation

of thematic content shows how 'at the global level of discourse, topics may influence what people see as the most important information of text or talk' (Van Dijk, 2008: 358), topic choices thereby 'framing' (Blommaert, 2005) reader subjectivities.

Situating communicativeness in language pedagogy

CLT has been the dominant paradigm for second and foreign language pedagogy since Hymes (1972), concerned with reorienting language in terms of its social function rather than exclusively as an abstract set of rules and words, first coined the term *communicative competence*. Yet the debate continues around what constitutes communicativeness and, since Hymes, the challenge facing those involved in teaching and producing pedagogic material, including curriculum design, has been to translate the premise of communicative competence into workable pedagogic practice.

Some theorists of instructed second language acquisition sought to refine what communicative competence comprises, for example Canale and Swain (1980) offered a taxonomy of four subsidiary competences,¹ whereas other exponents of CLT, such as Brumfit and Johnson (1979), described a pedagogy based on recreating pseudo-authentic contexts in the class for the student to enact. One criticism of the latter's practice-based approach was that their construal of communicative contexts was not theoretically underpinned by research into language use or language acquisition, but was rather assembled from common-sense maxims about language practice that would be functionally useful for students in future interactional contexts. CLT, in trying to replicate real target language contexts, privileged oral/aural skills over reading and writing, and, in its 'strong version' (Howatt, 1984), suggested that the language classroom should be an immersion context in which target language use should be maximised to the exclusion of the students' mother tongue (Howatt's 'monolingual principle', 1984: 289). Indeed, in many private language schools around the world, this maxim still prevails, often cited as a selling point in contrast to many state schools, where reference to the students' first language (or rather the language of national education) is, to varying degrees, more common.

A key area of debate concerns the specific model of language which is presented in CLT and what Holliday (2006) describes as the ideology of native speakerism, that is, 'the chauvinistic belief that "native speakers" represent a "Western culture" from which spring the ideals both of the language and of language teaching methodology' (Holliday, 2006: 49).

In Leung (2005) we see how native-speaker models of interaction continue to dominate language courses despite the growing call to challenge native-speaker hegemony (Leung et al., 1997). Published coursebooks perpetuate the supremacy of the native-speaker model of language. At best, different geographical varieties of the language are dealt with – rather than social class or gender differences, for example – but these are usually still certain native-speaker varieties. Despite advances in our understanding of non-native interactions (e.g. empirical research within the English as a lingua franca paradigm by Jenkins et al., 2011) recognition of non-native speaker discourse has yet to be legitimised by the textbook industry.

A further criticism often levelled at coursebook writers and publishers is that the communicative contexts in textbooks, in depicting scenarios which are not only hypothetical but purport to be typical encounters between native-speakers, are ‘bland’ (Tomlinson, 2003: 234). Class discussion is directed away from real-world problems, focusing on language divorced from meaning; even where language is provided to facilitate reasoned debate (e.g. *Je pense que ...; Cependant ...*, [I think that ..., However ...]) the teacher may be encouraged by the teacher’s book to frame debates within a safe void of hypothetical scenarios. At other times, the language of contestation may be taught, but is frequently limited to minor consumer gripes such as *ma soupe est froide* (my soup is cold).

Recent developments in language pedagogy such as task-based learning or content-based approaches (e.g. CLIL, see Chapter 6) bring into focus the importance of meaning-making through the foreign language, so that students are not just rephrasing existing knowledge but are using new language to engage cognitively with specific ideas or non-linguistic content. It is timely, then, that greater consideration is given to the way language is presented in textbooks and other resources as models of meaning-making. Before looking at the books presented in this chapter, I provide some contextual framing of the position of French as a foreign language.

Some background on the study of French

French retains a privileged position in the world. Although estimated to be ninth in the numerical count of native-speakers French is still, after English of course, the second most learnt (in the sense of studied) foreign language in the world (Garriaud-Maylam, 2009; Observatoire de la Langue Française, 2010) and remains a vital force as an international language. It is no longer a question, as was the case earlier in the twentieth century, of vying for supremacy with English (or indeed

other languages) but of maintaining and promoting its position as *an* international language serving as a vehicle for culture and the circulation of ideas as well as trade and industry. One of the ways French affirms its position is through its strong, subsidised network of cultural institutions such as the Alliance Française (founded in 1883 as an 'Association nationale pour la propagation de la langue française dans les colonies et à l'étranger').² Instituts Français and Alliances Françaises represent the largest number of subsidised language-cultural institutions in the world, considerably outnumbering branches of the British Council, Goethe Institute (Germany) or Instituto Cervantes (Spain).

The UK clearly has a very long tradition of learning French and the historical reasons for this are well documented. In more recent times, at least since the 1980s, diversification of the language offer in UK schools has been encouraged (Phillips and Filmer-Sankey, 1993). Yet still today, despite a decline in numbers studying modern languages, which are currently optional in many UK schools after the age of 14, the French language retains tenaciously its position as the most studied language ahead of the other two main languages German and Spanish. In primary schools, French is by far the most taught language³ and so represents for most children in the UK their first contact with formal study of foreign languages. Concerns over take-up for modern languages have led to many enquiries into attitudes to language study including who is studying what. For example, in the UK French is often cited Williams et al., 2002; Coleman et al., 2007) as particularly 'gendered' because it is more popular with girls, or, to a lesser extent, as an elitist subject (Coleman, 2011) because it is more studied by middle-class students. However, further research is needed to understand how these attitudes are perpetuated, including through representations of language, curriculum design and activity types in class. In the following section we see ways in which French is represented across sites of learning. To simply state that French learning is becoming the 'preserve of middle-class girls' (as David Bell, chief inspector of schools in England in 2004, is reported to have said, cited in *The Guardian*, 19 October 2005) does not advance our understanding of the reasons for this. As argued elsewhere (Coffey, 2010), to participate in French learning entails participation in a particular Francophile repertoire which is inscribed in clichéd images of French. Such images of Frenchness can attract but also exclude.

Conveying and participating in discourses of Frenchness

The association of French language teaching with the teaching of a particular set of values ('les valeurs d'universalité et de tolérance' [the values

of universality and tolerance], Garriaud-Mayalle, 2009: 4) has always contributed to French being linked to France and a centralised Frenchness. Traditionally this was perceived as the *mission civilisatrice* of the colonial epoch, and later, as France's colonial power waned after the Second World War, continued through the political will to promote and disseminate French language and culture. (described by Coste, 1984).

It would be simplistic, nonetheless, to suggest that French is promoted only through the actions of centralist agencies such as the French government and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (established in 1970 and with 56 member states); historically produced representations of French have been appropriated within different national and transnational discourses as indexical of certain aesthetic and philosophical positions. In particular, France, and by association the French language, has a very strong image association with effortless elegance and style which is often exploited in marketing (Hornikx et al., 2007). French language resources exploit the associations of French with food (*la gastronomie*), luxury goods, beauty and elegance as well as with republican and secular values.

FLE, though not on the scale of English as a foreign language (EFL), is an important global industry encompassing government-funded teacher training (through university FLE departments), examination boards and centres,⁴ private publishing houses and countless language schools and institutions where lessons are taught. Since the establishment of FLE as a distinct field there has been an important strand of scholarship (e.g. Zarate, 1993; Abdallah-Pretceille, 1996; Abdallah-Pretceille and Porcher, 1996; Zarate et al., 2011) examining the intercultural dimension of French language pedagogy, and my analysis here aims to contribute to this work in combining a critique of cultural representations with a critique of topics of communication. In the following section I introduce the two books which are presented here as examples of French study within contexts of CLT.

Tricolore Total 2

This is the latest in the *Tricolore* series, a series familiar to many British students who studied French at school from the 1980s onwards. The course has changed from the black and white version launched by Hodder and Stoughton in 1981 as *Tricolore*, to *Encore Tricolore*, then to *Encore Tricolore Nouvelle Édition* to *Tricolore Total*, the fourth and current incarnation which is considered here, written by the original two authors – both women are former French teachers – with additional input from

freelance author Michael Spencer. As a former teacher familiar with the previous versions in the series, I find it interesting that the current publishers, Nelson Thomas, have adapted the book to respond to broader developments in pedagogy and how these are perceived. Publishers in the UK compete for sales in the market of school textbooks, unlike many countries where school textbooks are either produced by or endorsed by central government agencies. This competition drives the regular updating of books to show that they meet changing requirements resulting from changes to the curriculum and changes in pedagogy incurred by technological advances and evolving notions of good practice. Among these can be cited the way the recent focus on learning-to-learn and learner strategies is addressed by the category *stratégies* which runs through the course.

The *Tricolore* series has enjoyed great popularity over the last three decades, though competition for titles is now much tighter. Anecdotal evidence from 18 school language departments in and around London indicates that *Tricolore* is now less popular, its content too 'busy' and its layout perceived as too cluttered for many students. The *Tricolore* series has nonetheless sustained its popularity in particular with more able pupils and schools where pupils are selected by ability.

The *table des matières* (contents page) shows the way the eight units in the book are divided into three areas:

- bullet points of functions;
- *grammaire; stratégies*.

The topic headings for each unit are as follows:

- *En ville* (in town)
- *On fait des projets* (making plans)
- *De jour en jour* (day to day)
- *En famille* (with the family)
- *Bon appétit*
- *En voyage* (travelling)
- *Ça va?* (How are you?)
- *On va s'amuser* (Let's have some fun)

These topic headings are broad thematic categories that are then broken down into functions, grammar parts and learning strategies. The topic choices, as we will see, presuppose a set of positions which are ideologically associated with a particular construction of language

Table 7.1 *Unité 4: En Famille*

	<i>Grammaire</i>	<i>Stratégies</i>
• Describe yourself and others • Greet and introduce people • Ask and answer questions when staying with a host family • Talk about helping in the home • Talk about the past and present • Say what you have done recently • Talk about presents and souvenirs • Say goodbye and thank you	• Revise adjectives, including the comparative • Use the perfect tense of regular verbs (with <i>avoir</i>) • Use expressions of past time • Use <i>ce, cet, cette, ces</i> + noun (this ..., that ...)	• <i>Tu/vous</i> and related words • Adding extra information • Translating the past tense • Pronunciation: <i>-er, -ez, -é, -et</i> • Irregular verbs • Dictionary skills

learning: travelling, making travel plans, eating (ordering food), staying with a family, saying how you feel (I've got a sore throat, etc.) and leisure time. Table 7.1 shows, as an example, how *Unité 4* is presented.

These three areas (functions, *grammaire*, *stratégies*) record different times and fashions in pedagogy and language learning. The previous version of the *Tricolore* series, for instance, (*Encore Tricolore 2*) had the first two columns but did not have the strategies category. The combination of a functional strand with a more traditional grammatical strand is typical of the kind of syllabus found in many textbooks from the 1980s; while the strategies strand is an addition more typical of the 1990s and inscribed in an ideology of greater learner autonomy. Let us consider how these three areas of language mesh. Firstly, the topics are divided into functions (what one can do), a set of aims inscribed in the communicative ideology of the language curriculum as preparation for future encounters of a practical, survival nature; the 'can do' statements enshrined in the threshold levels, for example the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR, 2001); Coste et al. (1976); Van Ek (1975).

Secondly, the list of grammar items is grafted onto the vocabulary-driven topic areas (*en famille*). This matching of function with discrete language items has been common practice since the mainstream hybridisation of former structure-led syllabi with more

notional-functional communicative objectives. Consequently, most UK French teachers will automatically associate the teaching of reflexive verbs with the topic of daily routine. This is because certain reflexive verbs lend themselves to describing routines of waking up, getting up, showering and so forth (e.g. *se réveiller*, *se lever*, *se doucher*) although reflexive verbs, of course, have a much broader application (e.g. *s'amuser*, *se demander*) and so the pairing of the grammar item and topic is not as natural or inevitable as it might appear.

Finally, 'strategies' are inscribed in a more recent turn which goes beyond the former communicative goal of proficiency in coping with real-life situations and, instead, sees language learning as also about developing both *communicative* strategies (how to get by when words or structures are unknown) and also *learning* strategies (how to develop self-awareness about one's own learning styles and learning trajectory). Learner strategies have come to play an important role in the discourse of empowerment through reflexivity and so the inclusion of the strategies category signals the ideology of developing greater reflexivity and encouraging learner autonomy *about* learning. This is enshrined in the CEFR⁵ and has led to foreign language learning being framed as part of broader language awareness initiatives (such as described by Barton et al., 2009), including first language literacy. In UK schools this reflexivity (discussion *about* learning) is conducted in the first language, moving away from the former communicative view that recourse to the first language in the classroom should be avoided lest it obstruct the development of automated cognitive responses in the foreign language (Castellotti, 2001).

Alter Ego

Alter Ego 1: Méthode de français is the first in the series of four *Alter Ego* coursebooks published by Hachette, a publishing house which has a substantial number of FLE titles. The course was written by five women, all of whom have taught at the Alliance Française. It is a prescribed coursebook for French lessons at the Alliance Française for level A1 and A2 classes (beginner levels). The course is aimed at adults and older adolescents (the term *grands adolescents et adultes* is used to characterise this typical FLE public).

The contents page (*tableau des contenus*) in *Alter Ego* lists ten themes as *dossiers* and each of these is further divided into sections according to subsidiary topics. At the end of each unit is a special extra lesson called *carnet de voyage* (travel log). The course is keen to show

Table 7.2 Dossier 4 (unit 4)

Dossier 4: Une journée particulière (a special day)			
1. Rythmes de vies et rythmes de la ville. La télévision dans la vie quotidienne. (Lifestyles and opening times in town)	2. Routine/ changement, rupture de rythme. Vie de famille et taches ménagères. (Routine and a break from routine. Family life and household chores)	3. Les principales fêtes en France (The main national holidays in France)	Carnet de voyage: Qui fait quoi dans la maison? (Who does what in the home?)

that it meets many different requirements: the topics (*thématiques*) are described as socio-cultural content (*continues socioculturels*) and these are juxtaposed with four *objectifs socio-langagiers*, the first column comprising the *objectifs communicatifs et savoir-faire* and the three remaining columns grouped together as *objectifs linguistiques: grammaticaux, lexicaux, phonétiques*. In the interest of space I do not replicate the whole four pages of the *tableau des contenus* here but list the topics (*thématiques*) of the ten units (*dossiers*) and provide an example of how these are further divided into subordinate themes by showing how unit 4 (*Dossier 4*) is presented (see Table 7.2).

- *Dossier 1: Les uns, les autres ...* (Different people)
- *Dossier 2: Ici/ailleurs* (Here/there)
- *Dossier 3: Dis moi qui tu es* (Tell me who you are)
- *Dossier 4: Une journée particulière* (A special day)
- *Dossier 5: Vie privée, vie publique* (Private and public life)
- *Dossier 6: Voyages, voyages* (Travel)
- *Dossier 7: C'est mon choix* (It's my choice)
- *Dossier 8: Pour le plaisir* (For fun)
- *Dossier 9: Lieux de vie* (Places in one's life)
- *Dossier 10: Horizons*

Different pedagogic contexts

The most recent version of the modern foreign languages (MFL) national curriculum for England and Wales (2008) asks schools and teachers to plan learning around the following objectives:

- linguistic competence;
- knowledge about language;

- creativity;
- intercultural understanding.

In common with previous guidelines, no specific content guidance is included and the areas are so broad that they could cover almost any presentation and practice of language. For instance, the two objectives listed under knowledge about language are '(a). Understanding how a language works and how to manipulate it; (b). Recognising that languages differ but may share common grammatical, syntactical or lexical features'. In terms of concrete language goals therefore teachers and resource designers refer to the specification of the GCSE examination.⁶ School students are expected to know something about France but this is usually a comparison of school timetables or traditional ways of celebrating Christmas; pressure to cram for examinations means that there is very little if any classroom time given over to specifically developing *intercultural understanding*. UK modern languages teaching, in common with most school language curricula, deals with what Cook describes as the 'day-to-day unemotional transactional encounters of modern urban existence' (Cook, 2000: 62), and this is certainly the case with the way French-speakers and French-speaking contexts are represented.

Some key contextual differences between the classrooms in which *Alter Ego* is used and those in which *Tricolore Total* is used are summarised in Table 7.3. These contextual variables have implications for how French is studied, what language items are included in the programme, how, and which representations of Frenchness are included. The focus of textbooks written for use in UK schools is clearer in the sense that they have a more contained, predictable target public. So, although, as has been said, UK school textbooks are privately produced and promoted on the open market, book publishers strive to appeal to the teacher in terms of user-friendliness and pupil-appeal while also offering opportunities to develop specific skills and vocabulary topics. *Alter Ego* is subject to different constraints. It too has to please teachers and students and promises to conform to the CEFR but it also has to be usable in different national settings, an inherent problem with global materials (Gray, 2010a).

As with the topics in *Tricolore*, those presented in *Alter Ego* centre around the intersection of personal life and different social spheres. These take self-representation as a starting point and then introduce a range of normative lifestyle options which centre around consumption of goods and services, including travel and participation in commercially organised leisure activities. The linguistic content

Table 7.3 *Tricolore Total*

	Tricolore Total	Alter Ego
Age of students	Relatively fixed, mostly between 12 and 14 years old.	From 16–17 upwards.
Linguistic homogeneity of students	Assumes L1 English so has some comments and translations in English, though MFL teachers are increasingly asked to take into account mother tongues other than English.	Heterogeneous, so the whole course entirely in French (though in reality FLE teachers may sometimes translate words to English or other languages that they know).
Gender	Appealing to boys is seen as a priority in modern languages, especially French, in the UK.	There are more than twice as many female than male students at the Alliance Française in Paris. ⁷
The setting	Teaching takes place in secondary schools in England, so France, authentic interactions and service encounters are deferred in the sense that they are projected onto possible future contact.	Alliance Française centres are in France and around the world, so the learning can be in immersion contexts <i>or</i> representing France from a distance.
Assessment framework	Within the national education system so following the national curriculum and culminating in national exams (in England these do not yet recognise the CEFR).	Linked to the objectives of the CEFR levels A1–A2, this is integrated into the established FLE diploma DELF.

follows the conventionalised communicative frame of the CEFR, with vocabulary introduced in simulated contexts of communication and then practised through listening and reading comprehension activities followed by an opportunity to use the language in guided production scenarios. However, as we see in the example below, the personalised practice opportunities are tightly structured. The next section focuses on representations of France and Frenchness in the two books, showing how the topics choices are oriented to particular representational positioning of the reader vis-à-vis France and *la Francophonie*.

Representations of France and French-speaking places in both books

The most immediately striking impression of *Tricolore Total* is the extent to which it is very France-centric. The book's bright blue front cover features a contour of France with sunray-like lines pointing outward and a white male adolescent bursting forth from the centre on a skateboard. The geographical outline of France is repeated on the first inside page and again on the next page, which shows a basic political map of France with the regions listed below. Other French-speaking countries (or contexts of using French) are not mentioned in *Tricolore Total* except when the vocabulary topic of countries is dealt with (unit 2A 'Talk about countries in Europe' or when introducing Franco-Canadian characters visiting France). This stance reflects both the traditional hold on the imagination of French as exclusively the language of France and reinforces the cultural and linguistic hegemony of native speakers as privileged custodians of the language. A broader, more international range of representations would allow French to be perceived as a viable international language used in different geographical and socio-cultural contexts. Such a limiting portrayal of the international role of French is surprising, especially given that the current rates of growth indicate that the largest number of Francophones in the twenty-first century will reside in Africa (Observatoire de la langue française, 2010). Furthermore the tight, exclusive linking of French to France reinforces the centralising post-colonial power of metropolitan France, which is at odds with the internationalising aims of an inclusive Francophonie agenda.

Alter Ego is, like *Tricolore Total*, predominantly France-centric but many other French-speaking contexts are featured, for example, Montréal, Bruxelles, the DOM-TOM (French overseas territories like la Réunion). The global character of *la Francophonie* is presented through an article on the Senegalese singer Robert Charlebois (pp. 110–1). He is cited as symbolising *la Francophonie* because his mother is *Antillaise*, his father Senegalese and he now lives between Paris and Montréal. He is the exception, however, as ethnic minorities are virtually absent from both textbooks. The children who feature in *Tricolore* are all white, although one black boy does appear in a group photograph on page 34, and the countries introduced are mostly western European, with some other Francophone countries such as Morocco, Canada and Senegal mentioned and some other destinations (the continents) mentioned in the summary vocabulary list at the end of the chapter.

The specificity of French and Frenchness is manifest through representations mainly of France, but, more precisely, and especially in *Alter Ego*, through *western* French-speakers. We are reminded by Pingel (2009: 41) in his UNESCO guidebook on textbook research that ‘distances in mental maps often differ considerably from the “real” geographical ones’. So, we can ask, what are the ‘mental maps’ that students are presented with? With regard to *Alter Ego*, the answer is one in which French appears as a global language but also as a consistent purveyor of the values of western consumerism. These values are not made explicit but are inherent in the representation of supposedly ‘exotic’ places as tourist destinations or examples of the wide spread of French across the world. *Alter Ego* includes several presentations of *la Francophonie*, but these omit any reference to post-colonialism or the complexities of local subjectivities (where the French language is often synonymous with political and economic power). In common with Soysal’s analysis of French history books, in French language textbooks ‘projections of Europe still derive from the nation-state model and experience. We expect the European public space to manifest itself through a common agenda and purpose’ (Soysal, 2006: 121). On the other hand, difference beyond Europe is erased under the umbrella of *la Francophonie* which defers always to the monolithic norms of France and Frenchness.

In *Unité 2* of *Tricolore* the topic is to talk about countries in Europe. Here again there is a blandness resulting from the absence of problematising socio-economic data and/or the ambiguities of human experience. The verbs presented in conjunction with country vocabulary are *aller*, *venir*, *partir* (to go, to come, to leave), all suggesting mobility but the storied examples offered are of temporary visits to host families in other countries. Immigration is therefore airbrushed out and even the struggles of short homestays that could be associated with affluently mobile Europeans, including homesickness and culture shock, are not dealt with. The narrative positioning of this unit, through the range of identifications that are made available, is that students learning French are polite, docile tourists who are willing to help their host mother, to buy her a gift to say thank you, and to write a postcard home.

Insider-outsider: Models of native speakerness

What is missing from both books is any discussion of communicative difficulty or what might be called ‘identity struggle’ as a non-native outsider. This could be especially pertinent for students living abroad whose real-life experience is of having unequal access to the cultural capital of

insider native-speakers, especially those portrayed who are all affluent, mostly white, women who seem to have leisurely lives and to be free to make choices. Non-French students already in France, such as those at the Alliance Française in Paris, are living stories in their day-to-day of becoming which are not in any of the narratives of *Alter Ego*. Although students of French at the Alliance Française may be considered elite language learners, living in a foreign city with limited language proficiency and being away from home invariably entails some emotional struggle. In *Alter Ego*, learners' struggles are rendered invisible. There is no mention either of language learning for greater understanding or of the joy of aesthetic appreciation. Even if students' needs are reduced to a more pressing, instrumental nature (needing to find accommodation or deal with official institutions) these too are not met except for the final chapter on interpreting *petites annonces* for accommodation.

In the two books the fact of being an outsider is never problematised. The potential struggles entailed in travelling to France and engaging with a different language are not presented. Rather, mobility and instances of communication (interaction) are presented as seamless, portraying a superficial transposition from the 'home' setting into the French setting. Knowledge of the language and the cultural norms are presented as helpful in negotiating these interactions, but the absence of any reflection on communicative difficulties (pragmatic, linguistic, cultural and psychological disjuncture) assumes that there is an insider-outsider binary which language learning resolves. In other words, by imbibing the language and cultural information offered *you the outsider* can become an *insider*. The transition from A (country of origin) to B (France) is in fact presented therefore as available only to French-speakers, given that all the characters shown in the book are French-speakers. Such a positioning erases one's place of origin and the complexity which characterises much twenty-first century mobility.

Furthermore, the contexts of communication are not only linguistically unproblematic, there is an unrealistically homogenised content. What the student is presented with is a kind of homogenised, cosmopolitan, and middle-class, lifestyle, a lifestyle also indexed by English language teaching materials. In the next section we look at the communicative contexts offered through topic choice and linguistic content.

Contexts of communication

Textbooks present contexts of communication, taking the student into imagined worlds of language use, each positioning the learner

in particular ways within and vis-à-vis France and representations of Frenchness. Table 7.4 summarises the range of communicative contexts afforded by the topics in *Tricolore*, the way these are structured around language resources and representations, and the consequent identity positions afforded the student.

Table 7.4 Topics in *Tricolore Total 2* and how these position the learner

	Topic covered (communicative aim and key language items)	Representations of Frenchness and contexts of communication	Identity positions afforded
Unité 1	<i>En ville</i> : French shops and what they sell; shopping; money	The French shop in small, independent shops; items to buy include crisps, newspapers, meat, pâté, jam, pains au chocolat, ice cream	Consumer (shopper and consumer of goods); tourist
Unité 2	<i>On fait des projets</i> : planning a trip; means of transport; describing places; writing a postcard	Young white Europeans talk about their hobbies and travel plans; different European cities are shown with famous monuments	French speaker as European; focus on language use in western Europe
Unité 3	<i>De jour en jour</i> : school life in France; making comparisons; describing daily routines	Young white French children describe their school day, comparing school subjects and timetables	French speaker as European; school pupil constructed around lessons and timetable
Unité 4	<i>En famille</i> : physical descriptions of self and others; introducing people; staying with a host family; helping at home; talking about presents and souvenirs	Use of past tense to say what you have bought or eaten; requests to your host family (can I...?); comparative phrases; household tasks phrases; writing a thanks you letter	French speaker as either French or Canadian; polite house guest; helpful child
Unité 5	<i>Bon appétit</i> : cafés; describing meals and ordering food	Food and drink vocabulary; ordering a meal in a restaurant	Consumer; customer

Unité 6	<i>En voyage</i> : travel plans; describing a journey; ask for information and tickets	Describing a trip; describing a day out	Tourist
Unité 7	<i>Ça va?</i> : clothes; people's appearance; saying what hurts (parts of the body)	Clothes vocabulary ('my favourite clothes'); parts of the body; physical descriptions ('she's fat/thin/medium', etc.)	Interested in fashion and able to discuss appearance through clothes and body parts
Unité 8	<i>On va s'amuser</i> : finding out about Nîmes; find out what's on; discuss going out; accept or decline an invitation	Describing a French town; exchanging contact details; free time and sports vocabulary	Tourist; socially active with many hobbies

A similar analysis of the way topics are presented in *Alter Ego*, linguistically and thematically, shows that topics therein also position learners as consumers of goods and services, of celebrity culture, and of normative discourses of gender and family relations. This positioning is achieved through conventionalised images of Frenchness, including a glossy representation of *la Francophonie*.

Communicative aims in the two books are facilitated largely through the presentation and practice of vocabulary (domain specific lexis) and associated phrases. For instance, in *Unité 1* of *Tricolore* the four verbs *acheter*, *préférer*, *vendre* and *choisir* are practised, the use of which clearly position the student as a consumer presented with choice and preferences in consumer (retail) contexts. The main function of unit 1 is therefore to buy things, to consume. The tendency of language coursebooks to position students in this way has previously been commented on by Gray (2010a, 2010b) with reference to EFL. Here we see a similar principle in operation although what is offered is a quaint, French version of consumer choice, the shops included being *la boulangerie-pâtisserie*, *la boucherie*, *la charcuterie*, *le tabac* and so forth. What is *not* included is any invitation to problematise modes of shopping, for instance the phenomenon of clone towns and the disappearance of the *petit commerçants*, the rise of commercialism, the low wages of shopkeepers, the expansion of *grandes surfaces* (out-of-town retail markets) shopping in France.

Service encounters feature heavily, in both books but especially in *Tricolore Total*, so that social relations are configured through the ownership and consumption of goods. The focus on consumption that has been widely reported since the post-war years (Williams, 1974) has been exacerbated since the 1970s by the extension of the global market and the concomitant rise of neoliberal economic ideology. This in turn has led to a homogenising of aspiration which is perpetuated through language coursebooks (Gray, 2010b), and these two are no exception. Linked to the positioning of the reader as consumer is the prevalence of choice and requests for opinions and preferences. The language of choice and expressing opinions and preferences is threaded through both books. This meets with the requirements of the English national curriculum too (the ability to express opinions is required to meet Attainment Target Speaking Level 3 of the national curriculum) but the choices and preferences that are modelled tend to be about consumer products and practices, for example *j'adore le shopping; je déteste faire les courses* (I love shopping; I hate doing the shopping). Where there is potential to make cross-cultural comparisons these are often reduced to reified dichotomies, based mostly on gender in the case of *Alter Ego* as shown in the next section.

For a closer comparison of these two books I now analyse how a common topic is presented in each book: household chores. I have chosen this topic because the way household chores are dealt with presents an interesting case as one of the few topics that neither presents service encounters, nor has clear institutional norms as a frame (like school or workplaces, which are regulated externally). Discussion of who does what in the domestic sphere offers the potential to include discussions of gender roles, and children's and parental responsibility. This potential is realised in a limited way in *Alter Ego*, but the source text used to introduce the topic and the exploitation activities evoke a discourse of male–female antagonism which detracts from any serious discussion of cultural practices. My analysis of this topic followed two stages. Once I had located the source material and associated activities used to introduce the framing topic and to model the language, I looked for how subjects were represented within the communicative context (gender roles, references to activities, family roles, references to French culture, etc.). I then considered how the representation of the communicative context positions the reader according to the interpersonal dynamic within the source text and the broader, ideological discourses that are ‘“textured” together in the text in accordance with its genre and syntactic features’ (Fairclough, 2010: 273).

Les tâches ménagères (Household chores)

In *Tricolore Total*, this topic forms part of the larger topic of *En famille* covered in *Unité 4*. The objective of the sub-section (4b) is 'talk about helping at home', a topic that requires knowledge of certain vocabulary and phrasal chunks for the GCSE (e.g. *je passe l'aspirateur, mon frère ne range pas sa chambre* [I Hoover, my brother doesn't tidy his bedroom]). *Unité 4* introduces six young Canadians who have come to stay with French families. The children are clearly *Franco-Canadian* as they all have French names and speak fluent French. We are not told why they have come to France to spend ten days with host families; however, the fact that they are mother-tongue Francophones is significant as it removes any complication in the communication between them and their host families, so that we again see dialogues between native speakers which do not model any communication strategies or representations of language outsidership.

The phrases are introduced as a reading/listening comprehension activity. Students are told, in French, that *Julie* (one of the Canadian students who is staying with *la famille Lebois*) *regarde la télé avec Nicole Lebois. Écoute et lis le texte, puis mets les images dans l'ordre* (Julie is watching TV with Nicole Lebois. Listen and read the text, then put the pictures in the right order; p. 56) and are shown the dialogue that takes place between the two girls. Next to the dialogue box there is a photograph of the house set of *Secret Story* (the French equivalent of the reality show *Big Brother*). Below the photo of the house set are eight pictures of stick figures doing household chores (shopping, washing the car, making the beds, etc.). In the transcript of the dialogue between Nicole and Julie they discuss two characters from the show and the housework that these characters are seen doing, thereby using the housework phrases in third person and also reinforcing some previously learnt items such as physical and character descriptions (e.g. *la blonde en t-shirt et jean; beau; paresseux* [the blonde in the t-shirt and jeans; handsome; lazy]) with expressions of frequency (*une fois par mois* [once a month]). Of the two characters discussed the female, Maeva, is described as *mignonne* (cute/pretty) and as somebody who does the cooking for the other contestants and who, after dinner, washes up. Julie and Nicole also discuss Cyril, the male character. While he is described as *beau*, it is also pointed out that he is lazy (*paresseux*), and that he does not Hoover nor tidy up the boys' bedroom. Nicole says she hopes that Cyril is soon eliminated from the show. Towards the end of the dialogue the two girls say, in first person, what they do to help at home, what they like or do not like doing.

The activity that the girls are engaged in (watching reality TV) is confirmed as a globalised practice when Nicole tells Julie that 'J'adore *Secret Story*' and asks 'Tu as ça au Canada?' (Have you got that in Canada?). And Julie replies 'Nous avons *Loft Story*, c'est presque la même chose' (We have *Loft Story*, it's almost the same thing). The fact that they strike up a conversation, however unrealistic, because of a shared TV experience and discussion of characters in the programme allows them to replicate the tone of celebrity gossip which features in much social media and talk about TV viewing. By tapping into this particular global youth discourse, *Tricolore* seems to be attempting to bridge the experience of the French-speaking protagonists represented in the book and what they imagine is the lived reality of the student using the book. However, not only do they exclusively represent native insider references, there is no choice offered to opt out of the reality TV content of the constructed dialogue which conflates globalised Frenchness with reality TV. The context of practising household chores through discussion of a TV reality show introduces the reader into a fabricated world of behavioural norms where good equals a girl who does housework, and bad equals a boy who is lazy. Furthermore, the adjectives used to describe the contestants are highly gendered (*la blonde; il est beau mais paresseux*), and seem to privilege what Mohanty describes as the 'suppressed feminine' (1995: 74), that is, a particular pseudo-feminist perspective found in women-targeted media whereby women are encouraged to club together in opposition to the oppressive male.

In *Alter Ego* the topic of household chores is presented through a humorous cartoon (*bande dessinée*) showing a woman busy all day doing different chores. At the end of the day her husband, seated in his armchair, suggests she should join a gym as she does no sport. Given how busy her day has been she is exasperated by his suggestion and throws a saucepan over his head. Readers are asked to put the parts of the story in the right order, and then to match up nine statements about Myriam's daily routine, for example: 1. *Chaque matin, elle prépare le petit déjeuner pour la famille* (Every morning she makes breakfast for the family). The student is then asked, on the opposite page, to imagine that they are a journalist for *Elle* magazine who is doing some research on who does what in the home. Later in this unit (p. 79) the theme is revisited under the heading *Qui fait quoi dans la maison?* (Who does what at home?). This time students are asked to read a magazine article, based on research carried out by the French market research company IPSOS in 2005 on the distribution of household chores. Students are asked to compare the

data presented with the 'general situation' in their home country and to say which country they prefer to live in as far as the distribution of household chores is concerned. There is a photograph of a good looking, smiling man in shorts and a casual shirt loading a washing machine in a sunny, modern kitchen. The caption reads *L'homme nouveau est arrivé?* (Has the new man arrived?).

Apart from the explicit references to women's magazines (an article extract and the mention of the magazine *Elle*), the topic choice and activity types in *Alter Ego* replicate the layout and content of women's magazines. Women-targeted publications in France (*la presse féminine*) are big cultural icons; two of the world's three leading women's magazines are French⁸ and there is a strong tradition of mixing articles on fashion and shopping with other issues believed to be of concern to women. In Lualaba's (2008: 6) report on representations of women in French language women's magazines, she notes that, while there are differences for different age groups, these:

(women's) magazines share a certain number of characteristics:

slick presentation

content which fulfils three basic requirements: to entertain, to inform and to give advice

a keen willingness to support and help women in their daily life.

Women's magazines want to be advisors and confidantes; what is most sought after, whether this is stated or implied, is to contribute to the well-being of women. The content of the magazines shares a number of similarities: topics reporting on and giving advice on themes considered to be of concern to women e.g. staying slim, beauty, men, sex, cooking, diets, shopping.

[my translation]

This intention 'to contribute to the well-being of women' seems to be mirrored in the topic choice and discursive stance throughout *Alter Ego*. An article on who does what in the home is the sort of gender discussion article that appears regularly in *la presse féminine*⁹ so, while the topic is presented as of general interest, what we see is the reproduction of a particular genre where advice and support is offered to women in a light, entertaining format. Male figures are either ridiculed as insensitive oafs or idealised as the 'secure, participating partner in the relationship' (Hills, 2002: 270).

Textbook topics are presented through the modelling of *communicative contexts*. Each context presented assumes an instance of communication that is not only recognisable but is believable or desirable. In other words, the communicative contexts presented lead the reader into narrative worlds which are framed as normative in some way. In their analysis of *Cosmopolitan* magazine Machin and Thornborrow (2003) showed how women's magazines use images and texts to align their readers with the values of the magazine editors and advertisers. Similarly, in its presentation of vocabulary related to household chores, *Alter Ego* has explicitly used the popular discourse of gender differentiation to introduce and to develop the topic. *Tricolore Total*, as with other topics, does not explicitly refer to gender differences, but these are implied, both through topic choice and also the way in which the topic is modelled by adolescent girls. In both cases, gender roles are polarised, although it is *Alter Ego* that does this consistently throughout the coursebook, featuring almost only women protagonists in their material and using a formatting and presentation that strongly resembles a women's magazine.

In the UK the discourse of gender differences is often evoked (and of social class to a surprisingly lesser extent) with regard to education, the experience of school and examination performance, especially in MFL. The study of French has been cited as a particularly gendered activity, both preferred by girls as well as discouraged for boys. *Tricolore Total* strives to be inclusive and boy friendly through its images of active boys, but the topics are, nonetheless, predominantly centred around home, domestic spheres, shopping and talking about relationships. Beyond the gender binary, needless to say, there is no alternative to the 'normality of heterosexual familism [...] affirmed in the everyday routines and narratives of social life' (Chambers, 2001: 168) (see Chapter 3 for discussion of similar heteronormative perspectives).

Conclusion

In offering this critique, it is only fair, as many reviews do, to applaud the excellent work that is done within the constraints of publishers' restrictions and commercial imperatives. My aim in this chapter has not been to criticise the hard work and integrity of authors. Rather, I have sought to compare how communication and communicativeness in different French learning contexts are represented in two different coursebooks. I have no reason to believe that students at the Alliance Française do not enjoy their classes and learn a great deal from teachers using *Alter Ego*, which is an attractive and useful resource. Indeed, the

content of *Alter Ego* seems to reflect the demographic of FLE students who travel to Paris for intensive courses; that is, mostly affluent women. Furthermore, looking only at a textbook does no justice to the other resources that FLE teachers bring to supplement their classes, and, as suggested by Pingel (2009), further empirical work is needed to investigate *how* textbooks are used. With regard to UK schools, coursebooks such as *Tricolore Total* strive to interest and to be more inclusive in terms of gender representation but are restricted by limited curriculum objectives to focusing on grammar and interactional language.¹⁰

Nonetheless, it is important to examine and to contest the representational choices in any educational media. Representations both reflect and seek to produce subjectivities, and textbooks offer valuable insights into how language and communicative contexts are packaged and presented for particular markets. Both textbooks presented here function well within their constrained markets. It is pertinent that they are written by former teachers themselves, as are most textbooks, and so any criticism centring on narrowness of representation (gender, age, ethnic heritage) or lack of opportunity for reflexivity (on one's own linguistic and cultural status) may not be perceived by authors and publishers as relevant to their markets. This raises the fundamental question about language learning and language-learner identity, such as understanding language as an aesthetic pleasure (Kramsch, 2009) and for 'play' and ritual (Cook, 2000), not just for instrumental communication. The challenge facing language study today is to take into account complex identities resulting from unprecedented demographic mobility and diversity. In the UK modern languages in schools cannot survive if only reducible to superficial service encounters and so the rationale for languages needs to be argued at every level, a rationale that acknowledges the educational value of language learning to enable learners to relativise their world view. While both books considered in this chapter include a range of potentially interesting topics which provide opportunities for language practice, what is further needed is inclusion of challenging, inclusive content and discussion of the individual and social contexts of the language itself.

Notes

1. Grammatical, discourse, socio-linguistic and strategic competences.
2. <http://www.fondation-alliancefr.org/?cat=538>.
3. 'French remained the most popular language (offered by 89 per cent of schools in 2008), followed by Spanish and German (25 per cent and

10 per cent respectively), while a small number of schools (three per cent or under) offered Italian, Chinese, Japanese and Urdu' (DCSE, 2009: 3).

4. The most widely taken exams for FLE are the *Diplôme d'études en langue française* (DELFI) followed by the *Diplôme approfondi de langue française*, which are set and awarded by the French Ministry of Education.
5. 'Getting learners to recognise their own cognitive style and to develop their own learning strategies accordingly' (CEFR, 2001: 149).
6. The GCSE is usually taken in the final two years of compulsory schooling (ages 14–16). Afterwards most students wishing to go to university take a restricted number of subjects at Advanced Subsidiary or Advanced level. The GCSE tests the four skills in separate papers: speaking and writing are examined through teacher-led 'controlled assessments' with reading and listening being examined more traditionally as set papers and marked externally.
7. According to personal correspondence from the Alliance Française in Paris, they receive over 11,000 students per year of over 160 nationalities and a spread of ages. The breakdown for 2011 was as follows:

Age	Men	Women
0–18	130	239
19–25	1,144	2,966
26–35	1,482	2,917
36+	1,095	2,005

8. *Elle* and *Marie-Claire* (Souliez, 2008).
9. E.g. 'Qui s'occupe des tâches ménagères dans votre couple?' (Paul Ackermann in *20 minutes*, 3 December 2009); 'La parité à la maison, c'est possible.' (Brigitte Grézy in *Elle*, 12 October 2011).
10. It is well known in MFL teaching that the more interesting content texts which do sometimes feature (such as a text on William the Conqueror and *A quoi sert le cou de la girafe?*, pp. 97 and 109 respectively in *Tricolore*) are often omitted from lessons because the language is not directly linked to the needs of the GCSE and thereby not deemed 'useful'.

8

Spanish Imagined: Political and Subjective Approaches to Language Textbooks

Cristina Ros i Solé

Introduction

Language teaching is rarely free from cultural values and beliefs about particular languages and the purpose for teaching or learning them. Whether it is about attitudes towards a language, beliefs about a language and the uses of it, or the way it should be taught, historical, socio-political and ideological aspects pervade all language teaching. As has been pointed out in the literature, language pedagogy (as manifested in curricula, teaching practices and materials) is not a 'neutral' ground alien to socio-political issues, rather, it reproduces and engages with the circulating discourses and values embedded in governmental and institutional policies on the meanings of a language and culture (see, for example, Harklau, 1999; Creese and Martin, 2003; Kubota et al., 2003; Kubota, 2004; Van Dijk, 2004; Creese et al., 2006; Gray, 2010a; Starkey, 2011). In this way, language textbooks construct the target culture through socio-historical and socio-political lenses and learners are placed at the centre of an ideological exercise in which particular agendas are played out.

Most language textbooks, however, do not foreground this contingent and ideological nature of cultural content and instead present the cultural aspects of a language in a purportedly objective way. Within such an approach, cultural issues are frequently presented in 'culture asides' which provide idiosyncratic and curious 'facts' about the culture. Whether consciously or unconsciously, language textbooks transmit particular ideologies about a culture and these are manifested in different ways; for example, the examples used in grammar explanations

may present particular versions of the world (Starkey and Osley, 2001; Leahy, 2004), or even when culture is presented in an explicit way, this may be done by presenting homogeneous and monolithic versions which are seriously at odds with reality (Mar-Molinero, 1992; Cortazzi and Jin, 1999). This chapter argues that the textbook does not and should not present a single imaginary of a culture. Rather, it suggests that the textbook, as a cultural artefact, should incorporate competing versions of the target culture, while at the same time allowing space for reflective distance. It should provide learners with the tools to 'pass judgement' and present alternative world views by engaging their subjectivity (Kramsch, 2009).

A recent 'subjective' turn in language learning has signalled a move towards personal and symbolic aspects of the language learning experience which foreground the development of new sensibilities and the construction of personal meanings through the target language (Coffey and Street, 2008; Kramsch, 2009; Ros i Solé and Fenoulhet, 2011). These new subjectivities, however, which tap into learners' personal interpretations of the culture, may be in tension with political and ideological views represented in language textbooks. Textbooks, it will be recalled, can also be seen as 'cultural artefacts' (Gray, 2010a) in which meanings are represented in highly selective and frequently politicised ways. This chapter explores how learners' alternative worlds and personal trajectories challenge these politicised representations of Spanish-speaking people. In order to highlight how ideological discourses constrain subjective cultural representations in language coursebooks, I analyse a Spanish language textbook, *Aula Internacional* (Corpas et al., 2006).

Language teaching ideologies and learners' subjectivities

Language learners may be driven not only by specific economic and instrumental goals, as the communicative approach which dominated language teaching in the 1980s and 1990s assumed (Kramsch, 2005; Leung, 2005; Block, 2007), but by a desire to expand their sense of self. The more emotional and transformative aspects of language learning for the self have recently been pointed out in the literature (e.g. Norton, 2000; Block, 2007; Kramsch, 2009). The concept of subjectivity is key in such an approach. According to Kramsch (2009: 17) the term *subjective* 'is used to characterize the affective aspects of the language experience and is positively associated with the cognitive and emotional development of the self [...] and the transformations [the student] is undergoing in the process of acquiring it'. Moreover, for

Kramsch 'subjectivity' is closely associated with symbolic forms and the personal meanings language learners acquire. In this way, subjectivity implies an evolving rather than a static sense of self. Our sense of who we are and our relationship with the cultures we participate in is not the same across time, but has to be constantly maintained. In this way, the language learner has the potential to constantly re-signify and reinterpret the meanings of the culture(s) under study, and has a responsibility to 'pass judgement and take moral decisions' (Kramsch, 2009: 18). In order to incorporate this dimension, language teaching textbooks may include texts and language exercises that trigger personal reactions based on moral judgements that invoke language learners' sense of self.

The suggestion that an emphasis on the 'subject' rather than on a disembodied (and more asocial) 'learner' may result in greater involvement of the subject has been emphasised in the literature (Block, 2003; Pavlenko, 2005; Kramsch, 2009; Van Leeuwen, 2009). As Van Leeuwen (2009) explains, contemporary language identities may be described as lifestyles which diverge from the traditional criteria of frequently more static social positions such as class, gender, age and occupation. As with the definition of 'subjectivity' provided above, our sense of self may be better defined by a mobile and fluid identity building process. For Van Leeuwen (2009: 214), this identity building process feeds on the individuals' consumer habits and is better represented by the concept of 'lifestyle', which consists of:

a combination of, on the one hand, things which formerly would have been the province of individuality, such as 'attitudes' and 'personality traits' and 'feelings', and, on the other hand, things that are more in the public domain such as income, and especially consumer behaviour.

In this context, language learners are no longer seen as made up of old and fixed identity markers – rather they constantly interact with socio-economic constraints and their 'lifestyles' and identities are affected by these. Learners may 'buy into' different ways of being recognised by others or may be positioned into different roles by governmental organisations, cultural and educational policies, and even marketing experts. When entering the language classroom, learners already carry with them their identities and subjectivities that will match or be in conflict with the imagined language learner identities provided in the language textbook.

But learners do not have to be tied in to a particular version of the culture. They do not have to consume the version of the culture produced by the textbook or endorsed by the teacher, they can contest and inflect this with their own meanings. In order to explore this further, I will now focus on three aspects of cultural representations and how they can be explored from the perspective of the putative learner: the concept of 'foreignness', representations of Spanish multilingualism and multiculturalism, and the place of history in the teaching of culture. I have chosen these topics because of their potential to link learners with their affective and moral responses, and to have a transformative power for the development of the self.

Imagining 'foreignness'

The meaning of 'foreign' in language learning is highly ideological. As Pavlenko (2003: 315) points out, the meaning of 'foreignness' can be defined as an arbitrary construction by 'those in power'. Pavlenko reminds us how the notion of the nation rests on a collective consciousness of belonging to a group, and, invoking Anderson's (1991) notion of *imagined communities*, she argues that the difference between the 'other' and 'us' is not real but 'imagined'.

The idea that the concept of discrete languages and cultures is part of a 'grand narrative' constructed by powerful agents such as governments, their foreign policies and the cultural production of elite groups is not new. Said's (1978) concept of orientalism famously denounced the skewed images that intellectuals in the West had formed of Eastern cultures. He also used the term 'imaginative geographies' to describe how the East has been given meaning and interpreted through Western discourses. Pratt (1992) takes a similar stance by questioning cultural representations of European travel writers and their post-colonial imaginaries.

The contingency of languages and cultures rests both on particular political discourses and the perspective that the beholder takes. Within this critical view of the scope of languages and cultures, languages are not seen as fixed and pre-existing us, that is, static objects to be discovered, but rather they evolve and are defined within historically evolving ideological domains (Pennycook, 2004), so that, for example, the meaning of 'Spanishness' or 'Spanish culture' is not only contingent on the discourses available at the time, but also on the individual learner's perspective and his or her specific historic and cultural trajectory.

This shifting ground in the perception of languages and cultures can be exemplified by noting the changing relationships of particular languages to specific territories. One only has to think of regions where there has been a recent war (such as the Balkans) (see Byram, 2008). In the former Yugoslavia, the concepts of 'the nation' and 'the language' are embedded in questions about the fixedness and 'truth' of attributing cultures and languages to particular geographies and the arbitrariness of this. Where before there was one language (i.e. Serbo-Croat), now there are four: Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Serbian.

Similarly, traditional modern European languages taught in Western European countries have until recently followed a national modernist paradigm of one language-one nation that has linked cultures with national and homogeneous identities (Starkey, 2011; Stougaard-Nielsen, 2011; Ros i Solé, 2003; Risager, 2007). However, the increasing globalisation of the world economy has provoked an important shift in language ideology. As Heller (2000: 12), points out:

we find ourselves at a turning point, in which, at least in Europe and North America, there is a tension between understanding language as primarily linked to the construction and operation of nation-states and understanding language as primarily linked to the control over and access to the production and distribution of economic resources.

We need to add to this the phenomenon of the population's growing mobility (Urry, 2009) and *superdiversity* in urban societies (Vertovec, 2007) where individuals cannot be segregated into closed-off communities. Rather, these superdiverse individuals often participate in different communities simultaneously. Within these conceptualisations of culture, language learning must re-examine the boundaries and scope to include these new complex dimensions of the imagined ideological cultures which may blur political barriers.

While globalisation is having an impact on contemporary approaches to Spanish language teaching by favouring transnational approaches to the language in which the global scale is the ultimate scale for action (Mar-Molinero and Paffey, 2011), we also need to look at how this global scale impacts on national identities. Indeed, the relation between the national and the global, the multiplicity of cultural alliances, and the intermingling of communities within and across geographical boundaries need to be discussed in the context of Spanish language teaching.

Imagining Spanish multiculturalism

Although ‘foreign’ languages are built upon the idea of the ‘distinctiveness’ of the ‘other’, this other has been artificially tied to the national paradigm and the supposed homogeneity of its culture. Indeed, the discourses found in language textbooks reveal different types of multicultural representations and different definitions of the other. Whether these discourses embrace or reject transnational models, where the learner’s cultural alliances embrace more than one nation-state and identify him/herself across national borders; whether they highlight or silence linguistic and cultural minorities such as Catalan and Galician in Spain or Aymará and Quéchua in Latin America; or whether they recognise diasporic and migrant cultures, we can identify different definitions of multiculturalism and diversity. Furthermore, it is important to investigate to what extent such diversity is described in all its complexity and not simplified into ‘us’ and ‘them’ dichotomies that pigeonhole communities and cultures, or even arbitrarily add particular values to some communities. For example, we would want to assess whether the paradigm presented of Spanish cultures is one that represents the diversity and complexity within Spanish language territories in a fair and non-discriminatory fashion.

One must also be wary of ‘liberal’ multiculturalism and its focus on celebrating or silencing the other by misrepresenting or ignoring problematic issues of social cohesion and social unrest or by exoticising or essentialising such problems. In such approaches to multiculturalism, differences in cultures are presented objectively as permanent and are taken for granted (Kubota, 2004). In contrast to this, a more critical approach to multiculturalism would engage with difference. The idea of the other therefore needs careful analysis, one that does not merely present facts in ‘cultural asides’ as permanent truths or celebrates difference between cultures and emphasises its uniqueness. Rather a ‘critical’ multiculturalism would advocate presenting multilingualism and multiculturalism as complex, mobile and dynamic processes where societies and cultures reject essentialist and objective representations, while at the same time attempting to engage the multiple perspectives and subjectivities of the learners.

Given the subtleties indicated in the appreciation of multiculturalism in societies, we may want to ask what position Spanish language textbooks take on such issues, what strategies they use to build multicultural representations of Spanish societies, and what positions learners are allowed to take. Cultures, however, cannot be appreciated just within

a snapshot in time, they also need to be viewed from a historical perspective.

Imagining learners' cultural memories

Like representations of multiculturalism and multilingualism, the history of national cultures has often been included in language teaching manuals in a purportedly objective manner rather than in a critical way and by representing multiple voices.

Language textbooks are peppered with commemorations of historical events that students may be very familiar with and even implicated in, or on the contrary so unfamiliar with them that such events require careful contextualisation and explanations. Indeed, descriptions of political events can be presented in a way that includes language learners' point of view and cultural references. They can be presented impersonally and 'objectively' as the undisputed truth of the rendering of an event, or they can be subjectively presented through personal documents and 'testimonials' from different perspectives (Parry, 2000). Accounts from different witnesses of a historical event can be provided in such a way that they mirror the cultural complexity of both the historical event and the possible reactions or points of contact with the audience of the textbook, thereby inviting the learner to respond critically and affectively.

Despite the fact that it is beginning to be recognised that learning languages helps us revisit and reconcile ourselves to poignant cultural memories and historical episodes (Pavlenko, 2003; Charalambous and Rampton, 2010; McNamara, 2011), the effect that key (and often violent and traumatic) episodes in history have on people's emotions and personal disposition towards the other is something often neglected in language teaching. Historical events set in the target cultures are not necessarily alien to learners' emotional and historical pasts. Heritage language speakers, learners with historical connections to the culture, whether religious or political, may well be emotionally connected to certain historical events that invoke troubled identities and conflicting views. But do Spanish language textbooks take into consideration such personal links and stances towards historical events?

Whereas very often culture has been exoticised and glamorised in language teaching textbooks to present a 'tourist gaze' (Urry, 1990), a more involved and 'ethical' approach to history (i.e. one which allows the learner to pass moral judgement of 'right' or 'wrong') would involve

such books dealing with ethically controversial aspects of a particular territory such as language conflict, war and exile. In the case of a textbook for teaching peninsular Spanish, this could involve readings on the privileging of Spanish over other peninsular languages under Franco, the building of mosques in Catalonia today, the Basque independence question, or the exile of Spanish republicans after the Spanish Civil War. Indeed, as some authors have pointed out, feelings of empathy, awe, pride, shock or sadness are not strange to the language learner in the cultural encounter (Pavlenko, 2005) and these could certainly be invoked by touching on the topics mentioned above.

When language learners are faced with controversy, conflict, injustice and violence they may well be more readily inclined to respond with subjective and personally meaningful thoughts that implicate their moral self, trigger feelings of empathy for other cultures and the construction of personal and symbolic meanings. This contrasts with the usual representations of culture in language textbooks where it is seen through a rose-tinted glass with a focus on the most positive aspects: for example, literary achievements, architectural assets and quirky celebrations.

In the next few pages I examine how a particular Spanish language textbook deals with the conscious or unconscious development of the learners' moral self and subjectivity by analysing the three different aspects of the representation of culture aforementioned: that is, the notion of 'foreignness', representations of Spanish multilingualism and multiculturalism, and the place of history in the teaching of culture.

Methodology

I have chosen a particular language textbook in order to apply the theoretical framework described above. This textbook will provide the context to discuss a critical analysis of textbooks from the point of view of the subjectivity allowed for the learner and the political positions afforded to the learner within multilingual and superdiverse societies.

The book has been selected for its breadth and variety in the treatment of Hispanic cultures and contemporary topics which go beyond the stereotyped list of themes often found in foreign language textbooks. The different ways in which cultural topics are dealt with in the book also allowed for a more in-depth analysis of the role of the imagined subjectivity of the learner.

The audience of the book was also an important factor in choosing it. The aim was to choose a textbook that had international appeal and was not exclusively designed with the UK in mind. Although *Aula Internacional* (AI) is produced in Barcelona, it is a book directed at a wider global audience, albeit one that focuses on Europe. This allows me to assume a more multicultural target reader that goes beyond national paradigms. Moreover, there seemed to be an attempt by the authors to go beyond the purely functional and touristy language outcomes to deal with more educational and socially oriented themes.

The analysis of the book is based on a combination of content analysis, critical discourse analysis (CDA) and critical literacy approach. I began by tracing the topics mentioned in the book, whether in the table of contents or within its pages, both in the exercises and the texts introduced. Then, I went through a second level of analysis which used CDA to interpret texts within any ideological frame that may be underpinning it (Fairclough, 1989; Van Dijk, 2004), and finally I used the concept of open and closed text from critical literacy studies (Luke, 1989).

***Aula Internacional*: An analysis**

The information presented on the front and back covers of the book gives an introduction to how Spanish-speaking culture(s) is/are set out in this textbook. The front cover of the book places culture in a prominent position by showing a fragment of a *trencadís* (mosaic) by Antonio Gaudí, the famous Catalan architect who has become an icon of Barcelona and one of the emblems of a cultural policy which emphasises and sells Catalonia as a place of culture. Moreover, it can be also interpreted as a metaphor of the heterogeneity and multiplicity of influences in a *superdiverse* (Vertovec, 2007) culture represented by the different shards that make up the mosaic. The written information on the back cover of the book complements this first impression by claiming to address Spanish cultures as well as Latin American ones. The book states that as well as covering the communicative skills and grammar, it also 'integrates' *getting to know* and *understanding* the different cultures in Latin America.

It is not only the illustration on the cover of the book that gives us a clue about what the main claim of this book is. It is also interesting to pay attention to the title of the book 'Aula Internacional'. On the one hand, the use of the word *aula* (classroom) signals the book is for use

in classrooms (and may thus be said to reference education – in a way that few UK-produced ELT textbooks do). On the other, it emphasises its international and global projection.

The artwork accompanying Unit 1 is a cartoon featuring another important image which sets the tone for imagining the audience of this textbook. This cartoon illustrates a wide section of the population: ranging in age from early twenties to fifties, they represent a variety of ethnic backgrounds and professions. A close investigation of the table of contents and the book's content shows that the texts and images presented introduce a variety of cultural, spiritual and educational topics that go beyond the 'tourist gaze' and engage with contemporary topics and concerns – from the more aesthetically oriented, such as contemporary design, body piercing and fashion, to the media (e.g. radio), medicine (e.g. alternative therapies), cultural history (e.g. archaeology), architecture and literature. These topics are presented in order to practise language functions and structures and to expand vocabulary.

Voicing learners' subjectivities

As well as the topics mentioned in the previous section, *AI* introduces a great variety of topics in more depth in a separate section of the book (called *Más cultura* [more culture]). The texts appearing in these special sections are mostly adapted texts, written by the authors or by famous literary figures (e.g. Octavio Paz, Arturo Pérez-Reverte, Miguel Delibes and Gabriel García Márquez) and they include information about a variety of different aspects of Hispanic culture. These texts are not only appearing in a different section (*Más cultura*), but they are also different kinds of texts from the ones found in the main section of the book, and the pedagogical treatment is also different. By concentrating on the cultural content, the texts presented in the *Más cultura* section are longer and present more linguistic difficulty. We could even argue that they present a different type of text, what I will call, following Luke's definition (1989), an 'open text'.

Luke (1989) elaborates on Umberto Eco's distinction of 'open' and 'closed' texts. He posits that 'closed texts' are those that prompt normalising and uniform reactions from the reader and allow the learner to 'uncritically consume texts' (p. 74). In contrast to this, 'open texts' allow 'unforeseen interpretations' (p. 68), that is, they do not intend to represent reality as it is, but rather, they invite a variety of possible meanings and worlds in the reading of the text. The addressee is therefore involved

in refashioning the original text and engaging his/her background and knowledge of contemporary culture by imagining alternative possible worlds. Luke (1989: 68) writes:

by calling its own subjectivity to the reader's attention, the work juxtaposes itself against the reader's knowledge of contemporary culture and requires an 'unforeseen interpretation' on the basis of the variables of the reader's 'semantic encyclopedia'.

If we analyse the texts presented in the *Más cultura* section we can see that the texts provided are susceptible to multiple interpretations and elicit the opinions of the learner and accounts of his/her alternative possible worlds. Indeed, with this type of text the reader could be invited to reflect on his/her own experiences and refashion the text presented by accessing his/her 'semantic encyclopedia'.

Instead, though, the reader is asked to give an opinion that does not engage critically with the 'culture' presented in the text. Rather, the reader compares experiences described in the text with familiar ones without trying to give the text a 'new life'. There is no refashioning or imagining of alternative scenarios. Although the learner is on occasion invited to imagine how a particular conversation would develop, this concentrates on 'style' rather than on the content of the piece.

An example of such stylistic approaches to text can be seen in the treatment of the text 'Sin noticias de Gurb' (p. 153). Here the learner reads a humorous and fantastical passage written by the Spanish writer Eduardo Mendoza about an alien, who, having landed on earth, is studying how Spanish people function. After reading the text, learners are asked to comment on the conversation between an alien and a janitor in a building and give their opinion on what they think of the seducing techniques employed by the locals. The reader is not asked to reinterpret the text by giving it a different reading of the experience, or by being an 'outsider'. This would have involved a certain degree of reflexivity which would encourage the student to talk about experiences of alienation in a different culture; that is, learners could be asked to talk about what it feels to be like a 'foreigner' in another culture, or how they would go about things if they were the outer space character and had landed in a Latin American country rather than in Spain. Instead, what the reader is asked to do does not make the learner engage his/her unique cultural trajectory and (multi)cultural experiences, but rather sees the literary excerpt as a humorous piece or an anecdote. Although we could classify the text used in this exercise as an 'open text' for the opportunities

it may afford for engaging learners' criticality and emotional reactions, the treatment given seems to forego these opportunities by not involving the personal judgement of the reader in relation to culture, its norms and behaviours.

In the next section I will discuss another way of presenting knowledge about Spanish culture in this book that shows greater participation and the engagement of the subjectivity of the language learner.

Consuming culture

The imagined readership of the book in *AI* does not seem to be people who are merely uncritical consumers of 'high' culture. Instead they are people who participate in other forms of cultural consumption that are not only the privilege of an intellectual elite.

The readership of *AI* is represented as being a social group who has a desire to consume popular culture such as music, food and holidays, and everyday hobbies and activities accessible to most Western Europeans. An example from the book, where students are asked to select a restaurant to go to from a selection after reading a brief description of what type of restaurant it is, illustrates this point (p. 22). As with many ELT courses, asking students to make consumerist choices shows that Spanish courses are not immune to the trend of presenting 'consumerist lifestyles' (Van Leeuwen, 2009; Gray, 2010a) in which textbook characters are presented as people seeking to fulfil material and lifestyle ambitions.

The fulfilment of consumer desires and the exercising of choice by the language learner does not stop at the level of the kind of Spanish lifestyle learners opt into, but also the different cultural 'products' and 'souvenirs' they consume. The students of this book are imagined as middle-class consumers of both 'pop culture' and 'mass culture' interested in fashion, eating out and travelling. The theme of *Moda española* included in the chapter about 'design' is an illustration of this. Here a brief text about the history of Spanish fashion is used as a reading exercise where students have to match images of models wearing clothes to the different design styles described in the text.

This cultural consumption does not conform to the definition of culture usually referred to when talking about 'culture' in language studies and language teaching. It does not conform to 'high-brow' culture but to the view that cultural studies have broadened the concept of culture to include that which deals with everyday life and its practices (Labanyi,

2002). Following Beck's (2006: 41) concept of 'banal cosmopolitanism', one can see how language learners are urged to consume (or simulate consuming) cosmopolitan mass-products in language textbooks by reading about designer furniture, clothing and ethnic restaurants. Banal cosmopolitanism is intimately connected with all forms of consumption. It is exhibited not only by the vast colourful array of meals, foodstuffs, restaurants and menus routinely found in almost any city anywhere in the world; it also pervades other spheres of everyday culture – for example, music.

So, whereas language learners may think that they are not dealing with culture in these instances of 'banal cosmopolitanism', it is precisely in these instances that students acquire more relevance and agency and are allowed to reflect about the cultural content presented. Ironically, it is with 'mass' culture that the learner has an opportunity to make choices about the target culture and engage his/her subjectivity by constructing his/her own lifestyles within it and express his/her own desires. In another exercise from the book we can see how learners engage their subjectivities by infusing and interpreting Spanish cultures with their personal tastes and desires where students are asked to look at several holiday trips and to choose one (p. 50).

Students following this textbook are not only assumed to be able to travel for holiday purposes, but they are also constructed as highly mobile individuals who see the rest of the world as possible locations for work, and cultures that can be drawn on for educating oneself and broadening the mind.

Mobility, globalisation and multiculturalism

In *AI* language learners are assumed to be people who have broad intellectual interests (e.g. they go to the cinema and read world literary fiction) and cosmopolitan aspirations (e.g. travelling abroad, as seen in the topic 'el turista accidental', p. 49), and they are tested on their knowledge of different aspects of Latin America. The job market is imagined on the global stage (e.g. a cartoon about a job indicates skills in German are required, p. 68), and an exercise about a job application shows that the candidate has a degree in French studies, had a work placement in Paris and worked in Strasbourg for two years (p. 107). Another exercise shows highly skilled professionals relocating to a Latin American country (p. 101). In the examples just mentioned mobile lifestyles are invoked. We seem to be faced with a truly cosmopolitan

citizen who, with his/her knowledge of Spanish, will have access to a great variety of countries and cultures in the world.

Whereas we can say that *AI* has a truly cosmopolitan feel and orientation, a closer inspection into how this cosmopolitanism is constructed reveals that there is an imbalance between the attention given to Spanish and Latin American contexts and the treatment of the different cultures. Whereas Spain is used as the backdrop for different topics, Latin America is foregrounded and represented as 'knowledge about the culture'. This is particularly evident in the inclusion of a section that deals exclusively about Latin America (*América*, p. 97). I would suggest that such foregrounding of Latin America displays a degree of 'liberal cosmopolitanism' which exoticises and otherises it, glossing over possible political and social problems such as social inequalities or culture-specific issues.

Although, as I have discussed, the general tone of the book is to present cosmopolitan individuals with global aspirations, the treatment of Latin American countries versus Spain belies a different treatment which is not so cosmopolitan and internationally minded. If the literature on foreign language education has denounced a tendency in much language teaching to fall into binary paradigms of 'us' and 'them', here we see a different perspective. Here, the producers of the book are the traditional other (they are working in Barcelona, Spain), but in the discourses of the textbook the roles have been slightly re-worked. The Spanish from Spain becomes 'us', whereas the Latin American culture becomes 'them' or the 'other'.

Indeed, *AI* draws a distinction between Latin American and peninsular Spanish culture. This is done in three different ways: through the standard language used (the peninsular variety); the different pedagogical treatment the 'two' versions have in the book; and by some of the values the different varieties of Hispanic cultures enshrined in this book.

The dominance of the use of the peninsular Spanish variety of the language is patent throughout the book. Even when Latin American stories are presented, these are done through a peninsular Spanish voice. All the exercises and tasks are located in Spain or told from a 'European' point of view, as with the story about the practice of *Santería* in Cuba (*Santería: la cara oculta de Cuba*, p. 80).

Similarly, Latin American varieties of Spanish are not presented as a 'model' to work from. In a text about Haydée Mercedes Sosa, an Argentinian singer (p. 174), the use of the possessive third person pronoun 'su' to talk about 'her' country tells us that the person writing about the singer is not from Argentina, but, probably, Spain.

The pedagogical treatment of Latin American cultures and Spanish ones is also markedly different. Indeed, parallels between Spain and Latin America are constantly being drawn and differences emphasised, thus presenting two entirely different worlds that share the same language. The following instructions for an exercise in the book where two Hispanic writers (one from Spain and another from Latin America) are compared is an example:

A continuación, te presentamos dos textos de dos grandes escritores hispanos. En ellos dos mujeres que llevan casadas más de veinte años se quejan a sus maridos. ¿Cuál dirías que es la principal diferencia entre ellas? En tu opinión, alguna de ellas tiene mas razón para quejarse?

(Corpas et al., 2006: 162)

[Below, there are two texts by two well-known Hispanic writers. In them, two women who have been married for more than 20 years complain about their husbands. What would you say is the main difference between them? Do you think that one has a better reason to complain than the other?]

It could be argued that this tendency to polarise Spain on one side and Latin American countries on the other could in itself be just a strategy to handle the great variety of languages and cultures within Latin America and Spain. However, the different cultures are not treated as being in the same playing field. Not only is Spanish culture written about from a peninsular Spanish authorial perspective and the contrast between Latin American and Spanish cultural productions used as a pedagogical strategy, but there is also a clear tendency to present stories about Latin America in a different light. This is further emphasised because many of the topics and texts about Latin America appear in three specific sections of the textbook: the unit about 'América', a section called *Viajar* (where there is a focus on the reading of authentic texts), and the section called *Más cultura*.

The bias towards a Spanish peninsular voice is patent in the way Latin American cultures are not integrated fully in the coursebook and in the choice of topics, which present certain values about the culture(s). Whereas peninsular Spanish stands for modernity, rationality and the world of work, Latin America is associated with more exotic and backward practices. In the section *Viajar*, where both Spain and Latin America feature, there is a noticeable difference in focus. In Table 8.1

Table 8.1 Spanish and Latin American texts in AI (*Viajar* section)

Chapter number	Hispanic context	<i>Viajar</i> (text)	<i>Viajar</i> (topic)
1	Spain and Latin American (LA)	<i>Lenguas en contacto con el español</i> (Languages in contact with Spanish)	Socio-linguistics
2	Non-specified, peninsular Spanish language	<i>Lo que más me gusta de mi trabajo</i> (What I like best about my job)	Society
3	Non-specified (probably Spain and LA)	<i>Trabalenguas</i> (Tongue twisters)	Folklore
4	Spain	<i>Chistes</i> (Jokes)	Folklore
5	Spain	<i>España en democracia</i> (Democracy in Spain)	History
6	Spain	<i>La Noche de San Juan</i> (Saint John's night – a festival in Spain)	Folklore
7	Spain and LA	<i>Bolero</i> (a type of music very popular in Spain and LA)	Music
8	Spain	<i>Moda española</i> (Spanish fashion)	Fashion industry
9	Cuba	<i>Santería: la cara oculta de Cuba</i> (Santería, Cuba's hidden side)	Religion
10	Spain	<i>Más de 80 años de radio en España</i> (More than 80 years of Spanish radio)	Media
11	Indigenous/minority cultures in Spain and LA	<i>Tradiciones singulares</i> (Special traditions)	Folklore/ religion

there is a breakdown of the different texts and topics that appear in this section.

In the table we can see that more than half of the chapters feature Spanish examples on their own. In contrast to this, there is only one occasion where a topic about a Latin American country (Cuba) appears on its own. Moreover, the topics chosen to be represented with material

from Latin America are usually within the areas of folklore, music or religion (chapters 3, 7, 9, 11).

Having done this analysis of the content of the cultural section *Viajar*, we can say that there is a tendency to present topics about Latin America in relation to traditions, art and religion, whereas Spanish society is described in a more comprehensive and contemporary way by including topics such as social issues, modern industries (fashion), the media and recent politics. In the next section I will argue that such treatment constitutes the 'otherisation' of Latin American cultures.

Some authors such as Van Dijk (2004) classify such forms of 'otherising' as subtle and implicit forms of 'contemporary racism'. He distinguishes the following ways of displaying racism in representations of different societies:

- *exclusion* of certain population types such as migrants;
- *difference* is emphasised and similarities de-emphasised;
- *exoticising*: 'distant' and 'strange' are some of the adjectives applied to the 'other';
- *stereotyping* 'poverty', 'lacking modernity' and 'backwardness';
- *negative representations*: poverty, lacking modernity, even criminal behaviours;
- *institutional unlawful behaviours* not only of individuals but of institutions and governments, for example undemocratic governments;
- *the 'other' is not granted a voice*: the other is seldom allowed to give his/her own opinion.

One can see a clear change of point of view in the treatment of Latin American countries and their cultures when compared to peninsular contexts.

A poignant example is the one that we find in the only text that appears without a 'peninsular Spanish text' counterpart in the section *Viajar*. This is a text that presents the *Santería* religion in Cuba and its practices. In the text the *Santería* practices are traced by the text back to West Africa, slavery and magic. The text is written in the third person, thus adopting an impersonal style. Such a narrative voice establishes a distance between the writer and the topic of the text and highlights that the text is about Cuba (and the followers of *Santería* practices) rather than told by Cubans, for example:

Todo el mundo sabe cosas de Cuba... [everybody knows something about Cuba]

La santería tiene sus orígenes en el oeste de África... [Santería originates in West Africa]

Los devotos de la santería creen en una fuerza central llamada Oloddumare... [Santería followers believe in a central force called Oloddumare]

By representing the role of Hispanic and indigenous cultures in Latin America in terms of folkloric and mysterious religious practices, Latin America is not treated on an equal footing with Spain, where, as I have stated, more modern developments are presented. Latin American cultures are dealt with as something we do not understand properly. In this way they are made mysterious within Hispanic cultures, and students cannot necessarily exercise their subjectivities by empathising or opposing their views to those presented in the textbook.

The making of history

As we discussed above, history is often presented in language teaching manuals as 'objective' facts rather than a particular interpretation of a historical event. On the contrary, some language classes may present historical events from different points of view. As I have reported elsewhere (Ros i Solé, 2012), a Croatian/Serbian language class presented different interpretations of the events of the eve of the First World War when Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated, as a crime or as a liberation for the oppressed population of a state. In contrast to this, if history is presented as an 'objective' fact and the truth through a particular lens, the expectation is that such facts are not to be reflected upon or discussed by the learner, but to be accepted unquestioningly.

But learning languages could give the learner an opportunity to be more critical with regard to historical events if faced with a range of interpretations of an event. Such alternative renditions could more easily tap into learners' cultural past, their emotions and personal disposition towards their own cultural histories or points of contact with the histories of Hispanic cultures.

Language textbooks rarely consider to what extent language learners are driven by their personal historical memories (whether direct experiences or memories passed down from their close families) and by a desire to empathise with particular versions of history. A close analysis of some of the texts presented in *AI* shows that the inclusion of this historical dimension in language teaching needs further development. In *AI*

historical events and in particular negative ones, such as the presentation of situations of conflict and troubled societies, are not set in Spain or Latin America. Rather, when they occur they are localised elsewhere. An illustration in *AI* is an account of an episode in the Turkish–Cypriot war in 1974 in the north part of Cyprus rendered by a well-known Spanish writer.

By setting the war in Cyprus the learner is supposed to be at a safe distance from the events and remain emotionally detached. The article describes war and devastation in Cyprus during the fighting between Greeks and Turks where Spanish forces (*nuestros camiones* [our lorries]) are presented as the peace-keeping force of the conflict.

Conflict, with its ensuing suffering and devastation, is localised elsewhere. The feelings and empathy of the language learner are sought but not in order to engage with the trauma of the events portrayed, but to side or not with the gaze and point of view of the professional war correspondent, the Spanish writer. In the exercise, the learner is asked to reflect on the role of war correspondents:

Has pensado alguna vez en la labor que desempeñan los corresponsales de guerra? ¿Cómo ves esa profesión? ¿Piensas que los periodistas se identifican con las víctimas de la guerra o actúan con frialdad e indiferencia?

(Corpas et al., 2006: 168)

[Have you ever thought about what war correspondents do? How do you see this type of job? Do you think that journalists identify themselves with war victims or, on the contrary, that they are cold and indifferent to the events?]

By not choosing a violent episode of Spanish history, the trauma and memory of Spanish history is not discussed and reflected upon by the learner and observer of another culture. Language learners' historical memories of events directly experienced by themselves, or lived through the tales and stories told by their own community or through intellectual affinity with a community may well have left traces of this history in their own identities. One has only to think of the British involvement in the Spanish Civil War and its international reverberations. Indeed, a book that tries to depict and discuss Hispanic contemporary culture may do well to include an account of poignant examples of cultural and political conflict with international reverberations such as the Spanish Civil War, the Zapatista revolutionary movement in Mexico in

the 1990s, the Cuban revolution in the late 1950s or the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua in the 1980s, to mention just a few.

At first glance then the choice of another country for talking about war appears to be an odd one when we are dealing with a book about Hispanic language and culture. However, it all becomes clear when we consider that the focus of the text presented here is not so much talking about world events and the role of Spanish peace-keeping forces, but rather to present an example of the Spanish cultural canon through its 'high brow' literature; in this case the literature of one of its most famous Spanish contemporary writers, Arturo Pérez-Reverté.

If this is the aim of the exercise, having the discussion of 'high brow' literature as the focus misses an opportunity to engage learners' subjectivity and emotional involvement in emotionally charged conflicts such as war. The learner is given a version of Hispanic culture that has been sanitised and stripped of any serious political debate. It is not the war correspondent that is distancing himself to the events, but rather the topics presented in the textbook are themselves presented as 'distant' and 'cold', and as the undisputable truth of 'high culture'. It is a version of Spanish culture that the learner has no stake in because no alternative versions are provided and the learners are not invited to reflect on their own feelings and position towards the event; it has already been digested, marketed and packaged for them to consume unquestioningly.

Imaginings of Hispanic cultures

At the beginning of this chapter I argued that textbooks should not only be cultural artefacts that reproduce 'prêt-à-porter' versions of the culture that do not allow for learners' subjectivities. This, I hypothesised, could be analysed by looking at how a language textbook approached three different aspects of Hispanic cultures: the construction of the 'other' and the notion of 'foreignness', representations of Spanish multilingualism and multiculturalism, and the engagement of learners' cultural pasts and memories in Spanish language textbooks.

In respect of the first point, we saw that although the traditional concept of the 'other' as the 'foreigner' refers to the 'target culture' while 'us' denotes the students' culture, this is further complicated in the textbook analysed. In *AI* the 'other' is constructed as anybody belonging to a Latin American culture, whereas 'us' refers to peninsular Spanish cultures.

But the way in which cultural content is presented and structured in the textbook gives us more clues as to what kind of representations

of multilingualism we can find in the book. Whereas the images and topics of the book may seem to indicate that the type of culture portrayed in the book is one that represents plural cultures, a close analysis revealed a less diverse view of Hispanic cultures. The location and isolation of cultural topics in particular sections of the book (*Viajar* or *Más Cultura*) where the learner takes a backstage, passive role undermines the power of the subjectivity of learners and their role in refashioning texts through language and personal experiences. An exception to this was found in the treatment of 'popular culture' topics and consumer choices where learners are allowed to exercise their agency by becoming real 'actors' in a particular scenario (e.g. choosing a holiday) and expressing their own desires.

But cultural imaginings of Hispanic cultures cannot be limited to consumerist lifestyles. There also needs to be a moral dimension to understanding another culture where the learner reassesses and recasts his/her own cultural history. As I have suggested, the introduction of more politically engaged texts about the history of Hispanic cultures could address this aspect of language learning, so far largely absent in language textbooks. This answers the third dimension of my analysis: to what extent are learners allowed to engage with their personal cultural memories?

This chapter has shown that by celebrating Hispanic cultures with the presentation of largely uncontroversial topics and examples from the literary canon, *AI* missed an opportunity to address aspects of Hispanic cultures that invoke and challenge students' own sense of self. By avoiding the inclusion of emotionally charged and highly disputed historical and political events in the language classroom, such as the causes and aftermaths of war or revolution, language textbooks not only emphasise the positive aspects of a culture, but they sanitise it to the extent that learners may not feel the need to involve their own cultural memories. This critical approach to language textbooks therefore has argued for a greater focus on the subjectivity of the learner that appeals to students' personal choices and moral judgement, and the reconstruction of a sense of self through the target cultures. Through the laying down of a framework for analysing subjectivity in language textbooks and its exemplification in the Spanish textbook *AI* I hope to have advocated for a more personally engaged treatment of culture.

9

Motivation, Authenticity and Challenge in German Textbooks for Key Stage 3

Nick Andon and Ursula Wingate

Introduction

In England, the number of pupils studying modern foreign languages (MFL) beyond the compulsory period of three years at Key Stage 3 (KS3, age 11–14) has decreased dramatically since 2003. More than 50 per cent of pupils discontinue language study at the age of 14, which, it has frequently been argued, gives them a considerable disadvantage in terms of their intellectual development, their intercultural understanding, and their life and career opportunities (e.g. Nuffield Languages Inquiry, 2000: 6; Coleman, 2009). The current decline in MFL study also contributes to the social divide in educational provision in England, as the more prestigious and selective grammar schools and independent schools maintain relatively high levels of participation, while in less privileged schools far more pupils drop languages at the end of KS3. To provide equal opportunities to all pupils, it is crucial to identify ways in which pupils can be influenced to continue the study of MFL beyond the age of 14.

Pupils' lack of motivation for studying MFL has been attributed to a number of factors. Perhaps the most commonly cited is that pupils (and their parents) express the belief that there is little practical use in knowing a foreign language when 'everybody speaks English'. There is also a widely held belief that foreign languages are difficult, and thus a risky choice of subject to take in the GCSE¹ examination at age 16. These beliefs are difficult to counter in the short term. Lack of motivation has also been attributed to problems with the content and methodology of lessons, which are, to a very great extent, determined by the

topics, texts and activities provided in textbooks. Despite the fact that teachers may have little choice over the MFL textbook used in their school, given their busy schedules, they usually have to rely on the textbook for the provision of structure and progression in learning, as well as for content. Pupils' motivation is closely linked to the perceived relevance of the teaching content to their identities, needs and personal interests (Dörnyei, 2001). We were therefore interested to evaluate the extent to which MFL textbooks provide exposure to authentic language and opportunities to use language in authentic ways which might help pupils aged 11–13 to see the relevance and value of learning a foreign language to their real-life needs and concerns.

KS3 textbooks provide the first part of a graded progression towards the achievement of the GCSE, and therefore cover the range of themes, topics and tasks tested in the GCSE. This is ironic, given that more than half of the pupils in England do not study MFL up to that level, since studying a foreign language ceased to be compulsory beyond KS3 in 2003. For this reason, it could be argued that the content of MFL teaching at KS3 should not necessarily be dictated by GCSE requirements. Instead, it should aim at building pupils' confidence in their own ability to learn and use the foreign language in practical and useful ways, as well as maintaining and strengthening pupils' interest in the language and culture, as these attitudes might also motivate pupils to continue their language study. The choice of content (i.e. topics, texts and learning activities that are perceived by pupils as engaging, sufficiently challenging, relevant and authentic) is crucial for these aims.

We chose for analysis volumes 1 and 2 of *Logo!* and *Echo* (Gordon and Lanzer, 2002; Green and Lanzer, 2002; McNeill and Williams, 2004, 2005), two widely used German textbook series. Before we present the findings of our evaluation, we discuss authenticity and challenge as two factors that are held to facilitate motivation in instructed language learning. Based on these factors, we then present a framework for analysis of the content of the materials focusing on authenticity, challenge and provision of information on the target language culture. In addition to evaluating the potential of the textbooks to motivate pupils, we also consider teachers' and pupils' perceptions of the suitability of topics, texts, tasks and target culture information in these textbooks, by drawing on a small-scale study into MFL teaching and learning at KS3. This study included a focus group discussion with eight teacher trainees, interviews with two experienced German teachers, observations of their German lessons, and focus group discussions with pupils

from the observed lessons. All participants worked with either *Logo!* or *Echo*. Although our analysis focuses on four German textbooks only, it is argued that these books are representative of current MFL textbooks at KS3. We compared *Logo!* and *Echo* with a range of other German textbooks for KS3, as well as French and Spanish textbooks for the same level, and found that they are very similar in their design, topic choice, methodology and progression towards the GCSE. This is not surprising, given that these books prepare pupils for GCSE specifications that are very similar across different languages and across the five English examination boards (CILT, 2012). We therefore hope that the findings of our study will offer some useful suggestions for the design of KS3 MFL textbooks in general, as well as suggestions for teachers who have to work with these textbooks on how the materials can be made more relevant, engaging and challenging for pupils.

Motivation, authenticity and challenge

It has been argued that the MFL classroom in English schools is a particularly unfavourable setting in terms of pupil motivation (e.g. Coleman et al., 2007). The formal school setting in itself tends to be less motivating than a natural acquisition environment because of its detachment from the target language community and a resulting lack of integrative motivation (Dörnyei and Skehan, 2003). For L1 speakers of English, there is an even greater lack of integrative motivation because of the dominance of English in the world, which leads to the perception that there is no need to learn other languages (Coleman, 2009). The removal of MFL from the core curriculum at KS4 in 2003 further contributed to the low value attached to learning languages. For those pupils who do continue language study beyond KS3, enjoyment of lessons was found to be the main reason (Evans and Fisher, 2009). To explore what makes lessons, and language learning in general, enjoyable and motivating, situated motivational theory (Dörnyei, 2001) offers a useful framework. This process-oriented model focuses on instructed learning and recognises that motivation has to be generated and maintained by teaching practices. In the associated Model of Motivational Teaching Practice, Dörnyei lays out strategies for generating and maintaining motivation. Teaching content, that is, materials, activities and tasks, is an important factor, and Dörnyei proposes that topics, texts and activities should be authentic in the sense that they are interesting and personally relevant for learners, and an appropriate level of challenge should be built in (2001). The textbook is an important carrier

of content in language teaching, and we were therefore interested in whether textbooks provide the types of authenticity and challenge that foster motivation. For our textbooks analysis, we took a closer look at these two concepts.

Authenticity is a complex term with conflicting understandings, which are discussed in a 'state-of-the art' article by Gilmore (2007). These understandings range from 'language produced by native speakers for native speakers' or 'language produced by a real speaker for a real audience, conveying a real message' to 'the types of task chosen' (p. 98). These definitions are problematic because of the unclear concepts of 'real audience' and 'real message'. Widdowson (1979) offered a broader concept by distinguishing between 'genuine' and 'authentic' language use. 'Genuine' concerns language that is not specifically constructed for the purpose of language learning, while 'authentic' language 'is a characteristic of the relationship between the passage and the reader and it has to do with appropriate response' (p. 80). Widdowson's concept of 'authentication' (1978) explains that materials which may not be genuine can be 'authenticated' by learners through their engagement with them. This concept is largely concerned with the relevance that materials have for learners. Van Lier (1996: 125) shares this concept and argues that authenticity of materials and tasks must be understood as '*a process of engagement in the learning situation, and as a characteristic of the persons engaged in learning*' (italics in original text). In the same vein, Tomlinson proposes that an important principle for the selection of texts for language teaching is the text's potential for affective engagement. He defines engagement as 'a willing investment of energy and attention in experiencing the text in such a way as to achieve interaction between the text and the senses, feelings, views and intuitions of the reader/listener' (Tomlinson, 2003: 110).

While authenticity in language learning is most commonly related to the reading and listening texts that provide input for language learning, in recent years there has been increasing discussion of the importance of providing opportunities in the classroom for authentic communication, in order to help language learners 'to develop the voice (or voices) needed for authentic self-expression in the foreign language' (Roberts and Cooke, 2009: 620). Research into second language acquisition (SLA) processes has resulted in widespread agreement that a focus on meaning is essential to language learning (e.g. Willis, 1996; Ellis, 2008; Tomlinson, 2013), and this is taken to include not only provision of authentic texts and authentic tasks to process these for understanding, but also opportunities to use language to communicate; that is, to

convey pragmatic meanings in speech and writing. As with texts, pupils' engagement with the task is essential in order to authenticate and bring meaning to their own written or spoken output.

As mentioned earlier, relevance is an important condition for the process of authentication.

It is helpful to focus on three types of relevance that result in authenticity. The first implies that pupils need to see the usefulness of what they are learning to say and write, and recognise that the tasks they carry out in class closely resemble the types of situations and interactions for using the foreign language that they might encounter in the real world. This 'situational authenticity' (Andon and Eckerth, 2009: 295) requires that pupils' language use in the classroom is situated in a clear context, with pupils having a clear awareness of the setting and the intended audience for what they are saying. If the role plays, conversations, question and answer exchanges and written texts that pupils produce have a clear purpose, this will not only help them to see the relevance and usefulness of what they are learning, but also lead to a better understanding of appropriate levels of formality and politeness and of the differences between spoken and written registers.

Another type of relevance leads to 'interactional authenticity' (Andon and Eckerth, 2009: 295), and relates to language activities that do not necessarily mirror the situations learners will find themselves in if they travel to Germany or happen to need to interact with German speakers in other contexts, but nevertheless require students to use the kinds of language and interaction patterns that will be valuable in a range of situations. Activities that require students to share personal information, take part in a debate, work together to solve a hypothetical problem, or choose the best applicant for a particular job may well be outside pupils' immediate concerns and survival needs, but they nevertheless provide opportunities for meaningful practice; for example in giving opinions, agreeing and disagreeing, giving reasons, asking for clarification, and trying to persuade others of their point of view in order to reach a decision or consensus. Interactional authenticity necessarily involves communication – the purposeful transmission of pragmatic meanings – and therefore requires some kind of information, knowledge or opinion gap.

A third type of relevance leads to personal authenticity, which is taken here to mean three things. Firstly, in the language class topics, as well as the associated information and activities, need to be of relevance and interest to the learners. Secondly, in discussing these topics learners should have the opportunity to relate them to themselves, talk

about their own lives, interests, preferences and concerns, and give their own opinions on the topics. Thirdly, if the focus is on communicating personal meanings rather than displaying knowledge of particular language forms, learners should be free to use whatever language they are able to in order to get their message across. We looked for these three levels of authenticity in the analysis of German textbooks.

The need to provide an appropriate level of challenge to language learners is underpinned by expectancy-value theories which describe the relationship between an individual's expectancy of success and the individual's perceived value of that success (Pintrich and Schunk, 1996; Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2012). Perceived success in the early stages of learning a language will motivate pupils to continue; however, success in an activity will only be valued if the activity presented a challenge. There is evidence (e.g. Block, 2002; Coleman et al., 2007), however, of a tendency for MFL teaching in English secondary schools to under-challenge pupils in terms of linguistic and intellectual demands. Explanations for the lack of challenge and progress in MFL learning have included a narrow focus on functional language at the expense of grammar, and the perceived difficulty of MFL (Pachler, 2007). Macaro (2008) argues that most pupils start the study of MFL with an initial motivation which is rapidly lost during the course of KS3 and he attributes this loss of motivation partly to the lack of real progress at KS3 and pupils' consequent inability to interact in the MFL. Macaro therefore recommends ensuring the 'rapid and substantial progress' of KS3 students which would enable them to reach 'a substantial communicative competence' by the end of Year 9 (p. 106).

For the reasons discussed in this section, the two concepts of authenticity and challenge provided the framework for our analysis of *Logo!* and *Echo*.

Analysis of *Logo!* and *Echo*

We chose *Logo!* 1 and 2 and *Echo* 1 and 2 for the analysis because, according to the MFL teacher trainers, language advisers and teacher trainees we consulted, they are the textbooks most widely used to teach German at KS3 in England. They were also the ones used in the schools where we conducted our small-scale study. Both textbooks were published by Heinemann, *Logo!* 1 and 2 in 2002, and *Echo* in 2004 (*Echo* 1) and 2005 (*Echo* 2). Although some updated versions have been produced recently, the original versions are the ones most widely in use. The two volumes of pupil books cover two years of KS3; they are accompanied by a range

of resources, including teacher's guides, resource and assessment files, pupil activity packages, teacher presentation packages, flashcard packs, audio CD packs and colour OHT packs. Considering the publication dates of these textbooks (2002, 2004 and 2005), it can be expected that some aspects of content are outdated.

Focusing on authenticity and the level of challenge, we analysed the topics, texts, tasks and activities, and also the photos in the textbooks. The process of authenticating a text, discussed earlier, involves having an interest in the topic and processing the text for meaning in order to learn something new from it. Part of personal authenticity is that the lesson content should be interesting and relevant, and we assumed that pupils starting to learn a new language would be naturally interested in, and curious about, the cultures of the countries where the language is spoken. In our evaluation of texts and photos, therefore, a third aspect we focused on was the provision of information about the target culture, although both texts and photos may also serve other purposes. Our analysis was, then, guided by the following questions:

- Do the textbooks offer topics of personal authenticity? Do they provide opportunities for communication that represent what pupils aged 11–14 would naturally talk about?
- Do the tasks and activities presented in the textbooks offer situational and interactional authenticity, as well as an appropriate level of challenge?
- Do the texts and photos offer information on the target culture that is capable of stimulating and satisfying pupils' interest?

Topics

The range of topics in the two textbooks is identical and all topics correspond to those in the GCSE specifications of the five exam boards (CILT, 2012). The topics of the six units of the first volume of *Logo!* and *Echo* are identical and appear in the same order, with some small differences in unit headings. The topics relate to pupils' immediate environment, that is, talking about oneself, school, family and friends, leisure time and hobbies, the home, and the town and its location. In the second volume, the six units in both textbooks cover identical topics, but in a different order; these include holidays, shopping, eating, going out, and health and the body. Both books devote one unit to the topic of going on a student exchange (*Logo!* 2, Unit 5: 'Los geht's nach Köln'[Off to Cologne]; *Echo* 2, Unit 6: 'Exchange'), obviously based on the assumption that KS3

pupils will have the opportunity to take part in an exchange or a visit to a German town.

All topics are obviously related to the pupils' world and life experience, and therefore pupils would in all probability have something to say about them. Nevertheless, the question is whether the topics represent something KS3 pupils would want to speak about. As Hawkins (1996) argued in his plea for starting MFL earlier than KS3, children aged 11–14 are pre-pubescent or in puberty, a phase when they become self-conscious and anxious about peer approval. Topics such as self, family, home or the body may at this stage be perceived as embarrassing to talk about. The fact that the textbook topics constantly require learners to speak about themselves was also criticised in the focus group discussion of trainee teachers, for example:

A: It can also be a bit of a minefield talking about themselves, they're teenagers, young teenagers, particularly at stage three they have no idea who they are, year seven they're making friends still, they've only known each other a year and to ask them what their favourite kind of music is, well it's so dangerous for them to answer because they might say something that's uncool.

Some of the unit sub-topics have the potential of being particularly face-threatening. For instance in Unit 5 (*Logo!* 1: 'At home'; *Echo* 1: 'My home') one sub-topic, 'Helping around the house', requires pupils to explain the ways in which they help at home. This is highly likely to be 'uncool', not to mention completely uninteresting as a topic for this age group, and pupils may worry about being teased if they admit that they help around the house. It is also highly unlikely that a conversation about domestic duties would occur naturally in this age group. There are numerous examples of sub-topics and activities that seem to have little communicative relevance to pupils. For example, the first unit of both textbooks, entitled 'Hallo', has the sub-topic of 'Meine Tasche' [My school bag] and requires pupils to describe what is in their school bags. This activity has as little communicative meaning as the request to describe the town in which they live (Unit 6).

It has to be acknowledged that textbooks for beginners which aim to equip learners with general communicative skills are constrained in the choice of topics; clearly these need to be general enough to be of concern to everybody and relate to everybody's everyday life. It is therefore not surprising that the topics presented in *Logo!* and *Echo* 1 and 2 are not only, as mentioned earlier, the same in KS3 textbooks for other

languages, but also in textbooks for adult beginners. However, it is not only the topics, but the associated tasks and activities, as well as cultural information presented in texts and illustrations, that can make a textbook authentic and thus motivating for learners. The two examples of talking about helping around the house and the contents of one's school bag have demonstrated an unfortunate use of activities, as they require pupils to make potentially uninteresting or embarrassing statements about themselves. In the next section, we will examine more closely whether and how the two textbooks make their topics relevant to pupils through activities that offer opportunities for personally meaningful communication.

Tasks and activities

The activities in the textbooks follow a fairly rigid pattern of presentation, practice and production (PPP), which focuses on discrete mastery of language points, although in these KS3 materials the production (or 'free stage') activities are either completely absent, or else highly controlled and not really communicative. The PPP framework, which is associated with a weak form of communicative language teaching but also has much in common with the audio-lingual approach that was promoted in the 1950s and 1960s, has been criticised by applied linguists (e.g. Willis, 1996; Skehan, 1998) for its ineffectiveness as well as its lack of compatibility with current theories of SLA. In contrast, there is widespread agreement coming out of SLA research that for the L2 to develop, there is a need for not only extensive, realistic and personally meaningful input, but also extensive opportunities to use the target language for the communication of meaningful messages (e.g. Willis, 1996; Lightbown, 2000; Ellis, 2008). With this in mind, the activities in the KS3 German textbooks were examined to see whether they provide meaningful opportunities for real communication, as opposed to mechanical accuracy practice and language display. The need to communicate propositional meanings involves a much greater level of challenge than quasi-communicative exercises such as role plays which are highly controlled cued dialogues, or asking and answering questions about a picture or a set of information that both pupils can see. Activities that contain some kind of information gap, opinion gap or knowledge gap require considerably more effort from both speaker (or writer) and listener (or reader) to ensure that a message is conveyed and understood.

As discussed above, three inter-related aspects of authenticity – situational, interactional and personal – are required in order to ensure

that activities are communicative, challenging and perceived as relevant to learners.

To illustrate the lack of all three types of authenticity, two units from towards the end of *Logo!* 2 are analysed in detail below. Unit 5 of the textbook, 'Los geht's nach Köln' (Off to Cologne), consists of five lessons related to an exchange visit to Cologne. The topic of Unit 5 Lesson 1 is 'Meine Familie' (My family) and is subtitled 'Talking about your family', and Unit 5 Lesson 2 is 'Ankunft in Köln' (Arrival in Cologne) and subtitled 'Talking about a journey'. Leaving aside our doubts about how common it is these days for pupils to go on the type of exchange where they live with a host family for a number of weeks, or the likelihood of a 14-year-old travelling unaccompanied by train to the exchange family, these topics have the potential to provide a reasonable context for practising language that pupils may see as interesting and relevant.

Unit 5 Lesson 1 starts with a set of five small pictures representing Miguel's family, captioned with first names and family relationships, for instance 'Werner, mein Stiefvater' (Werner, my stepfather), 'Karin, meine Mutter' (Karin, my mother), 'Georg, mein Halbbruder' (Georg, my half brother). Pupils are asked to answer written questions like 'Wie heißt Miguels Stiefvater?' (What is Miguel's stepfather called?), 'Wer ist Georg' (Who is Georg?). Then, in pairs they are required to ask each other the same questions about Miguel's family. It is hard to imagine a situation where pupils would need to ask each other the names of another pupil's parents, but in any case they already know the answers, so this is pure language display. The format of the exercise lacks any challenge and can be completed without any understanding of what the target words mean. There is no requirement for pupils to do anything with this information, beyond filling in the relationship labels in a text consisting of Miguel's own description of his family. 'Werner ist mein _____' (Werner is my _____), and this again could be copied from the labelled pictures above without any understanding of the text.

Pupils then are required to listen to a recording in which someone is asked questions about members of their immediate family. For example, 'Wie findest du deinen Stiefbruder? Ach, er ist sehr lustig und nett. Das finde ich toll.' (What's your stepbrother like? He is very funny and nice. I find that great.) The pupils' task is to classify ten adjectives from the recording (for example, 'nett' [nice], 'laut' [loud], 'doof' [stupid], 'nervig' [annoying], 'verständnisvoll' [understanding]) as positive or negative according to the tone of the voice in the recording. They are encouraged to look these up in the glossary and then listen again to make notes such as '1 Stiefbruder – lustig, nett' (Stepbrother – funny, nice). Pupils then

read four sentences in which yet another person's relatives are described and they have to decide whether the descriptions are positive, negative or neutral; for example: 'Mein Bruder ist sehr nett, aber er ist auch ziemlich laut' (My brother is very nice, but he is rather loud) is presumably neutral as it is neither completely positive nor completely negative.

Given that the lesson aim is (according to the Teacher's Guide) 'talking about your family', thus far, pupils have had no opportunity to talk about their families. The language they have practised in the unit in talking about Miguel's fictitious family is rather unnatural (Werner is my stepfather. Karin is my mother) and the models provided throughout the unit are without context or purpose. Who is describing their family to whom, and why are these questions being asked? What pupils are learning to say in German is simplistic (My mother is very funny. My brothers are totally annoying) and lacking in educational value, cognitive challenge or affective engagement. Another exercise in this unit asks students to describe their family in a short, written text, and interviewing one another about their families is suggested in the Teacher's Guide as an extension exercise. Apart from this optional extra exercise (which is not in the pupils' book itself), pupils do not get to practise the unit aim 'talking about your family'.

Unit 5 Lesson 2 has as its aim 'Pupils will learn how to: say what you did on a journey; talk about a journey' (Green and Lanzer, 2002: 121). It is not clear why pupils need to learn to talk about what they did on a journey as, unless something unusual happened, this type of information is generally not really of interest to anyone and hardly a frequent topic of conversation. Clearly the point of this topic is to practise making sentences about the past using the German perfect tense, which is often used where English would require the simple past tense. There is some attempt to contextualise this language at the beginning of the lesson in the form of a survey for train passengers about what they did on a journey, and in the second half of the lesson within a role play welcoming a visitor where the target language is worked into the conversation in a rather contrived way. Model sentences printed at the beginning of the lesson include 'Ich habe Musik gehört' (I listened to music), 'Ich habe mit Freunden geplaudert' (I chatted to friends) and 'Ich habe aus den Fenster geschaut' (I looked out of the window). The pupils' task is to listen to a number of mini-conversations containing these sentences and identify which of the people in a drawing of a train carriage are carrying out these activities. Pupils then ask and answer questions, taking turns to pretend they are one of the people in the picture, as the following exercise shows (*LOGO! 2*, p. 80, exercise 1b):

Was hast du unterwegs gemacht? [What did you do on the journey?]
 Ich habe (aus dem Fenster geschaut). [I looked out of the window.]
 Du bist Person h. [You are person h.]
 (Richtig!) Was hast du unterwegs gemacht? [(Right) What did you do
 on the journey?]

The next exercise provides drawings of people doing various activities, each one labelled with a person's name, and pupils are expected to write sentences about these people, for example 'Jens hat aus dem Fenster geschaut' (Jens looked out of the window).

The second part of the lesson, as mentioned above, is based on a highly contrived dialogue between two 14-year-old friends:

Stefan: Hallo Miguel, Willkommen in Köln. Wie war die Reise?

Miguel: Wunderbar!

Stefan: Wann bist du abgefahren??

Miguel: Um dreizehn Minuten nach zwölf.

Stefan: Vier Stunden im Zug! Das war sicher langweilig!

Miguel: Nein. Es war O.K.

Stefan: *Was hast du unterwegs gemacht?*

Miguel: *Ich habe viel Musik gehört und aus dem Fenster geschaut.*

[Stefan: Hello Miguel, welcome to Cologne. How was the journey?

Miguel: Wonderful!

Stefan: What time did you depart?

Miguel: At thirteen minutes past twelve.

Stefan: Four hours in the train! That must have been boring!

Miguel: No. It was okay.

Stefan: *What did you do on the journey?*

Miguel: *I listened to a lot of music and looked out of the window.*]

(LOGO! 2, p. 81, exercise 3; our italics)

The conversation ends abruptly (and unnaturally) after the target question and answer (in italics above) have been uttered. Pupils then listen to five more conversations that are equally contrived and note down whether the traveller's experience in each case was positive or negative, as well as the departure times and the traveller's activities on the train. Then, based on pictures labelled with four more names, pupils role-play similar conversations about four other fictitious teenagers, Anke, Mustafa, Uwe and Detlef. Finally they are asked to write out dialogues involving Mustafa and Detlef following the same contrived model.

Although there is some attempt to incorporate situational authenticity by providing a minimal context for asking and answering about what someone did on a journey, the purpose of these conversations and their contexts are not clear, and even if they were, they are not very natural situations. The model dialogue is stilted in order to arrive at the target structure 'Was hast du unterwegs gemacht? Ich habe (Orangensaft getrunken)' (What did you do on the journey? I [drank some orange juice]). Interactional authenticity is lacking as nothing is communicated in the pair work except perhaps 'see if you can recognise from what I say which person in the picture I am pretending to be'. The 'texts' they produce lack naturalness not only in the language but also in the discourse structure – learners would recognise the activities as practising grammar not learning to communicate. Would anyone really ask someone what they did on a journey, and would anyone say 'I drank coca cola' or 'I wrote a letter' or 'I looked out of the window'?

Personal authenticity is missing from this whole set of activities on a number of levels. Pupils do not get to use their own ideas or to talk about their own experiences or ideas. Interestingly, pupils we observed working with this unit made up crazy ideas such as 'I played basketball on the train' personalising the content just for fun. In fact, although the aim in the teacher's guide is 'Pupils will learn how to say what they did on a journey', it is striking that at no point in this unit do learners get to talk about what THEY did on a journey. They talk about person (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i and j) in a picture, and they talk and write about the fictitious journeys of fictitious characters such as Stefan, Miguel, Anke, Mustafa, Uwe and Detlef, names which are appearing, sometimes for the first time in the textbook, as labels on pictures. The topics are not of personal relevance or interest, and the functional situations are not ones that learners are likely to see as important for their own lives. Furthermore, the whole idea of a 13- or 14-year-old travelling on their own by train to a host family in Germany seems extremely unlikely. Besides this, it seems to us that activities like reading newspapers and magazines or talking and texting on your mobile are much more common things for 13- and 14-year-old children to do on a train journey than some of the activities in the book, like writing a letter or doing puzzles. Lastly, pupils are constrained in the language they use. The rationale for the unit is the accurate production of inauthentic instances of a grammatical sentence pattern devoid of any personal meanings or communication of ideas and information.

Information about the target culture: Texts and photos

As discussed earlier, the range of topics in the first two volumes of the textbooks is related to the pupils' immediate environment. While it may be rather uninteresting to talk about their own world and life, the topics can become more exciting when pupils are offered opportunities to discover similarities and differences between their own lives and everyday life in German-speaking countries, and particularly the lives of German teenagers. Raising awareness of learners' own culture through the comparison with the target language culture is also a declared objective in the national curriculum KS3 programme of study (QCA, 2007). Information about the target culture can be conveyed through texts which can be either 'genuine' (Widdowson, 1978), or constructed for the purpose of providing information. The use of so-called 'authentic' texts in language learning has been much debated (as we saw earlier), and while some authors advocate the need to offer 'genuine' texts, others concede that specially constructed or simplified texts are useful for the purpose of learners noticing language features (for a summary of the debate see Tomlinson, 2003: 5–6). We examined both types of text, genuine and constructed, in *Logo!* and *Echo* for information on the target culture; however, within the scope of this chapter, we focus on reading texts only. We also analysed the extent to which the textbooks used photos as a means of illustrating features of German culture.

The use of texts

The reading texts presented in the two textbooks include emails, letters and postcards supposedly written by German pupils, advertisements, tourist brochures, menus, school and train timetables, maps, menus, TV schedules and announcements (for instance from a club notice board). We carried out a closer analysis of the distribution and function of texts in *Echo 2*. Here, all texts were constructed, even though in a number of cases genuine texts would have fulfilled the same function just as well. Before we discuss the different functions and types of texts, we show an example of a constructed text where, in our view, the provision of the genuine version would have been preferable.

Unit 2, 'Nach der Schule' (After school), has TV schedules as a sub-topic. It presents a constructed and highly simplified German TV schedule, where the logos of the TV channels are fake, and, apart from 'Lindenstraße' (a popular German soap opera), the titles of programmes

are fictitious (e.g. 'Guten-Abend-Report' [Good-Evening Report] instead of the genuine name of the news programme 'Tagesschau'), or an obvious translation from an English programme ('Bob der Baumeister' [Bob the Builder]) for which there is no equivalent on German TV. Even the times for the programmes are unrealistic. The schedule contains gaps which pupils are required to complete by writing in the names of the TV programmes. This example looks like a deliberate attempt to withhold cultural information, so different is the constructed TV schedule from a genuine one. This choice of a 'fake' TV schedule makes little sense, as a genuine one could easily be used for the same activity, and by contrast would have offered the chance for pupils' exploration of typical German programmes, and differences with the English schedule. Categorising the types of programmes in a genuine schedule would have offered an appropriate linguistic and intellectual challenge, which is not the case with the obviously fake and overly simplified programme names provided in the constructed schedule. Other examples of the use of 'fake' over real information are a restaurant menu (Unit 2, p. 26), a cinema programme (Unit 3, p. 56) and notices on a youth club notice board (Unit 5, p. 92).

The most common text types in *Echo 2* are personal messages from German teenagers in which they report on their habits, activities and lifestyles in the first person singular (this is also the case in *Logo!* 1 and 2, and *Echo* 1). These messages are mostly intended to appear as e-mails, letters or postcards, but in some cases they appear as speech bubbles next to an illustration of a person doing an activity. Personal messages account for 32 out of the 55 texts in *Echo 2* (58 per cent). These messages range from 16 to just over 100 words in length and it is obvious that their content is determined as much by the grammatical focus of the unit as by the unit topic. The texts clearly lack authenticity, as it is unlikely that young people would report in this mode and manner to a pen pal. Their artificial nature is particularly obvious in some cases where a concern with lexical and grammatical content has over-ridden any sense of authentic communication or even reality. Here, for example, is an extract from Christian's letter (Unit 1, p. 6):

Ich bin ziemlich sportlich. Im Frühling spiele ich Tennis. Im Sommer gehe ich jeden Tag schwimmen.... Im Herbst ist das Wetter oft nicht so gut, also spiele ich mit meinen Freunden im Sportzentrum Basketball. Im Winter spiele ich in der Schule Fußball. Meine Freundin Lena ist nicht so sportlich. Im Frühling und Sommer geht sie einkaufen... Im Winter geht sie ins Kino oder sieht fern

I'm quite a sporty person. In the spring I play tennis. In summer I go swimming every day. In autumn the weather is often not very good, so I play basketball in the sports centre with my friends. In winter I play football at school. My friend Lena is not very sporty. In spring and summer she goes shopping. In winter she goes to the cinema or watches television.

For the sake of practising the seasons and sentence order, the unlikely scenario of people doing certain things only in certain seasons is presented: Christian plays tennis only in the spring and football only in the winter; Lena goes shopping only in the spring and summer, and watches TV only in winter.

The second type of text in *Echo 2* consists of written versions of dialogues and statements presented in listening comprehension activities. There are 12 instances (22 per cent) of this text type in *Echo 2*. This use of texts raises the question of whether it is appropriate to always provide transcriptions to accompany listening comprehension texts, when targeted comprehension tasks might be more effective in enhancing listening skills. The considerable amount of space given to transcriptions could be given over instead to more texts offering cultural information.

There are only five instances in *Echo 2* of more imaginative texts such as songs and, in one case, a poem. Even these were written specifically for the textbook, depriving pupils of the chance to hear and sing a 'real' German song. The fact that the song 'Die schönste Zeit ist die Weihnachtszeit für mich' (The most beautiful time for me is Christmas time; Unit 2, p. 39) was constructed for the textbook even though there is an old German song called 'Die schönste Zeit des Jahres ist die Weihnachtszeit' (The most beautiful time of the year is Christmas time) suggests a narrow understanding of the potential of texts in language teaching. There seems to be a preoccupation with exploiting texts for vocabulary and grammar, and a fear that genuine texts might be too difficult for the learners. These constructed texts make it obvious to pupils that they are written to reinforce a teaching point and kept extremely simple. In other words, the textbook is showing pupils that real language is too difficult, thus maintaining a culture of under-challenging and spoon-feeding.

The preference for constructed over genuine texts results in the occasional use of outdated and unnatural language. For instance, parents and grandparents are addressed with the obsolete title of 'Mutti' and 'Vati' (mum and dad), and in *Logo!* 2, the totally outdated form 'Großmutti' (grandma) can be found in a postcard (p. 36). Elsewhere, an e-mail has 'Betrifft' (Reference) in the heading, a form that became obsolete

in letters in the 1990s. Occasionally the language use is even inaccurate rather than unusual, for instance when Stefanie Schuster writes in a letter of enquiry about opportunities for mountain biking 'Ich mag Mountainbike fahren' (I like riding mountain bikes; *Echo* 1, p. 71).

Throughout the four volumes of *Logo!* and *Echo* 1 and 2, only a few pieces of factual information on German culture and life can be found. These are very short texts written in English, such as the two sentences on German markets in *Echo* 2 (p. 24).

The use of photos

Photos are used in much the same way in both textbooks and can be grouped in the following categories according to their function:

1. Prompt for an activity: for example, Unit 4, 'Freizeit' (Leisure time), in *Echo* 1 (p. 67) contains a letter in which Viktor describes his hobbies to James. The text is accompanied by a listening comprehension and the portrait photo of a boy, with the prompt 'Hör zu und lies den Brief von Viktor' (Listen and read Victor's letter).
2. Illustration of actions described in the text: one example is in Unit 6 'In der Stadt' (In town) in *Logo!* 1 (p. 93), where two teenagers are shown in an 'Eiscafe' (Ice cream shop); the photo accompanies a listening comprehension on what the teenagers order in the café.
3. Presentation of a real feature of German-speaking countries: this category consists of pictures of various types, including stars/celebrities (e.g. *Logo!* 1, p. 11: Steffi Graf, *Echo* 1, p. 57: Arnold Schwarzenegger); towns and tourist brochures (for example the brochures of Osnabrück and Quakenbrück in *Echo* 1, p. 123); food items such as 'Das Pausenbrot' (school snack) in *Logo!* 1 (p. 30); and German scenes such as food markets, types of shops and transport.

We chose *Logo!* 1 to take a closer look at the use of photos in order to analyse the extent to which the German textbooks offer information that could enable pupils to discover similarities and differences between the L1 and L2 cultures.

Category 1: Of the 46² photos presented in *Logo!* 1, 25 (54 per cent) function as prompts for an activity. These photos show individuals, mostly teenagers and mostly portrait shots, who could be from any background. They may be effective in making the textbooks more colourful and offering an alternative to the frequently used cartoons. However, as these photos convey no cultural information, they are not likely to

interest pupils. This was confirmed in one focus group interview with KS3 pupils who were asked what they thought about the photos in their current textbook, *Logo!* 1. The pupils made fun of the 'people photos', saying that some of the people looked 'geeky' and they questioned whether the people in the photos were 'really Germans'.

Category 2: There are six instances (13 per cent) of photos in *Logo!* 1 that have the function of helping pupils to understand the reading and listening texts. Sometimes they also give cultural insights, for example the photos of classroom scenes in Unit 1 (p. 14), where English pupils can learn that German pupils do not wear school uniform and can go to school quite casually dressed. In a few instances, photos in this category provide inaccurate cultural information. One example can be found in *Echo* 2, Unit 3 'Gesundheit' (Health), where six photos show young people explaining their symptoms to a doctor. These photos were clearly taken in a UK National Health Service (NHS) surgery, as can be seen from the set-up and furniture. In this case, the opportunity is missed for pupils to discover that a German doctor's 'Praxis' looks quite different from an NHS surgery (for instance, there would probably be more medical equipment and a medical assistant around). Real photos would have provided a basis for exploring and discussing differences between the English and German health care systems, and thus an authentic topic to talk about.

Category 3: The 13 photos (28 per cent) in *Logo!* 1 have in common that they present something that is clearly identifiable as German, either well-known people or places, or items that have German writing on them. In their function, the photos overlap with the previous categories, as most are used as either incentives for activities or as illustrations of actions. When presenting well-known people, all textbooks have the problem of quickly becoming outdated, which is obvious in the photos featuring in *Logo!* 1 of sport stars such as Steffi Graf and Jürgen Klinsmann who would be hardly recognised by today's KS3 pupils. With the technology available in today's classrooms (for example, fast internet connections and smart whiteboards) it would not be difficult for publishers to update their resources packs regularly and replace outdated photos with links to more recent cultural information which pupils might more readily relate to. Another type of photo in this category consists of arrangements of items, for instance the eight items assembled under the heading 'Das Pausenbrot' (snacks eaten at school, Unit 2, p. 30). Of the eight items, three (a packet of crisps, a bag of German Christmas sweets and a box of orange juice) have German writing on them; however, they are not real in the sense that they would

not constitute the kind of snacks that German pupils eat in school. Some photos are effective in showing typical German features, such as the style of German houses (Unit 5, p. 71), or public buildings such as the station, the post office and a supermarket (Unit 6, p. 86). A good example of this can be found in *Echo* 2, Unit 4, where nine different types of shops are shown; some of these, such as the baker's and the butcher's, look distinctly different from their English equivalents. This type of photo provides good opportunities for intercultural comparison and meaningful communication. However, the relatively low proportion (30 per cent) of this type in *Logo!* 1, particularly in comparison to the number of 'people photos' (category 1), shows that opportunities for providing cultural information are missed. In both textbooks, there are further examples of missed opportunities, for instance in *Logo!* 2, where a strip of cartoons is shown under the heading 'Karneval in Köln' (Carnival in Cologne).³ There is nothing similar to Karneval in the English culture, and including genuine photos would have given pupils some experience of this rather colourful and unusual event.

Conclusion

We have argued that there is a need for language teaching materials to meet a number of criteria in order to build and maintain learners' motivation, a consideration which is particularly important in the case of MFL at KS3 in England. These criteria include the provision of meaningful and authentic texts on topics that are relevant to pupils' lives, information that pupils can learn from, in particular about the target language culture, opportunities to communicate in ways that have personal, interactional and situational authenticity, and activities that challenge pupils cognitively and affectively. We have shown that *Logo!* 1 and 2 and *Echo* 1 and 2 have severe shortcomings in relation to all these criteria. Motivation, authenticity and challenge are inter-related in that authentic texts and tasks which require understanding and communication of pragmatic meanings are undoubtedly more challenging and more motivating than display activities which focus solely on accurate production of sentences. Pupils are seriously under-challenged by the activities in KS3 MFL textbooks which spoon-feed pupils (or perhaps drip-feed is a more appropriate metaphor, given that progress is so slow). We feel that substantially increasing the level of challenge and engagement, and creating conditions for learning that are consistent with current research into SLA would lead to considerably faster progress, which in itself would help to build greater motivation.

If the format of lessons has to be PPP, it is essential not to leave out the third 'P', production or 'free stage' activities, where accuracy is not supposed to be prioritised to the exclusion of fluency and communication. Learning to use a language communicatively requires opportunities to produce language in ways that are natural, authentic and personally meaningful. Struggling with the challenge of actually communicating ideas, opinions and preferences and talking about their lives, their interests, their concerns and their ambitions is much more likely to motivate pupils than activities that require only language display that is largely devoid of meaning. For the authentication of teaching materials, with its effect on motivation, pupils need authentic models as a starting point, as well as engaging information about the context and the purpose of the communication.

There is an almost total neglect of authenticity and challenge in the reading and listening passages in the textbooks we analysed. The lack of exposure to anything other than small and highly contrived samples of language means that there is little data which pupils can draw on to get a feel for language, or make and test out hypotheses about how the language works. There is a need for far greater exposure to the target language, which means more texts, but also texts that are more authentic, longer and linguistically more complex. More importantly, however, we are convinced that the topics themselves, and the treatment of the topics reflected in choice of texts and activity types, seriously detract from the motivation of pupils who are taught using these materials. The texts need to contain interesting and substantial information on topics that pupils can see as relevant to their own lives and interests, and from which they can learn something real that they did not know beforehand. Some of this information should undoubtedly be about the target language culture, in this case about Germany, German culture and the real lives of German people, particularly those of similar ages to the learners. Other texts could be linked to cross-curricular themes, including the kinds of serious and even provocative topics appropriate to their age group which are sometimes covered in personal, social and health education lessons. The target language culture can even be linked to cross-curricular themes, for example, the topic of smoking and health could start from a comparison of health warnings on German and English cigarette packets. Given that learners can draw on their schematic knowledge of what such warnings are likely to contain, they should be able to cope with the challenge of working out the details of the warnings for themselves. In fact, we found almost no activities in these textbooks which require pupils to puzzle out meanings for

themselves, or which help them to develop strategies for comprehension, and no activities that require pupils to notice linguistic differences between the L1 and the L2 or develop inductive learning skills.

Despite our previous critique of the dominance of personal topics, we would argue that it would be a mistake to remove all personal content from the lesson activities: some of the activities in language lessons can provide opportunities for pupils to explore and express their own identities and values, and learning about the target language culture also provides opportunities to reflect on one's own culture. This implies treating personal and cultural information as serious topics to be explored and analysed in systematic, principled and non-trivial ways. Discussions on how pupils spend their time could include activities such as surveys on how much time people in their class spend playing computer games, accessing social media, watching DVDs and TV and discussions on whether this is a good or bad thing, as well as comparisons with real data on their German counterparts in relation to these topics. Sports, pocket money, homework, school uniforms, relationships, families, clothes, what children are allowed or not allowed to do on their own at different ages, and many other topics can be treated in ways that have far more educational value than learning to say in another language 'my sister is annoying' or 'on the journey I drank coca cola'. This undoubtedly involves a high degree of linguistic, cognitive and affective challenge and implies a shift in focus from requiring accurate production of very simple ideas using simple language, to a struggle to communicate and to build fluency, sometimes at the expense of accuracy, which in any case develops gradually over time and through use of language as much as through explanation and drills.

As our analysis has revealed, these four widely used German textbooks offer no real challenge or personal investment, little cultural information, almost no exposure to texts that even resemble authentic language use, and few, if any, opportunities for the production of meaningful language. Whether these shortcomings are due to the textbook authors' lack of understanding of what is involved in SLA, or to the constraints put on authors by publishers and the designers of the National Curriculum and examination frameworks, we would argue that they contribute significantly to the rapid decline in pupils' motivation in KS3 as described by Macaro (2008). We argue that there is an urgent need for textbooks which build in personal, interactional and situational authenticity, and the increased level of challenge that this would imply. Materials with the potential to engage pupils cognitively and affectively would contribute greatly to the creation and maintenance of pupils'

motivation and might therefore help to stem the rapid decline in foreign language study beyond KS3.

Notes

1. The General Certificate of Secondary Education awarded for subjects studied at the age of 14–16 (KS4).
2. Sets of photos such as the nine classroom scenes (*Logo!* 1, Unit 1, p. 14) were counted as one instance. Photos that are shown repeatedly have only been counted once.
3. Karneval is an annual festival in German-speaking countries, called 'Karneval' in Northern regions and 'Fasching' in the south.

10

Resisting Coursebooks

Scott Thornbury

Introduction

Each of the chapters in this collection casts a critical eye on some aspect of second language teaching materials, identifying and problematising issues of representation, ideology and use that are often ignored, avoided or overlooked by the producers and consumers of these materials. Thus, a number of contributors critique the way that particular discourses are represented, misrepresented or under-represented in coursebooks, while others draw attention to the complexity of materials production. Several chapters suggest ways and means by which the under-problematised nature of coursebook production and use might be redressed.

Nevertheless, all the papers in this collection are predicated on the assumption that, irrespective of their failings, coursebooks are a fact of classroom life. In that sense, the authors do not contradict the claims of many methodology writers, both past and present, such as Nunan (1988: 98), to the effect that: '[Materials] are [...]omnipresent in the language classroom and it is difficult to imagine a class without books, pictures, filmstrips, realia, games and so on [...]Materials are, in fact, an essential element within the curriculum'. Or Hutchinson and Torres (1994: 214): 'The textbook is an almost universal element of ELT teaching'. Or Byrd (2001: 415): 'Few teachers enter class without a textbook'. Or Harmer (2007: 182): 'Around the world [...] the vast majority of teachers reject a coursebook-free approach'. By all accounts, materials, with the coursebook as their flagship, are firmly entrenched in language classrooms – 'around the world'. However, given the fact that materials, and published coursebooks in particular, are so problematic (as the chapters in this collection would seem to attest), one could be

forgiven for asking (a) is there something inherently wrong with coursebooks that their ‘omnipresence’ belies, and that no amount of corrective surgery can rectify? And, (b) if so, is there a viable – and practicable – alternative? In this closing chapter I will suggest that **the answer to both these questions is in the affirmative.**

First, though, some background. In addressing the first question, I will attempt to demonstrate that there are compelling precedents, in general education as well as in language teaching, for challenging the ‘omnipresence’ of coursebooks. To this end, I will briefly review attitudes to coursebooks, both with regard to their status in the progressive education movement over the last century, as well as through the lens of critical pedagogy, before narrowing the focus to second language teaching in particular. In so doing, I hope to demonstrate that, **far from being ‘an essential element in the curriculum’, coursebooks are not only dispensable, but that they are fundamentally flawed, to the extent that they may actually be detrimental, hindering rather than helping the business of language learning (although, not of course, the language learning business!).**

Textbooks in progressive education

Dissatisfaction with mainstream education, coupled with initiatives for educational reform, has a long history, but rose to particular prominence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Loosely bundled together under the banner of ‘progressive education’, European and North American reform movements were impelled by the prevailing currents of humanism, secularism and early modernism, and shared the following beliefs (Zilversmit, 1993: 18):

- a commitment to ‘a child-centred rather than a subject-centred curriculum’;
- schooling that was dedicated to meeting the needs of the ‘whole-child’, i.e. ‘promoting children’s emotional and physical needs as well as their intellectual development’;
- an educational environment in which ‘children could play an active role in determining the content of their education’.

Admittedly, at the institutional level, the progressive education movement has always been a minor player, and is most typically realised by small, privately funded schools in niche markets. Nevertheless, by providing a kind of counter-discourse to the dominant educational

paradigm, these reforming principles have permeated mainstream education in many contexts, and have challenged such orthodoxies as subject-based curricula, formal testing, and – relevant to the current discussion – mandated materials.

Educational reformers have always had an uneasy relationship with textbooks, partly because they are often the material representation of the system that the reformers were seeking to reform, but also because they almost always embody a transmission view of education that stands in marked contrast to progressive ideals.

It is not possible to discuss these ideals without reference to the work of John Dewey, and specifically his concept of 'experiential learning', that is, 'the principle that education in order to accomplish its ends both for the individual learner and for society must be based on experience – which is always the actual life-experience of some individual' (Dewey, [1938] 1977: 29). An important corollary of this basic principle was, in Dewey's words, 'the sound idea that education should derive its materials from present experience' (Dewey, [1938] 1977: 77). As we shall see, 'deriving material from present experience' challenges the idea that a curriculum based on past experience, as mediated by remote scholars and enshrined in a textbook that is published off-site, has any potency, educationally speaking. However, while he conceded that 'there is very much which is artificial in the old [i.e. traditional] selection and arrangement of subjects and methods' (Dewey, [1938] 1977: 30), Dewey himself warned against an over-zealous abandonment of a structured curriculum altogether. On the contrary, he insisted that 'the basic material of study cannot be picked up in a cursory manner' (Dewey, [1938] 1977: 79).

Nevertheless, there is a strong tradition in progressive education that does hold with the view that 'basic material' can be picked up, rather than pre-packaged and delivered – a tradition, in other words, that prioritises learner experience over teacher 'transmission', especially where transmission entails the use of mandated materials such as textbooks. This tradition, inspired by Dewey, was further invigorated by the work of Jean Piaget, and specifically his belief that cognitive development is self-directed and emergent, and that the child 'is the architect of his [or her] own growth' (McNally, 1973: 96). To this end, Piaget advocated self-initiated, exploratory learning, where children typically work together to solve problems that occur spontaneously. As Hayes (2007: 23) notes, for Piaget 'the ideal school would not have compulsory textbooks, but reference books, which would be used freely'. This rejection of mandated textbooks, along with structured curricula, rote learning, teacher-fronted classes and formal examinations, all characterise the

various twentieth-century educational initiatives that are collectively labelled progressive.

The Montessori method (Montessori, 1912), for example, foregrounds experiential learning, and the creation of a nurturing social community. Montessori schools adopt a holistic approach to the curriculum, where arts, science and language are integrated, where the child's natural curiosity is engaged less through the use of published materials than through activity and play, and where learning extends beyond the classroom itself. Similarly, in the Waldorf Schools, inspired by the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner (see, for example, Steiner, 1989), an academic approach to learning is de-emphasised. Typically, there are no textbooks until at least the fifth grade (i.e. around age ten). Instead, children keep their own 'lesson books' in which they record their experiences and their learning achievements. Likewise, the use of electronic media, especially television, is strongly discouraged.

In contrast to Montessori's emphasis on learning through play, but still true to the principles of experiential learning, Célestin Freinet promoted a 'work-based pedagogy' that dispensed with the kind of centralised school-planning associated with textbooks and examinations (he actually wrote a book called *Plus de Manuels Scolaires* [No More Textbooks] in 1928). His best known innovation was the introduction into his school of a printing press, by means of which the pupils generated their own materials, including a school magazine, which they exchanged with pupils at a sister school. Freinet was impelled by the belief that 'the key features of empty academic activity are rules, books and teachers [...] all forcing pupils to produce work with absolutely no basis in real life' (quoted in Clandfield and Sivell, 1990: 37). Instead, 'by re-establishing the cycle of life, by assuring constant motivation through creative work, we get beyond dry academic exercises and reach a far superior form of classroom activity'.

In the same reforming spirit, Sylvia Ashton-Warner, a pioneering New Zealand primary school teacher, abandoned the set textbooks that were at the time imported from Britain, and based her teaching of basic literacy skills solely on the children's lived experiences: 'I reach a hand into the mind of the child, bring out a handful of the stuff I find there, and use that as our first working material' (Ashton-Warner, 1966: 28). And she adds, 'No one book could ever hold the variety of subject that appears collectively in the infant room each morning' (1963: 44). Accordingly, she took the radical step of burning most of her materials: 'I say that the more material there is for a child, the less pull there is on his [or her] own resources' (1963: 97).

More radical still was A. S. Neill, the founder of what became the best known British progressive school of the twentieth century, Summerhill. Neill's profoundly anti-intellectual stance led him to argue that books were 'the least important apparatus in a school' (Neill, 1968: 18), adding that 'only pedants claim that learning from books is education'.

A less radical but more durable legacy of Dewey's 'learning-by-doing' principle is the movement known as 'whole language learning', a largely North American phenomenon that is concerned primarily with the development of first language literacy skills and is diametrically opposed to such bottom-up approaches as the teaching of phonics. According to Strickland and Strickland (1993: 9) the major tenet underlying whole language learning is that 'language is best learned in authentic, meaningful situations, ones in which language is not separated into parts'. Hence, like other experience-based pedagogies, whole language learning minimises the role of externally produced materials. The curriculum is emergent and learner-driven, thus

expensive elaborate materials are not needed when implementing whole language approaches. Students read texts that are familiar and meaningful, drawing on familiar concepts and experiences to which they can relate. It is not necessary to purchase elaborate 'units' designed by publishing companies, material that often controls the curriculum by failing to consider student need and input.

(Strickland and Strickland, 1993:18)

As we shall see, whole language learning shares many of the characteristics of what – in second language teaching terms – is known as task-based instruction.

A third major influence on twentieth-century educational theory, after Dewey and Piaget, was Lev Vygotsky, whose writings on child cognitive development shifted the emphasis on to the social and cultural aspects of learning (neither of which had been entirely ignored by his predecessors, of course) while at the same time re-asserting the role of the teacher as co-constructor and mediator of learning. The core Vygotskian precepts – that learning is at first 'other-regulated' before it is 'self-regulated', and that this process is typically mediated through language – underpins the key pedagogic function of 'scaffolding' (Wood et al., 1976), which in turn informs such related teaching approaches as 'instructional conversation' (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988), 'exploratory talk' (Mercer, 1995) and 'dialogic enquiry' (Wells, 1999). What these approaches have in common is the principle, first expressed by Barnes

(1976: 20), that 'learning to communicate is at the heart of education'. Moreover, the role of the teacher is construed, less as a dispenser of knowledge, but more 'as a fellow learner whose prime responsibility is to act as leader of a community committed to the co-construction of knowledge' (Wells, 1999: 331). Of course, when learning is centred on both community and communication, the need for the textbook as source and stimulus for learning is sidelined. Indeed, the presence of 'the book' may distract from or otherwise inhibit direct communication, thereby diminishing its potential to afford learning opportunities. Barnes (1976: 137) criticises the use of the teacher-produced worksheet for these very reasons: 'Because it is interposed between the teacher and the pupil [it] will tend to minimize the likelihood that the teacher's interest in the subject matter will be communicated to his [or her] pupils'.

In short, it is fair to say that whenever there have been significant reforms in education these have not been motivated nor mediated by innovations in classroom materials. On the contrary, materials – and textbooks in particular – have been regarded with suspicion, even outright hostility.

Textbooks and critical pedagogy

While reformers generally agree as to the pedagogical principles underlying progressive education, there has been less consensus as to the extent to which progressive education should be overtly committed to social reform in society at large. As noted earlier, the dependence of many self-styled progressive schools on private funding, coupled with their (often semi-mystical) emphasis on self-realisation, has fuelled the perception that they are both elitist and out of touch with reality. Indeed, one early reformer – Paulus Geheeb, co-founder of the Odenwaldschule in Germany – confessed to having been 'plagued by the elite character of the school and its overrepresentation of children from socially privileged backgrounds' (Shirley, 1992: 77). In the context of the insidious encroachment of Nazi bureaucrats in the running of his school, this was a serious admission. And, at around the same period in the US, reformers witnessed 'the virtual disappearance from the progressive agenda of Dewey's notion that the school was to play an important role in the reform of the larger society' (Zilversmit, 1993: 12).

By contrast to the apolitical orientation of much progressive education, *critical pedagogy* adopts an explicitly political and transformative orientation: 'Viewing schools as cultural arenas where diverse

ideological and social forms are in constant struggle, critical pedagogy seeks to understand and critique the historical and socio-political context of schooling and to develop pedagogical practices that aim not only to change the nature of schooling, but also the wider society' (Pennycook, 1990: 24).

Thus, if the rejection of textbooks on the part of progressive educationalists was fuelled mainly by pedagogical considerations, their rejection by proponents of a critical pedagogy is motivated more by ideological ones: textbooks (and the methods that they instantiate) being viewed as serving the interests of powerful elites, and imbued with the discourses of political conservatism, colonialism, neoliberalism, sexism and so on. That, at least, is the thinking underlying Paulo Freire's 'mistrust' of the reading 'primers' mandated by the education authorities for teaching adult literacy in his native Brazil in the 1960s and 1970s. For Freire, the textbooks, with their anodyne, alienating texts and meaningless sentences for memorisation, simply dehumanised the learners, stripping them of agency, serving only to 'cast the illiterate in the role of *object* rather than the *Subject* of his learning' ([1973] 1993: 49). By this means, Freire argued, the marginalised and dependent status of the illiterate was perpetuated, and the social conditions that foster illiteracy ignored or 'mythologised'. As an alternative, Freire urged that the content of instruction should be generated out of the learners' own reality, ('deriving material from present experience', in Dewey's terms), and that the means of generating this content should be *dialogue*: 'Whoever enters into dialogue does so with someone about something; and that something ought to constitute the new content of our proposed education' ([1973] 1993: 46). For Freire, and other critical pedagogues, this 'proposed education' should not simply reproduce, and thereby reinforce, existing inequalities. Rather it should be emancipatory, empowering learners with the means to take control over their own lives. In short, from a critical perspective, education either perpetuates existing injustices or it critiques them.

The perception that textbooks, as the embodiment of curricular decisions at every level, for example from ministry to classroom, both shape and are shaped by the values of existing power structures is one that pervades much of the literature of critical pedagogy (see, for example, Apple, 1992; as well as many of the chapters in this volume). Central to this argument is the view that the design, content, selection and use of textbooks is never disinterested. Rather, textbooks instantiate curricular decisions that, as Giroux (1997: 87) puts it, 'function primarily to legitimate the interests of the dominant social order'. They do this, according

to Giroux, through promoting a culture of 'positivism', where facts are prioritised and 'classroom knowledge is often treated as an external body of information, the production of which appears to be independent of human beings' (1997: 21). As Giroux comments, 'not surprisingly, pedagogy in this instance is often reduced to the process of transmitting a given body of knowledge with student learning squarely situated in "mastering" the "basics" and appropriate standards of behaviour' (1997: 98). Being the principal vehicle for the delivery of these 'basics', textbooks (and their writers and publishers) are viewed as complicit in this reductive process, such that some educationalists have challenged their utility altogether. Thus, Postman and Weingartner (1969) called – provocatively – for a five-year moratorium on the use of all textbooks, on the grounds that

since with two or three exceptions all text[book]s are not only boring but based on the assumption that knowledge exists prior to, independent of, and altogether outside of the learner, they are either worthless or harmful. If it is impossible to function without textbooks, provide every student with a notebook filled with blank pages, and have [them] compose [their] own text.

Postman's disdain for textbooks was unrelenting, judging by this later comment (1996: 116): 'Textbooks, it seems to me, are enemies of education, instruments for promoting dogmatism and trivial learning. They may save the teacher some trouble, but the trouble they inflict on the minds of students is a blight and a curse'.

Language teaching coursebooks

To what extent, then, has the status of second or foreign language textbooks been affected by these developments in general education? Have they, for example, been subject to the same kinds of criticism (e.g. on progressive and critical grounds) as have textbooks for other subjects in the curriculum? Indeed, are they also 'a blight and a curse'?

As we have seen, the shift from a transmissive style of learning to a more experiential one challenged the centrality of textbooks in general education. A related shift occurred in second and foreign language teaching, and with similar effects, but not until much later. The notion that languages might be learned experientially, that is to say, simply through using them, did not gain widespread support until the mid-1970s, with the advent of the communicative approach (also known as communicative language teaching, or CLT).

This is not to say that some far-sighted methodology writers of the pre-communicative era, such as Billows (1961: 91), were not already warning against the overuse of textbooks:

The textbook is one – perhaps the most important – of many visual aids. [But] we should never allow it, or any picture or sentence in it, to stand between our pupils and the concrete world [...] The language must not be allowed to stay imprisoned between the pages of a book.

Of course, as far back as the mid-nineteenth century, reformers had been advocating language teaching methods – such as the direct method – that aimed at replicating ‘natural’ language acquisition, and which eschewed both the teaching of grammatical rules and the use of translation. Nevertheless, in reality these methods were generally highly regimented, in terms both of the syllabus (predominantly grammar-based even if grammar was not taught explicitly) and of the teacher’s role, which consisted largely of executing tightly scripted question-and-answer exchanges and (especially when audiolingualism was popular) orchestrating sequences of pattern-practice drills. Only in the loosest sense could such methods be considered experiential.

Much more experience-based, however, was CLT, and especially its ‘strong’ form, task-based language teaching (TBLT), which was predicated on the belief that, as Allwright (1979: 170) put it, ‘if the language teacher’s management activities are directed exclusively at involving the learners in solving communication problems in the target language, then language learning will take care of itself’. Accordingly, language courses were designed, not around a series of discrete grammar items, but around a series of communicative tasks. Even the notion of a pre-determined ‘series’ was challenged by the view that the tasks should be selected, even negotiated, in accordance with the learners’ evolving needs, prompting Allwright, in an interview with Pit Corder (Corder, 1990: 115), to ask: ‘Doesn’t this mean that it is not possible to provide a syllabus of tasks, but only a bank of them?’. A ‘bank of tasks’ is, clearly, a far remove from the traditional coursebook. Nor is a coursebook easily accommodated into an approach to curriculum design that is construed as essentially a management, rather than a syllabus, issue. As Allwright wrote (1990: 136): ‘The whole business of the management of language learning is far too complex to be satisfactorily catered for by a pre-packaged set of decisions embodied in teaching materials’. Instead, Allwright (1990: 142) advocated the development of ‘learning materials’, while suggesting that in lieu of the global coursebook,

'something much less ambitious, probably locally produced, would seem preferable'.

At the same time, theoretical support for the value of experiencing language *use*, that is, authentic communication, rather than of studying language *usage*, that is, the rules of grammar, was being offered by researchers into second language acquisition, notably Stephen Krashen. Krashen's rejection of a role for *learning*, in contradistinction to *acquisition* (1982), including the claim that learners are 'hard-wired' to acquire language in a 'natural order', presented yet another challenge to materials designers. For Krashen the only valid materials are those that provide 'comprehensible input', preferably outside the classroom, in the form of extensive reading programmes. Teaching approaches derived from, or consistent with, his 'input hypothesis' (1985) such as the 'Natural Approach' (Krashen and Terrell, 1983) or 'Total Physical Response (TPR)' (Asher, 1977) rely less on written materials than on classroom routines, visual aids and real objects. As Richards and Rodgers (2001: 188) note, in the Natural Approach, 'materials come from the world of realia rather than from textbooks' and, in a TPR course, 'there is generally no basic text' (p. 76).

A related development, endorsed by Krashen and also compatible with a 'learning by doing' philosophy, was the growth of immersion teaching (particularly in Canada) and its several subsequent variants, such as content-based learning, whole language learning and content and language integrated learning (CLIL). Acquiring an additional language through the learning of a school subject in that language clearly has implications for materials design, not least in the way that the general English coursebook is replaced by a subject-specific textbook.

We have already noted how whole language learning, itself strongly experiential, shares common ground with TBLT. Especially when combined with a shift to greater learner-centredness – a legacy of both humanism and the learner autonomy movement – whole language learning prioritises learner-driven content over textbook-derived content. As Freeman and Freeman (1998: xvii) define it, in a whole language approach, 'lessons begin with what the students know, and activities build on student interests. Teachers create contexts in which students can construct knowledge because they know that learning is not simply the transmission of information'. In such a pedagogical model there is little room for pre-packaged materials. In other learner-centred, so-called humanistic, pedagogies the same applies. Of community language learning, for example, Richards and Rodgers (2001: 95) note that 'a textbook is not considered a necessary component. A textbook would impose a

particular body of language content on the learners, thereby impeding their growth and interaction’.

The view that coursebooks and other pre-packaged materials might impoverish or even inhibit classroom interaction has gained plausibility in the light of research into the formative role that teacher–learner talk and learner–learner talk plays in constructing language learning affordances (van Lier: 1996). Where the teacher is seen less as a transmitter of knowledge and more as a manager of learning, and where learning is managed primarily through interaction, the role of pre-packaged materials is arguably less central, and even, potentially, counterproductive. As van Lier (1996: 208) comments, ‘textbooks tend to severely hamper your ability to engage in innovative exploratory teaching’.

For van Lier, ‘exploratory teaching’, like dialogic inquiry and instructional conversation, is a pedagogic approach that is informed by theories of learning aligned to Vygotskian socio-cultural theory (e.g. Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Swain et al., 2011). We have already seen how – in general education – Vygotskian theory has focused attention on to the quality of talk that is generated in collaborative classroom activity, and the way that such talk mediates and scaffolds learning. Applying the same principles to second language learning, Swain (2000: 110) offers evidence of ‘language mediating language’, that is, the way that collaborative dialogue facilitates the appropriation of linguistic knowledge. However, she adds that ‘not all dialogue is knowledge-building dialogue’ (2000: 113) and elsewhere (Swain et al., 2011: 44) suggests that in order ‘to push learners into using the target language as a cognitive tool’ activities need to be designed that ‘encourage learners to go beyond transmitting [...] an already existing message’, adding that ‘one way is to ask them to engage with non-trivial content’.

What constitutes ‘non-trivial content’? From a humanistic perspective, classroom materials are likely to be non-trivial, and to engage learners both cognitively and affectively, if, in Stevick’s (1980: 200) words they ‘allow and encourage students to make a much fuller self-investment than other materials do’. Ultimately, the topics and materials most likely to do this are the topics and materials that the learners themselves elect and generate – a point we shall return to shortly.

From a critical perspective language coursebooks have, like their counterparts in general education, come under sustained attack, both for their ideological (sub-)texts and for their failure to confront or address, except in the most trivial way, issues of inequality and social justice, including those of local, as opposed to global, significance (Gray, 2010a).

Canagarajah (1999), for example, has shown how, for teachers in 'periphery' contexts, such as in the developing world, the globally marketed textbook 'is a powerful instrument [...]for centre agencies wishing to influence the curriculum' (1999: 84), including the imposition of methodologies that fail to take into account local educational cultures and values. The Western obsession with 'new methods', Canagarajah (2012: 267) claims, is market driven: 'New methods mean the publication of new textbooks'. In the same spirit, Kumaravadivelu (2003: 255) notes:

Because of the global spread of English, ELT has become a global industry with high economic stakes, and textbook production has become one of the engines that drives the industry. It is hardly surprising that the world market is flooded with textbooks not grounded in [the] local sociocultural milieu.

Moreover, it has been argued that coursebooks are complicit – not only in subverting social, educational and cultural values – but in furthering linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), not least because of their exclusively monolingual content, including the predominance of native-speaker models of speaking, writing and grammatical accuracy. Holliday (2005: 6), for example, labels as 'native-speakerism' 'the established belief that "native-speaker" teachers represent a "Western culture" from which spring the ideals both of the English language and of the English language teaching methodology'.

One way that native-speakerism is perpetuated in coursebooks is, arguably, their almost obsessive concern with grammatical accuracy. We have seen how the 'culture of positivism' – that is, the belief in the value-free nature of transmittable factual knowledge – has permeated textbook writing in general education. It is not hard to find a related tendency in language teaching materials. In a study aimed at uncovering the beliefs about language and language learning that inform current English as a foreign language (EFL) practice in New Zealand, Basturkman (1999) took a selection of bestselling textbooks and subjected their back-cover blurbs to critical analysis. She found that in the seven books she examined '75% of the blurbs claimed the work to be based solidly in grammar' (1999: 19). A search of key words revealed that 'content referring to the language system had a high frequency of occurrence [...] especially words denoting grammar' (1999: 27), and she concludes '*The ELT community views language as a core of grammatical structures and vocabulary*' (1999: 32, emphasis in original). Such a view accounts for why

coursebooks are the way they are. As Littlejohn and Windeatt (1988: 161) note, ‘if “knowledge” in language learning is seen largely as consisting of “thing-like entities” it is not surprising that the most frequently occurring exercise types in [foreign language teaching] materials focus on the accumulation and manipulation of items’.

Reducing linguistic complexity and variety to a set of grammatical structures – or ‘grammar McNuggets’ (Thornbury, 2000b) – lends itself to a model of production, consumption and regulation that not only avoids threatening the status quo but underpins a lucrative global marketing strategy. The endless reproduction of what is essentially the same grammar syllabus in coursebook after coursebook is part of the ‘commodification’ of language learning, and contributes to what Gray (2002: 152) describes (with reference to ELT textbooks) as ‘the ways in which these texts, against a background of increasing globalization, represent the English-speaking world for pedagogic and commercial purposes’.

And, as we have seen, the use of coursebooks is pervasive. So much so that they act as a bulwark against attempts to initiate pedagogical change. Despite claims that language teaching methods are ‘dead’ (Prabhu, 1990; Allwright, 1991) or that we are now in a ‘post-method era’ (Kumaravadivelu, 1994), the ‘method concept’ (Stern, 1983) has proven remarkably resistant. As Block (2001: 72) notes, ‘while method has been discredited at an *etic* level (that is in the thinking and nomenclature of scholars), it certainly retains a great deal of vitality at the grass-roots, *emic* level (that is, it is still part of the nomenclature of lay people and teachers)’. This is a view echoed by Bell (2007: 143) who interviewed a number of teachers on the subject, and concluded that ‘methods, however the term is defined, are not dead. Teachers seem to be aware of both the usefulness of methods and the need to go beyond them.’ A major reason why the notion of method persists, I would argue, is because methods are enshrined and perpetuated in coursebooks. (Interestingly, in the Spanish-speaking world, the concept of coursebook and method are conflated into the one term: *método*). Akbari (2008: 647) suggests that, in EFL contexts such as Iran, the conflation of coursebook and method is the result of expedience:

The concept of method has not been replaced by the concept of postmethod but rather by an era of textbook-defined practice. What the majority of teachers teach and how they teach [...] are now determined by textbooks.

Thus we have the curious – some might say dysfunctional – situation in which, on the one hand, the coursebook is demonised by academics and researchers as ‘a deeply problematic artefact’ (Gray, 2010a: 191), while, on the other, it appears to be the engine that drives much current practice.

Dogme ELT

A teaching approach that aspires to challenge the hegemony of the ‘coursebook method’ has come to be known as Dogme ELT (Thornbury, 2000a; Meddings and Thornbury, 2009), by analogy with the Dogme 1995 film movement and its rejection of artifice and fantasy. Dogme ELT started life as a reaction to the uncritical use of a surfeit of materials and aids that, far from promoting real communication, seemed to be suffocating it. In this sense, Dogme was very much an attempt to revive the principles of ‘strong’ CLT and task-based learning, principles that Dogme’s founders felt had been traduced, not only by materials overuse, but by the fact that, since the mid-1980s, there had been a reaction away from the functional-notional and task-based syllabuses associated with the first few years of CLT, and coursebooks had reverted to a much more traditional, grammar-based organisation. As Thornbury (1998: 111) wrote,

CLT is still shackled to a largely grammatical syllabus, with the result that the linguistic tail is wagging the communicative dog. [...] When the objectives of a programme are described primarily in linguistic terms (and relatively narrow ones at that) it is unsurprising that so many allegedly CLT classes should show so little evidence of authentic language use.

As a corrective, proponents of Dogme ELT urged (and still urge) teachers to look for ‘ways of exploiting the learning opportunities offered by the raw material of the classroom, that is the language that emerges from the needs, interests, concerns and desires of the people in the room’ (ELT Dogme, 2012). To this end, an over-reliance on pre-packaged materials is discouraged, especially where these materials are enlisted solely to support the implementation of a grammar syllabus. Instead, teachers are enjoined to create opportunities for genuine communication. In this sense, Dogme anticipated the distinction that Allwright (2005) would subsequently make, between a ‘teaching point’ methodology and

a 'learning opportunities' one. Given Dogme's affinities with task-based learning and with the idea of a negotiated (or 'process') syllabus, it is hardly surprising that such a congruence should occur, and, in fact, much of the literature on Dogme attempts to make connections with its reforming precedents, both in education generally, and in language teaching specifically, as well as to dispel the notion that it is a 'method' in any but the loosest sense.

Over time, through discussion (mostly online), classroom practice, workshops and articles (e.g. Thornbury and Meddings, 2001a, 2001b; Thornbury, 2005), the basic tenets of a Dogme approach have evolved and consolidated, and, in response to a widespread perception that it is anti-coursebook and anti-technology, Dogme's proponents have attempted to re-position it by distilling its educational philosophy into three basic premises. These are:

- Dogme is about teaching that is *conversation-driven*.
 - Dogme is about teaching that is *materials-light*.
 - Dogme is about teaching that *focuses on emergent language*.
- (Meddings and Thornbury, 2009: 8)

The conversation focus draws on theories of language acquisition (e.g. Hatch, 1978) that argue that talk scaffolds and constructs linguistic knowledge; on theories of language socialisation (e.g. van Lier, 1996; Kramsch, 2002) and participation, to the effect that 'learning to become a legitimate participant in a community involves learning how to talk (and be silent) in the manner of full participants' (Lave and Wenger, 1991: 105); and on a top-down, discourse view of language, that is, that 'language happens as text, and not as isolated words and sentences. From an aesthetic, social or educational perspective it is the text which is the significant unit of language' (Kress, 1985: 18). Conversation, then, serves both as a model of language use, and the means by which language can be appropriated.

The proviso that teaching be 'materials-light' simply follows from the above: that, in order to create the necessary space (literally and metaphorically) for conversation to flourish, 'less is more'. As Ashton-Warner (1966: 98) observed, after she destroyed the bulk of her classroom materials, 'teaching is so much simpler and clearer as a result. There's much more time for conversation... communication'.

Finally, the injunction to focus on emergent language draws on at least two distinct theoretical constructs: the desirability, even necessity, of a 'focus on form', if linguistic input is to become intake, as

argued by proponents of a cognitive view of second language acquisition (e.g. Doughty and Williams, 1998; Robinson, 2001); and the complex systems view that language is an emergent phenomenon, and that, as Hopper (1998: 156) claims, 'grammar, in this view, is not the source of understanding and communication but a by-product of it'. This dynamic, usage-based view of language emergence challenges the conventional (and convenient) wisdom, as embodied in coursebooks, that language learning is a rule-governed, incremental and linear process. Rather, as Larsen-Freeman (2006: 591) argues, language 'grows and organises itself from the bottom up in an organic way, as do other complex nonlinear systems'. Nevertheless, by arguing for the need for a focus on form, Dogme theory recognises that even dynamic systems can stabilise, and that some kind of feedback loop involving conscious attention to form might be sufficient, and even necessary, to trigger a phase shift in the system.

In effect, Dogme attempts to accommodate two kinds of emergence: at the social, or macro, level where language emerges out of collaborative activity, and at the individual, or micro, level, where each learner's developing linguistic system evolves out of the need to satisfy their social and communicative needs. At the social level the language that emerges is a shared product, reminiscent of Breen's (1985: 149) assertion that 'the language I learn in the classroom is a communal product derived through a jointly constructed process'. At the individual level, the linguistic system that emerges is opportunistic, self-organising, adaptive and idiosyncratic, because, as Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 17) phrase it, 'learning an additional language is about enhancing one's repertoire of fragments and patterns that enables participation in a wider array of communicative activities. It is not about building up a complete and perfect grammar in order to produce well-formed sentences'.

A Dogme approach, then, is antithetical to the kind of pre-programmed, delivery model of pedagogy enshrined in the standard coursebook. It is also uncomfortable with the often trivial or anodyne nature of the thematic content of coursebooks and of many of their tasks, which, through want of relevance, challenge or choice, fail to engage learners or to stimulate the kinds of conversations that might embed optimal learning opportunities. Too often coursebook texts designed for receptive skills development or to model speaking and writing tasks are simply 'pre-texts' (Pulverness, 1999) for focusing on a pre-selected grammar item. As Grady (1997: 9) argues, 'the [typical] textbook represents all types of issues and all types of discourse as

not requiring much thought or action beyond the decision as to the appropriate grammatical structure – everything is reducible to form’.

It is difficult to measure the effect that Dogme ELT has had, either on classroom practice or on materials production, and the feeling persists, on the part of a number of commentators (e.g. Scrivener, 2005; Harmer, 2007), that it is very much a ‘niche’ methodology, an off-shoot of task-based teaching, and, like task-based teaching, only really viable in small classes of compliant adults taught by experienced, probably native-speaker teachers. Possibly its real success has been in stimulating a (frequently heated) discussion about, not just the design, use and impact of coursebooks, but about much broader issues, such as the goals of second and additional language teaching generally. It has done this by gathering up, under one banner, the diverse threads – many of them alluded to in this chapter – that represent an alternative paradigm to the prevailing transmissive and positivist orthodoxy.

Alternatives to coursebooks

I started this chapter by asking ‘Is there a viable alternative to coursebooks?’. That is to say, if it is the case (as I have argued) that pre-packaged materials constrain the implementation of a less transmissive, more dialogic approach to language teaching, how can curriculum designers and practising teachers *resist* them?

One response, as represented by Dogme ELT, is the abandonment of coursebooks entirely. A softer option, and the one most frequently recommended in the literature on materials design and use (e.g. Harwood, 2010; Tomlinson, 2011), is to customise the existing coursebook, adapting or supplementing it so as to cater for the perceived needs, interests and abilities of specific learners. Maley (2011), for example, outlines strategies teachers might adopt to tailor materials to their own classes, including the omission, addition, reduction and re-ordering of content. It is arguable, though, that no amount of cosmetic surgery can redeem a coursebook that is fundamentally flawed at the level of its overall design. And, as I have argued, the grammar syllabus, in particular, imposes an artificial agenda on teachers that is difficult to ignore or to escape.

An alternative to the globally marketed textbook is a locally produced one, or, at the very least, a version that has been adapted (‘versioned’) for a specific market. Gray (2002: 166), who interviewed a number of teachers about their attitudes to coursebooks, concluded that ‘it is certainly the case that the teachers I spoke to about global materials clearly felt the need for what might be called a glocal [i.e. a global-plus-local]

coursebook – something which could give them “a better fit” and simultaneously connect the world of their students with the world of English’. Nevertheless, as with adaptation, a locally produced coursebook, or a local version of a global one, doesn’t necessarily circumvent fundamental issues of approach and design.

Another way of resisting the covert values that coursebooks embody is by critiquing – or ‘interrogating’ – them. Littlejohn and Windeatt (1988: 175) refer to this as ‘turning the materials on their head’, that is, ‘making the materials themselves the object of critical focus in the classroom’. Thus, Kumaravadivelu (2003: 166) recommends ‘asking learners to discuss how topics could be dealt with differently, from the point of view of their own linguistic and cultural perspective’. Encouraging learners to use the tools of critical discourse analysis (see, for example, Wallace, 1992) in order to ‘unpack’ the ideological sub-text of classroom texts may have some pedagogical value, not least in training learners to become more critical readers of texts in general, but it is unlikely to be practicable at anything but the most advanced levels. Nor is the somewhat meagre nature of coursebook texts likely to bear the weight of so much critical analysis over a sustained period of time. On the other hand, learners themselves sometimes take the critical initiative, as Canagarajah (1999) has documented with reference to the way that they physically deface their textbooks. Their handwritten glosses and drawings in the margins ‘reveal an oppositional attitude towards the course. To some extent, students wrench the textual signs from the original context and make them objects of ridicule in an act of “resistant reading”’ (1999: 91). But Canagarajah (1999: 189) cautions against reading too much into these acts of defacement, given their lack of any coherent ideological underpinning, and suggests instead that it behoves the teacher ‘to problematize the cultural messages of the textbook [...] For this purpose, the cultural conflicts that develop in classrooms should not be ignored or resolved but exposed, so that students can explore them critically’.

Rather than adapting or deconstructing them (or indeed, destroying them!), another way of resisting coursebooks is simply to replace them. I have already mentioned the possibility of adopting a content-based approach, as advocated by proponents of CLIL (see Morton, this volume), for example, and using subject-specific textbooks that are written in the target language. But even in a dedicated language course, the option of ‘outsourcing’ the coursebook, and using materials that are readily (and freely) available on the internet is now viable in most parts of the world, and has the added advantage of devolving to the

course designer or to the teacher decisions regarding what kind of syllabus (grammatical, lexical, topical, textual, etc.) to adopt, ideally based on an assessment of the students' specific needs. Using materials that have been sourced online ensures greater topicality and relevance than is ever possible with print materials. Moreover, search engines are now available that will search for texts on specified topics and organise these in terms of their readability; there are also online tools that will provide detailed data on the lexical density and frequency of a text, as well as indicating ways in which a text might be simplified. Such tools will ease the load on teachers needing to adapt texts for specific levels of ability, and will also allow learners themselves to take more responsibility in the selection of texts.

Giving the learners responsibility for selecting texts – and even for designing the activities that go with them – may, in fact, constitute the perfect 'marriage' of Dogme ELT and the need for a set of course materials. As Hall (2001: 232) points out, 'The potential for learners to participate in generating materials has long been neglected. I would suggest that students themselves are in a unique position to look for relevant resource materials. They know what their own needs and interests are'. And he adds, 'The process changes student status from passive receivers of information to active accountability'.

As an example of a 'student-generated, experiential approach' to course design, Hall (2001: 237) describes the 'Talkbase' scheme, designed for students of academic English in Thailand: 'No detailed timetable or content is specified. Only a general syllabus outline is given, based on a repeated pattern of Plan, Do, Report Back, Evaluate, and Plan Again'. Students are each given a different topic to research and to present on, and the course proceeds through cycles of progressively longer and more complex presentations (spoken and then written) and feedback, both from peers and from instructors.

As the course develops, and students begin to analyse published and unpublished academic discourse produced by others, both form of presentation and organisation improve markedly, and communication within the classroom, as well as outside it, becomes committed and almost totally student-dominated. Except at very few places, such as the example from the first day of the first week, texts (recorded interviews, journal articles, etc.) are found and brought to class by the students themselves, so that the course content is generated by students, not by teachers.

(Hall, 2001: 238)

Admittedly, this was a specialised course, and the students already had a basic level of English to begin with. Nevertheless, the experiment suggests that there is 'life after the coursebook', and that – especially given the relatively easy access to digital materials nowadays – the possibilities for satisfying the need for texts within an experiential approach to language learning and *without* the imposition of a coursebook is not only viable but possibly highly productive. Certainly, Hall's evaluation of the project leaves no doubt that – at least in some contexts – there is a lot to be gained from involving the learners in materials production:

At the end of the course, students' sense of achievement at being able to present complex technical information to various different audiences gives them [the] confidence [...] to initiate communication and to persist with it when there are difficulties.

In terms of the prerequisites for communication, they are all present: there is genuine commitment to communicate, there is a genuine audience, and students care about whether they have made their point [...]. In this course, the desire to take the floor and to make a point does not depend on linguistic ability or a forceful personality; it depends on having something to say.

(Hall, 2001: 238)

It has been one of the intentions of this chapter to argue that 'having something to say', and being facilitated in the saying of it, is the *sine qua non* of CLT. If coursebooks contribute to this endeavour, so much the better. But, if they do not, they should be resisted.

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