Part I

Topics in the Design of Materials and Methods

1

The Framework of Materials and Methods

1.1 Introduction: Setting the Scene

(Graddol (2006: 22), in his study of global trends surrounding English, comments: 'On the one hand, the availability of English as a global language is accelerating globalization. On the other, the globalization is accelerating the use of English'. He refers to a statistical projection of the number of learners: '. . . there could be around 2 billion people simultaneously learning English in the world's schools and colleges and as independent adults. Nearly a third of the world population will all be trying to learn English at the same time' (Graddol, 2006: 101).

As the need intensifies for social, economic and technological communication at a global level, so English language teaching has been diversifying. For example, English teachers may be engaged in teaching

- English as a Foreign Language (EFL) – English taught outside English speaking regions.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) – English taught inside English speaking regions to non-native learners.
- English for Young Learners (EYL) – English taught as an additional language to very young to young learners up to, normally, primary level.
- English for Specific Purposes (ESP) – English taught for specific occupational purposes such as English for medicine and for business.

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- English for Academic Purposes (EAP) – English taught to those who wish to study at institutes of higher education.
- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) – English taught in cross-curricular programmes in which content subjects and language are taught at the same time.

Whichever varieties of English language teaching we are engaged in, teachers of English are members of an established worldwide profession. Wherever we work, we share many assumptions about what we do; we prepare and use teaching materials and classroom methods and techniques based on similar, or at least comparable, principles. Yet, despite this commonality, it is not unusual for teachers to report a sense of isolation from colleagues in other countries, and even in different areas of their own country. Another attitude that is sometimes expressed is that the teaching situation in our country, or school, is unique, with its own special problems and difficulties. There is some justification for these feelings, of course: many teachers work in geographical isolation, and may not have access to channels of professional communication (journals, conferences, in-service training courses); different countries have widely differing educational systems and philosophies, resulting in teachers being subject to different expectations and pressures.

In this chapter we shall take some time to look beyond our individual teaching circumstances to what can be thought of as a professional 'common core'. This has relevance to all teachers, whether we work in a Japanese high school, a Mexican university, a private language school in Spain, a Chinese polytechnic, a Turkish secondary school, a Zairean college – this list could go on indefinitely. We shall argue that the idea of a 'common core' is also useful whether our materials and methods are selected by us or specified by the educational authorities. It is, then, broadly made up of two kinds of factors: firstly, of the various wide-ranging criteria on which decisions about language teaching programmes are based, and secondly, on the pedagogic principles according to which materials and methods are actually designed. We shall take these two kinds of factors together and refer to them as the shared framework.

In what follows, this notion of a 'framework' is set out in a little more detail. We then subdivide it under the two headings of 'context' and 'syllabus', both exploring their general implications and trying to relate them as we do so to our own familiar and specific teaching situation.

1.2 The Framework: Context and Syllabus

In simple terms, the overall goals of a language teaching programme usually derive from an analysis of the reasons why a group of learners in a particular environment needs to learn English: these goals may be stated in general,

educational, or very specific terms. They may, on the one hand, be set out in the large-scale categories of a national language policy with many associated implications for the development of the curriculum. For instance, the aim of English language teaching in Malaysia was earlier stated to be 'to create a society that is able to utilize the language for effective communication as the need arises, and as a key to wider experiences. For those furthering their studies, the skills learned should become an instrument with which they may cope with the necessities of using the language'. The new guidelines for language teaching in Japanese schools include such statements as 'to develop understanding of language and culture through a foreign language . . . to develop a positive attitude towards communication in a foreign language, and a basic practical communication ability in hearing and speaking'. Alternatively, at the other end of the scale, a course may be organized to address a particular learning need for, say, the identifiable purposes of a small group. For instance, a course may be designed 'to meet the needs of learners who need to improve their ability to communicate when socializing, telephoning, making business presentations and taking part in meetings', or 'to help international postgraduate students in English-medium universities develop the writing skills necessary for writing dissertations'.

There is, then, a whole spectrum of possibilities for defining the goals of language teaching, for a country, an age group, a whole school, a class or an individual; and whether for general educational purposes, business, scientific development, cultural appreciation or many other reasons.

1 Is there an explicit statement of the goals of the language programme on which you work? If so, what are its primary aims?
2 If there is not such a statement, try to draft one that represents your own understanding of the goals.

To define what is meant here by 'framework' we start from the view that materials and methods cannot be seen in isolation, but are embedded within a broader professional context. This is represented in figure 1.1, which shows in a very simplified form the typical stages of planning an English language programme.

Whether goals are stated in terms of a national language policy, or in the more specific environment of, say, a particular school or college, the possibilities for actually implementing them will be directly related both to the learners themselves – their needs, characteristics and so on – and to the whole educational setting in which the teaching is to take place. Obviously, as we shall see in our subsequent discussion, goals need to be realistic for each circumstance. There is little use, for example, in planning for a multimedia

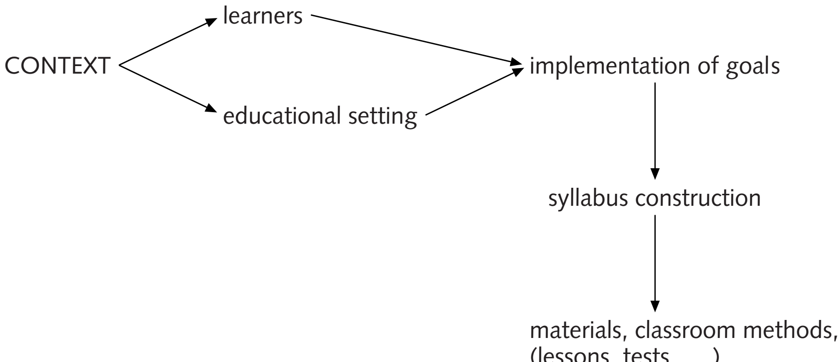


Figure 1.1 The framework of language teaching.

course if appropriate equipment is unavailable or unreliable, or in making too many general assumptions about classroom methodology. The statement of goals, then, related to the learners and conditioned by the setting, leads to the selection of an appropriate type of syllabus content and specification. The broad syllabus outline will in turn have direct implications for the more detailed design and selection of materials and tests, the planning of individual lessons and the management of the classroom itself. Clearly this logical planning sequence is an idealization of what is often a less well-defined procedure, where 'set' materials may linger behind aims that have been reformulated and updated, or conversely where new syllabus types may be ill-matched to existing educational objectives. The logical sequence will nevertheless be used as a reference point for discussion, and as a starting point for the exploration of individual teaching circumstances.

Let us now look at the most important contextual factors involved in planning, and then at the key types of syllabus from which actual courses are derived.

Contextual factors

In the preceding section, we took a broad view of 'context' and included both learners and setting under this heading. Let us examine each of these in turn in a little more detail.

Learners It is possible to identify a number of important learner characteristics or 'variables' which, as we have suggested, influence planning decisions and the specification of goals. The relative importance of these variables, and their effect on programme design, obviously depend to a certain extent on some of the situational factors to be discussed in the next section. For

example, a pupil's mother tongue may be more, or less, significant depending on whether more than one native language is represented in the classroom, or perhaps on the educational philosophy of that particular environment.

For the moment we can list here the key characteristics of 'the learner', indicating how they might affect planning and noting that they form part of our common frame of reference as language teachers, wherever we work. Some of these are characteristics of whole groups or subgroups of learners; others are individual and less open to generalization. Again, some can be known in advance and incorporated at the initial planning stage, in principle at least. Others are more appropriately assessed in the classroom environment itself, and as such are more obviously susceptible to teacher reaction and influence.

We consider the learner's

- *Age:* this will particularly affect topics chosen and types of learning activity, such as the suitability of games or role play.
- *Interests:* as with age, this may help in the specification of topics and learning activities.
- *Level of proficiency in English:* teachers will wish to know this even where their classes are based on a 'mixed proficiency' principle rather than streamed according to level.
- *Aptitude:* this can most usefully be thought of as a specific talent, in this case for language learning, as something that learners might show themselves to be 'good at', perhaps in contrast to other subjects in a school curriculum. (It can be measured by formal aptitude tests, although they are not very frequently used.) The relationship between aptitude and intelligence is not clear, and is certainly not direct.
- *Mother tongue:* this may affect, for instance, the treatment of errors or the selection of syllabus items – areas of grammar or vocabulary and so on.
- *Academic and educational level:* which help to determine intellectual content, breadth of topic choice or depth to which material may be studied.
- *Attitudes to learning*, to teachers, to the institution, to the target language itself and to its speakers. This is directly related to the following point.
- *Motivation*, at least in so far as it can be anticipated. Obviously a whole range of factors will affect this.
- *Reasons for learning*, if it is possible to state them. With school-age pupils this may be less significant than with many adult learners, where it is often possible to carry out quite a detailed analysis of needs.
- *Preferred learning styles:* which will help in the evaluation of the suitability of different methods, for instance, whether problem-solving activities could be used, or whether pupils are more used to 'rote learning', where material is learned by heart.

- *Personality:* which can affect methodological choices such as a willing acceptance of role play and an interactive classroom environment, or a preference for studying alone, for example.

Many of these factors will affect the learners' needs (for a recent book on needs analysis see Long, 2005), and this issue will recur in the relevant sections of subsequent chapters.

Setting That aspect of the context that we refer to as *setting* is to be understood here as the whole teaching and learning environment, in a wide sense: it is the factors falling under this heading that will determine whether the aims of a language programme, defined with reference to the learners' needs and characteristics, are actually feasible and realistic. In certain situations, the setting itself may be so significant that it provides the foundation for the specification of aims. This might be the case, for instance, in a country with a single political or religious ideological base, where the education system is primarily an expression of that ideology. In the majority of circumstances, however, the setting is more likely to condition the way in which goals are carried out, and indeed the extent to which they can be.

For most EFL/ESL teachers, therefore, the following factors, in some combination and with varying degrees of significance, will influence course planning, syllabus design, the selection of materials and resources, and the appropriateness of methods:

- *The role of English in the country:* whether it is a regular means of communication or primarily a subject taught in the school curriculum, where, in turn, it may or may not be the first foreign language. This relates to the linguistic environment, and to whether English is spoken outside class in the community or alternatively never heard.
- *The role of English in the school*, and its place in the curriculum.
- *The teachers:* their status, both at national and institutional levels, their training, mother tongue, attitudes to their job, experience, expectations (for a discussion of teachers' needs and wants, see Masuhara, 2011). This topic will be taken up in detail in the final chapter of this book.
- *Management and administration:* who is responsible for what level of decision, particularly which are the control points for employment of staff, budgets, resource allocation and so on. Additionally, the position of teachers in the overall system needs to be understood, as does the nature of the hierarchy in any particular institution.
- *Resources available:* books and paper, audio-visual material (hardware and software for cassette and video), laboratories, computers, reprographic facilities and so on. Design and choice of teaching materials will

be particularly affected by resource availability, as will the capacity to teach effectively across a range of language skills.

- *Support personnel:* administrators, secretaries and technicians, and their specific roles in relation to the teaching staff.
- *The number of pupils* to be taught and the size of classes. Overall numbers may affect the total number of teaching hours available, and the large class problem is a very familiar one in many settings worldwide.
- *Time* available for the programme, both over a working year (longitudinally), and in any one week or term (intensive or extensive). Many teachers would also consider that time of day is a significant factor.
- *Physical environment:* the nature of the building, noise factors, flexibility of tables and chairs, size of room in relation to size of class, heat and cold, and so on.
- *The socio-cultural environment:* this can often determine the suitability of both materials and methods. For example, some textbooks contain topics inappropriate to the setting, and some classroom methods require an unacceptable set of teacher and learner roles.
- *The types of tests used*, and ways in which students are evaluated: assessment procedures may, for example, be formal or informal and subjective. They may also be external, in the form of a public or national examination, or internal to the institution and the course.
- *Procedures (if any) for monitoring and evaluating* the language teaching programme itself. This kind of evaluation may be imposed by 'senior management', or alternatively agreed between teachers as colleagues.

Hedge (2000) covers similar points, classifying them into social, educational, pupil and teacher variables. Nation and Macalister (2010) discuss these factors as environment analysis with three major elements: learners, teachers and situation. Holliday (1994, 2005) is particularly concerned with the need for methodology to be *appropriate* to its socio-cultural context, not inappropriately transplanted from a different – and often more privileged – system. We will discuss this in Chapter 11 and, to a certain degree, Chapter 12.

Teachers are affected, directly and indirectly, by all these variables. Some they may be able to influence or even control: for example, the deployment of resources and materials, or the pacing of work within an overall timescale. Others, of course, arise from decisions taken far removed from a teacher's day-to-day professional life, perhaps at Ministry level, or at an earlier point in the country's educational history. Whatever their source, it is the teacher who is in the 'front line' – attempting to promote learning and fulfil the stated goals against the background of a complex network of interrelated factors. The grim reality described by Gaies and Bowers (1990: 176), with large classes, low motivation, inadequate coursebooks, poorly trained teachers,

lack of resources, heavy workload and the pressure of exams may still be realities in many teaching contexts (e.g. Hu, 2003; Pham, 2007 to name two). The conclusion in Gaies and Bowers (1990) still sounds pertinent that 'by coming to grips not only with new ideas but with the evidence of what happens when they are introduced into the local context, [teachers] equip themselves with the tools for establishing an appropriate methodology that can set realistic national objectives for teacher training and education' (181). We will discuss in more detail in Chapter 14 how changes and innovation affect teachers and how teachers may manage their self-development while seeking support.

Consider the following short case study of a fairly typical teaching environment. Note how the factors associated with the learner and the teaching situation can affect the organization of the language programme, the materials, the teachers and the methodology. For instance, most aspects are determined by decisions taken at some distance from the teacher, although teachers' views may have some effect. Again, the classes are on the whole conditioned by the examination system, but a minority of pupils are able to select classes in line with their own interests, which in turn means that teachers may be less bound by coursebooks and able themselves to be more autonomous in choice of materials and methods. In other words, there is a complex set of factors in operation, and the teacher in the classroom is the focus of a variety of pressures and influences, both direct and indirect.

Teacher X works in a secondary school, with pupils ranging in age from 12 to 16. She teaches 30 periods a week, two of which are options selected by older pupils according to their interests. Course materials consist in the main of set textbooks graded according to age and proficiency level and focused heavily but not exclusively on accuracy. Materials are written by a Ministry of Education team according to Ministry guidelines, and teachers' opinions are solicited annually by an Area Language Teaching Adviser. It is government policy to revise materials every eight years.

Average class size is 40 pupils. The pressure of the examination system ensures satisfactory attention, though – since there is little opportunity for travel – learners do not readily perceive the relevance of learning materials to their own lives.

The school has a language laboratory and a very small collection of books (mainly stories) written in English. Classrooms are basic but adequate. Very few supplementary English language teaching materials are available, though teachers are encouraged to make their own small-scale resource materials, and to share ideas at local teachers' centres. The school has one computer, so far without Internet access.

This teacher has been to Britain once, on a three-week summer school. She corresponds regularly with an English schoolteacher.

1. Now examine your own teaching environment in a similar way. First list the characteristics of your learners and of the teaching situation.
2. Then decide which are the more significant of these, and try to plot the patterns of cause and effect that they set in motion. For example, how are your classroom materials selected? To whom are you responsible? What possibilities do you have for innovation, or for professional development?
3. Finally, you might like to consider what kinds of changes in your teaching situation would have the strongest effect on your role as a teacher – a change in your status? Smaller groups? More time? The possibilities are many.
4. Discuss your analysis with colleagues, both with those working in the same environment and, if possible, with others from different backgrounds. Keep a note of your analysis: it will be helpful to refer to it again in subsequent chapters.

The syllabus

We can now assume that the goals of an English language programme have been set out and that the contextual factors affecting its implementation have been established and understood. The next step in the task of planning is to select a type of syllabus relevant to the learners for whom it is intended, appropriate to the situation and which fulfils the aims as closely as possible.

The 'syllabus' can be seen for our purposes as the overall organizing principle for what is to be taught and learned. In other words, it is a general statement as to the pedagogical arrangement of learning content. Richards and Rodgers (2001) have proposed a useful framework for the comparison of language teaching methods that illustrates the place of the syllabus in programme planning. Their model has three distinct levels, which they term *approach*, *design* and *procedure*, and is intended to show the relationship between the theory and practice of language teaching as an 'interdependent system'. Briefly, 'approach' is the most general level, and refers to the views and beliefs – or theories – of language and language learning on which planning is based. The most obvious example here is a view of language described as a set of grammatical structures. The next level, 'design', is where the principles of the first level are converted into the more practical aspects of syllabuses and instructional materials. It is here that decisions are taken about the arrangement of content to be taught and learnt, the choice of topics,

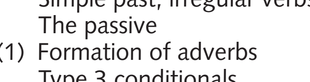
language items to be included in the programme and so on. Finally, 'procedure' refers to techniques and the management of the classroom itself.

The English language teaching profession nowadays has available a range of different types of syllabus from which a choice will be made for a specific situation. So however diverse our teaching contexts, our courses will be based on one, or a combination of, these principles of organization. Although syllabuses typically are written and published documents, their circulation is often restricted to the particular situation for which they have been drawn up. Therefore, one of the simplest ways of surveying the types of syllabus available is to examine the contents pages of published English language teaching textbooks, because they reveal the underlying principles and assumptions on which the writers have based their material. At one and the same time, they tell us something both about the approach and the design adopted, thus bringing together principle and practice in a directly observable way.

This is not a book about syllabus design as such, and it will not be necessary or appropriate to analyse each syllabus type in depth here. References to more detailed discussion are given at the end of the chapter, and the next chapters will examine the major areas of current debate. Let us simply try to identify the key principles of syllabus organization by examining the types of contents page most often found in the materials we use, because these distinctions will be the foundation for our discussion of 'design and procedure' in the remainder of the book.

> Look at the coursebook(s) that you use most frequently. With which of our samples in figure 1.2 does the table of contents in your own material compare most closely?

The first of these obviously is organized according to a list of grammatical structures and is one that will readily be recognized by most English language teachers. The second is based on the communicative and interpersonal uses to which language is put and, in contrast to the formal structural system of the first type, highlights what people do through language. It is normally referred to as a 'functional' syllabus. This design principle is often found together with the other list of items in the same box: they are technically called 'notions', a term used to describe the rather general and abstract categories a language is able to express, such as concepts of time and place. For convenience – and in line with common practice – they will be placed together here, and the syllabus as a whole designated 'functional-notional'. The most important distinctions between this on the one hand and the so-called structural syllabus on the other will be taken up in the next chapter.



(1) Simple past; irregular verbs The passive Formation of adverbs Type 3 conditionals Gerunds and infinitives	(2a) Making suggestions Asking for directions Giving advice Introducing yourself (2b) Location Duration Ability
(3) In the restaurant At a hotel In the post office At a garage	(4) Making notes from a talk Reading for information Using a dictionary Writing an exam answer
(5) Space travel Intelligence tests Smoking The weather	(6) Language focus: question forms Vocabulary: meeting people Skills: speaking, reading, listening Task preparation: listen to people meeting Task: interviews Task: follow-up

Figure 1.2 Principles of syllabus organization. (Adapted from *Cutting Edge* by Cunningham and Moor, 1999.)

The third sample presents a set of everyday situations or 'settings'. The fourth focuses on language skills, and is concerned with what learners do as speakers, listeners, readers, writers. The fifth uses topics or themes as its starting point. The sixth invokes the concept of task, discussed in Chapter 2.

We can now identify six broad types of syllabus:

1 grammatical or structural
2 functional-notional
3 situational
4 skills-based
5 topic-based
6 task-based

It is, of course, unusual to find just one of these as the only organizing principle, in isolation from others, and before leaving this discussion of syllabus types, two final explanatory points must briefly be made.

First, most syllabuses are based on a combination of two or more of the types we have illustrated. Some, like this one, for example, may have a 'primary' and a 'secondary' organizing principle:

At the bank: question forms
At a garage: imperatives
At a hotel: present perfect

Indeed, many situational and topic-based syllabuses are part of a broader pattern of this kind, where a grammatical point to be taught is linked to an interesting theme or practised in a 'real-world' setting rather than learnt mechanically and outside any context. Other syllabuses are multilayered, using several different principles (ideally) interwoven in a systematic way:

Talking about holidays
Requesting information
Question forms
At the travel agent
Listening and role play
Intonation practice

This deliberately is a somewhat extreme example, but it does show how topics, functions, structures, skills, situations (and pronunciation practice) can be brought together.

The second point to bear in mind here is the need to distinguish between the syllabus itself and what we might call a 'syllabus inventory'. The inventory is simply a list of the contents to be covered in the language programme, whether that is a list of functional or grammatical items, or of skills, or of topics and situations. The 'syllabus' is the way in which that content is organized and broken down into a set of teachable and learnable units, and will include consideration of pacing, sequencing and grading of items, methods of presentation and practice, and so on.

> Examine the list on the following page, which shows a number of different types of learners and teaching situations. Work with a colleague if possible, and select two or three of them to look at in a little more detail.

Where?	Who?	Why?
China: university of technology	Undergraduates	Reading purposes: English is a library language
Turkey: secondary school	School pupils	Part of general school curriculum
Britain: university	Postgraduates in various subjects	To follow postgraduate studies after one year English
An English town: secondary school withdrawal class	Refugees, newly arrived	Language survival
France: evening class	Mixed group: retired people, housewives	Tourism and general purposes
London: private language school	Young adults from the Middle East (male)	To do engineering in further education
Japan: university	Undergraduates	To be tourist guides for foreign visitors
Malaysia: technical institute	Post-'O'-level student	To enter higher education in Australia

1 Try to decide what you think might be the most important factors to do with the learners and the setting for the situations you have chosen. For example, you may think that learners' proficiency levels, or attitudes to English, are significant, and that class size and resources are the key elements affecting the teaching situation.
2 Consider the kind of syllabus that might be selected as the most appropriate in each case, bearing in mind the stated learning purpose. It does not matter if you are not personally familiar with these kinds of teaching context. They are quite representative, and the task here is to practise applying and integrating some of the principles that we have been discussing in this chapter.

1.3 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the background against which teaching materials and classroom methods evolve. Our professional activities as language teachers are not carried out in a vacuum, and planning a successful language programme involves much more than mere decisions about the content and

presentation of teaching materials. Although we work in specific situations with specific groups of learners, according to a specified set of aims, our work can be described along a number of shared and generalizable dimensions. These dimensions are the characteristics of learners, the range of factors in the teaching situation itself, and the syllabus types available to us as a profession. The differences lie in the relative importance of these factors and the choices that are made.

1.4 Further Reading

1. Harmer, J. (2007b): Chapter 8 discusses planning and syllabus design.
2. Jolly, D. and Bolitho, R. (2011): 'A framework for materials writing' describes real cases of how teachers developed materials and discuss principles and procedures.
3. Nation, P. and Macalister, J (2010): *Language Curriculum Design*. This is a recent addition to the literature on the whole process of curriculum development.

2

Current Approaches to Materials and Methods

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we examined in very general terms the most common types of syllabus organization for English language teaching. We also noted that these syllabus types form an essential component of the framework within which objectives are specified according to the learners, teachers and contexts, and within which the details of language teaching programmes are set out. This happens, as we have seen, according to certain principles and with various possibilities for combination. It is the purpose of the present chapter to take a closer look at the methodology and materials design that have influenced changes and innovations in English language teaching in recent years. We will start by discussing the 'communicative approach' with its underlying principles as they constitute the foundation for the approaches and materials that have followed.

The present chapter uses a selection of recent courses in order to examine the design perspectives that they demonstrate. We shall take some fairly popular courses available on the general market, partly on the argument that if a course is used frequently, then its users probably find it relevant and appropriate. It is not the intention to carry out an evaluation of their inherent quality, but rather to follow through developments and identify trends, in particular the so-called multi-component syllabus and the various current interests (e.g. English as lingua franca, task-based course design, emphasis on intercultural competencies, use of corpora and technology). Readers will

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again be invited to contextualize the discussion by commenting on materials familiar to them. We shall concentrate particularly on organization and coverage, and on views of learners and learning underpinning current materials, including the growing interest in learner strategies.

Try to characterize the approaches to materials design that the following two tables of contents represent.

Compare them with the textbook(s) you most frequently use: are your materials close to either of these approaches?

Lesson	Grammar	Vocabulary	Functional language	Pronunciation
1A Double lives p6	Stative & dynamic verbs Present simple & present continuous	Verbs with two meanings		
1B Britishness p10	Subject & object questions	Self-image		
1C First impressions p12		Describing people	Describing people	Intonation (lists)
1 Language reference p14				
2A Journeys p16	Present perfect & past simple 1	Phrasal verbs (separable & inseparable)		Word linking
2B Down under p20	Present perfect & past simple 2			
2C Getting around p22		Verb collocations (travel)	Travel	
2 Language reference p24				
3A Dream homes p26	Modals of obligation, permission & prohibition (present time) *Make, let & allow*	Accommodation		
3B Bedrooms p30	Modals of obligation, permission & prohibition (past time)	Verb collocations (sleep)		
3C Dinner date p32		Conversation fillers	Requests	Intonation (requests)
3 Language reference p34				
4A Luck of the draw p36	Past simple & past continuous	Idioms (taking risks)		*Was* & *were*
4B Coincidences p38		*Both* & *neither*	Talking about similarities & differences	
4C Twists of fate p40	Past perfect simple	Time linkers Injuries		
4 Language reference p44				
5A Hard sell p46	Comparatives 1 Comparatives 2	Adjectives (advertising) Adjectives (negative prefixes)		/s/, /z/ & /ʃ/
5B The office p50	Comparing nouns	Office activities		
5C Paperwork p52		Office supplies	On the phone	
5 Language reference p54				
6A Summer holiday p56	Future 1 (future plans) Future 2 (predictions)	Holidays 1 Holidays 2		
6B Perfect day p60	Present tenses in future time clauses			
6C Travel plans p62		Collocations with *sound*	Indirect questions	Word stress
6 Language reference p64				

	Reading & Listening	Speaking	Writing (in the Workbook)
1A	**R** *Liars!* **L** Radio review of TV programme: *How Michael Portillo became a single mum*	Discussing what people are most likely to lie about Talking about yourself ***Did you know?*** British political parties	A description of a best friend
1B	**R** *Are you British enough?* Devising a quiz about culture in your country	Discussing answers to a British culture quiz	
1C	**L** Three conversations in an office	Talking about first impressions	
2A	**R** *Lawyer gives up job to cycle around South America* **L/R** Three unusual journeys	Discussing travelling Talking about a film or book of a long journey	A description of a town or city
2B	**R** An excerpt from a web diary about a trip round Australia	Talking about Australia Planning a journey across your country	
2C	**L** Three conversations about trying to get somewhere	Talking about daily transport ***Did you know?*** New York & London taxis	
3A	**R** *Paradise Ridge* **L** Interviews with residents talking about disadvantages of living in Paradise Ridge **L** Interviews with people who live in unusual homes	Discussing where you live Designing a luxury holiday home	Advantages and disadvantages
3B	**R** *6 things you probably didn't know about beds and bedrooms*	Talking about sleeping & dreaming	
3C	**L** Three conversations at a dinner party	Describing a recent dinner party ***Did you know?*** Food in Britain	
4A	**R** *Lottery winners and losers*	Inventing a story about a lottery winner	A narrative: Lottery winner
4B	**L** Conversation: discussing things in common	Identifying & discussing coincidences	
4C	**R** *The world's luckiest man* **L** Three bad luck stories	Inventing a bad luck story ***Did you know?*** Superstitions in Britain	
5A	**R** *Catch them young* **L** A phone call: credit card telesales	Planning & presenting an advertisement for a mineral water Carrying out a market research survey	An advertisement
5B	**R** *Office stereotypes*	Planning an office party	
5C	**L** Ordering office supplies over the phone	Roleplay: phone conversation ordering office supplies ***Did you know?*** London's Mayfair district	
6A	**R** Questionnaire: *What kind of holiday person are you?* **L** Six short interviews at the airport	Roleplay: making plans with other holiday makers Planning a holiday for a family group	An extract from a holiday brochure
6B	**R** *Emerald Tours*	Discussing the perfect day out ***Did you know?*** Cork–European capital of culture	
6C	**L** Enquiring about flights over the phone	Discussing the different ways men & women think	

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LESSON		GRAMMAR/FUNCTION	VOCABULARY	PRONUNCIATION	READING
UNIT 1 IDENTITY page 7 Video podcast | What does *family* mean to you?					
1.1	Who do you think you are? page 8	question forms including subject versus object questions and questions with prepositions	family	intonation patterns in question forms	read and understand a text about a BBC programme that reveals family histories
1.2	Men and women page 11	review of verb tenses: present and past simple versus present and past continuous	relationships; collocations with *take*, *get*, *do*, *go*	stressed syllables	read a BBC blog about the differences between men and women; read and answer a questionnaire about what women really think
1.3	Tell me about yourself page 14	talking about yourself	interview advice; phrases to introduce questions		read tips on successful interviews
1.4	Second Life page 16		things you can do in Second Life; phrases to describe an avatar		
UNIT 2 TALES page 19 Video podcast | When is it OK to tell a lie?					
2.1	Fact or fiction? page 20	present perfect versus past simple	types of story; focus on prepositions (with expressions of time, nouns and fixed expressions)	strong and weak forms of the present perfect	read a text about whether Hollywood films use fact of fiction
2.2	What really happened? page 23	narrative tenses	the news		read an article about conspiracy theories; read short news stories
2.3	I don't believe it! page 26	telling a story	collocations with *say* and *tell*; sequencers	polite intonation	read a text about how to tell if someone is lying
2.4	Hustle page 28		crime collocations; narrative phrases		
UNIT 3 CONTACT page 31 Video podcast | Can new technology help communication?					
3.1	You're going where? page 32	the future (plans): the present continuous, *going to*, *will*, *might*	communication	*going to* in fast speech	read an article about teenage communication
3.2	Getting connected page 35	the future (predictions): will, might, may, could, going to, *likely to*	future time markers; idioms		
3.3	In other words … page 38	dealing with misunderstandings	types of misunderstandings; phrases to clarify/ask someone to reformulate	intonation: dealing with misunderstandings	read a short story about a misunderstanding
3.4	The virtual revolution page 40		internet communication; phrases for discussing preferences		
UNIT 4 JOBS page 41 Video podcast | Is your job a 'dream job'?					
4.1	Millionaires page 44	modals of obligation: *must*, *have* to, *should*	personal qualities; confusing words		read an article about millionaires; read and do a survey about whether you have got what it takes to be a millionaire
4.2	Dream job page 47	*used to* and *would*	strong adjectives	stressed syllables	read about childhood dreams; read job advertisements
4.3	That's a good idea page 50	reaching agreement	business collocations; phrases to give opinions, comments on other opinions and suggestions	sentence stress	read about a programme called *The Apprentice* broadcast on the BBC
4.4	Gavin and Stacey page 52		office conversation; phrases to describe routines		
UNIT 5 SOLUTIONS page 55 Video podcast | Are you good at solving problems?					
5.1	Machines page 56	comparatives and superlatives	technology	main syllable stress in words/phrases	read an article about how technology changed the world; read an essay about the advantages and disadvantages of technology
5.2	Ask the experts page 59	question tags	words related to questions; wors building: adjectives	falling/rising intonation in question tags	read a book review
5.3	It's out of order page 62	polite requests	problems and solutions	polite intonation in requests	read a short text about PC anger in the workplace
5.4	Top Gear page 64		presentation phrases to describe a machine		
IRREGULAR VERBS page 127		LANGUAGE BANK page 128		VOCABULARY BANK page 148	

LISTENING/DVD	SPEAKING	WRITING
listen to someone describing their family history	talk about family events: talk about people in your life	write an email of introduction; learn to use formal and informal styles
listen to a set of instructions and do a test	discuss the differences between men and women	
listen to a set of interviews; learn to understand and use DVD-word responses	talk about type of interviews and interview experiences; role-play an interview	
BBC **The Money Programme: Second Life:** watch and understand a documentary about life online	discuss and create a new identity	write answers to a questionnaire
listen to a radio programme about important roles in films	talk about life experiences; talk about your life story	
listen to news reports	talk about an important news story/event	write a news report; learn to use time linkers: *as soon as, while, during, until and by the time*
listen to people telling anecdotes; learn to keep a story going	tell a true story or a lie	
BBC **Hustle:** watch and listen to a drama about a burglar and a famous painting	discuss fictional crime dramas; tell a narrative	write a short newpaper article
	discuss attitudes now in comparison to ones you had earlier in life	write messages; learn to use note form
listen to predictions about the future of communication	talk about how things will change in the future	
listen to telephone conversations involving misunderstandings	learn to reformulate and retell a story about a misunderstanding; role-play resolving a misunderstanding	
BBC **The Virtual Revolution:** watch and understand a documentary about the impact of the internet	talk about communication preferences	write a memo
	discuss the qualities needed for different jobs; complete a survey and discuss the results	
listen to two people describing dream jobs gone wrong	talk about past habits	write a covering letter; learn to organise your ideas
listen to people making decisions in a meeting	learn to manage a discussion; participate in a meeting and create a business plan	
BBC **Gavin and Stacey:** watch and understand a comedy programme about a man's first day in a new job	describe a day in your life	write about daily routines
	discuss how technology has changed the world; talk about different types of transport and their uses	write an advantages versus disadvantages essay; learn to use discourse markers
listen to peole answering difficult general knowledge questions	do a short general knowlege questionnaire; answer questions on your area of expertise	
listen to conversations about technical problems: learn to respond to requests	role-play asking and responding to requests	
BBC **Top Gear:** watch and understand a programme about a race between a car and two people	present and describe a new machine	write an advertisement for a new machine
COMMUNICATION BANK page 158	AUDIO SCRIPTS page 164	

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2.2 Communicative Language Teaching and Its Influences

The communicative approach challenged the prevailing structural view of language and language teaching in the 1960s and innovated many aspects of course design, incorporating insights into language use, language learning and teaching from the 1970s to the early 1980s. Some of the principles of the communicative approach have come to be an explicit or implicit part of English language teaching in the everyday professional lives of teachers in many parts of the world. Communicative design criteria permeate both general coursebooks and materials covering specific language skills as well as the methodology of the classroom. For example, the two tables of contents we have looked at in the previous section include familiar categories of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. These categories were the norm in coursebooks in the 1960s, and they are still widely used. Categories such as 'function/functional language' and the four skills show the influence of the communicative approach from the 1970s onwards. What we are now seeing is the influence of both the structuralism of the 1960s and the communicative approach of the 1970s and 1980s in the materials of the new millennium, so they continue to influence our classroom teaching today. Richards and Rodgers (2001: 151) state:

> Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) marks the beginning of a major paradigm shift within language teaching in the twentieth century, one whose ramifications continue to be felt today. The general principles of Communicative Language Teaching are today widely accepted around the world.

What kinds of paradigm shift took place in the 1970s? What are the general principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)? Before exploring the implications of CLT for materials and methods, it is worth reiterating the point that CLT is an 'approach' in the sense that it represents 'a diverse set of principles that reflect a communicative view of language and language learning and that can be used to support a wide variety of classroom procedures' (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 172). This means that how exactly these principles are realized as materials, methods and classroom procedures depends on how the fundamental tenets are interpreted and applied.

We need to be aware that CLT as an approach has evolved over the years. For example, Richards and Rodgers (2001) identify three stages in its development:

> Since its inception CLT has passed through a number of different phases as its advocates have sought to apply its principles to different dimensions of the teaching/learning process. In its first phase, a primary concern was the need to develop a syllabus that was compatible with the notion of communicative competence. This led to proposals for the organization of syllabuses in terms of notions and functions rather than grammatical structures (Wilkins, 1976).

> In the second phase, CLT focused on procedures for identifying learners' needs and this resulted in proposals to make needs analysis an essential component of communicative methodology (Munby, 1978). In the third phase, CLT focused on the kinds of classroom activities that could be used as the basis of a communicative methodology, such as group work, task-work, and information gap activities. (Prabhu, 1987)

It is neither appropriate nor possible within the scope of this book to set out all the many ramifications of 'the communicative approach': inappropriate, because our main intention is to look at its impact on learning, teaching methodology and materials today rather than at the theory and background in themselves; impossible, because the concept covers a potentially vast area touching on many disciplines (philosophy, linguistics, sociology, psychology and anthropology). There are several readily available works for teachers interested in an overview of the historical accounts and various debates that took place in the 1980s–1990s (e.g. Richards and Rodgers, 2001; McDonough and Shaw, 2003).

It is vital, however, to revisit the fundamental tenets of communicative approaches because they constitute the foundations of post-communicative approaches and materials. We would now like to explore what we think are the most significant factors within the broad concept of the 'communicative approach' as the background to the main discussion of this chapter. As a whole, CLT shifted the goal of language teaching from mastering linguistic properties (e.g. pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar) to that of acquiring communicative competence. There are some variations regarding what exactly constitutes communicative competence depending on views of the nature of the language system and its functions (Hymes, 1972; Halliday, 1975; Wilkins, 1976) and emphasis on different theoretical insights (Canale and Swain, 1980). Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011: 115) provide a concise description of communicative competence: 'In short, being able to communicate required more than linguistic competence . . . – knowing when and how to say what to whom. The shift in focus towards the "real-world" use of language required considering the dimensions of context, topic, and roles of the people involved. In methodology and materials such a new paradigm led to revisiting our view of language and how it is used, how a language may be learned and how it can be taught'. We shall restrict ourselves here to trying to show those implications that have most helped to form the kinds of teaching materials we work with and our attitudes to managing our classrooms. As we go through this section, we suggest from time to time some points for you to consider in relation to your own experience, both of language and teaching.

Implication 1

In its broadest sense, the concept of 'being communicative' has to do with what a language has the potential to mean, as well as with its formal

grammatical properties. The research of the 1970s laid the foundations for this view, which is particularly associated with the work of Wilkins (1976) originally carried out for the Council of Europe. Wilkins proposed two categories of communicative meaning: 'notional' (or 'semantico-grammatical') and 'functional'. The distinction between these two terms is clearly set out by Johnson (1981). 'Notions' are rather abstract concepts – frequency, duration, dimension, location, quantity and so on – which in English are closely related to grammatical categories. So, for instance, expressing 'frequency' involves tense selection and certain adverbial constructions. ('They often used to visit friends'; 'I talk to my students regularly', for example.) 'Functions', on the other hand, refer to the practical uses to which we put language, most usually in interaction with other people. Johnson suggests that, to find out the function of any particular utterance, we can simply ask, 'what was the speaker's intention in saying it?' (Johnson, 1981: 5). For example, a short statement like 'I'll do that!' could be an offer of help, but it could also be a warning, if the speaker believes that the other person is likely to be in danger when trying to carry out some activity; while 'Do you smoke?' could be a straightforward enquiry, perhaps asked during a medical examination, or it could be an indirect request for a cigarette. Other functional categories often found in teaching materials include making requests, greeting, making suggestions, asking for directions, giving advice. Having awareness of communicative functions helps learners to understand the fact that communication could break down if they only focus on linguistic (semantico-grammatical) meaning and ignore the intended use of the utterance (i.e. function) by the speaker. For example, imagine that a person struggling to open a door with a lot of luggage turns around and asks your student, 'Can you open the door?' If your student gives a grammatically correct answer 'Yes, I can' without taking any action it could cause offence as the answer shows lack of understanding of the embedded function of 'making a request'.

> Think of some more examples of functions in English and the grammatical structures related to them. You could also think about comparable patterns in your own language.

The semantic criteria outlined here have obvious implications for the design and organization of teaching materials. Let us consider a simple conversational statement like 'Give me your telephone number'. This could, of course, be an order, if spoken by a policeman to a motorist who has committed a traffic offence. However, if said, with suitable intonation, to an acquaintance, it could be a suggestion about a way of getting in touch. Or 'If you don't sit down, there'll be a problem' could be interpreted as either

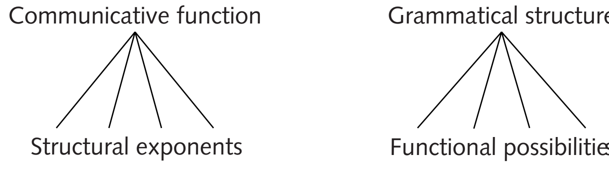

Figure 2.1 Form and function.

threatening or helpful. In other words, a grammatical structure can in principle perform a number of different communicative functions – an imperative might, for example, be a command or a suggestion, a conditional might be selected to threaten, to warn or alternatively to give advice.

The converse relationship also holds, where a single function can be expressed in a number of different ways. To make a suggestion, for instance, we can choose to say, 'You should . . .', 'You ought to . . .', 'Why don't you . . . ?', 'You'd better . . .', 'I think you should . . .', 'Have you thought of . . . ?', and undoubtedly there are several other possibilities. (In the Council of Europe's terms (van Ek, 1977), these structural items are referred to as 'exponents' of a particular function.) Figure 2.1 summarizes the relationships.

In more traditional teaching materials, this complex form–function relationship tends to be simplified, often implying a one-to-one correspondence, so that 'interrogatives' are used for 'asking questions', 'imperatives' for 'giving commands', 'conditionals' for 'making hypothetical statements' and so on. From a communicative perspective, this relationship is explored more carefully, and as a result our views on the properties of language have been expanded and enriched. However, there are a number of pedagogic problems associated with this approach to materials design, particularly to do with the sequencing of the language to be practised.

> How do your teaching materials handle the relationship between grammar and communicative function? Are communicative functions taught at all? If so, is a 'function' taught together with several grammatical forms, or just one? Alternatively, is a 'function' just used as an example where the main focus is on teaching grammar?

Materials developers in the 1970s and 1980s faced a dilemma. On the one hand, if they followed a traditional grammar syllabus, how should functions be incorporated? The same sentence could have various functions, depending on how it is used. On the other hand, if the main spine of the

syllabus is based on communicative functions, each function would involve different grammatical expressions. The complex relationships between grammar and communicative functions may be too overwhelming for beginners or learners with low proficiency. We will revisit this issue when we look at some current coursebooks. Meanwhile, the contribution of CLT deserves our acknowledgement in setting communication as the goal of language education and in identifying the roles of functions as well as linguistic structures.

Implication 2

Real-world language in use does not operate in a vacuum, and this is the second implication of the communicative approach. When we give advice, we do so to someone, about something, for a particular reason. If we are invited, it is by someone to do something, or to attend something. So in addition to talking about language function and language form, there are other dimensions of communication to be considered if we are to be offered a more complete picture. These are, at least

1 Topics, for example, health, transport, work, leisure activities, politics and so on.
2 Context or setting, which may refer to both physical and social settings, and may therefore include personal conversation and business discussion as well as the more traditional 'situations' such as travel or medical or leisure-time settings.
3 Roles of people involved: whether, for example, stranger/stranger, friend/friend, employee/boss, colleague/colleague, customer/person supplying a service.

Two short and simple examples will serve to illustrate this:

a Can I have a kilo of those red apples, and three lemons please?
b Anything else?
c That's all, thanks.
d £1.50 please.

a This is really good, but a bit expensive.
b Manchester restaurants are much cheaper.
c Who's paying?

Language function and language form, then, do not operate in isolation but as part of a network of interconnected factors, all of which need to be taken into account in materials that use a communicative concept as their

design principle. Based on a large amount of data from spoken language known as a 'corpus', Carter et al. (2011) and O'Keeffe et al. (2007) explain how spoken grammar is distinctly different from written grammar. There are also principles of conversation (McCarten and McCarthy, 2010) in which social interactions play an important role. We will elaborate on this point in Chapter 8, Speaking Skills.

Alongside this there is often a stated requirement for 'authenticity' – a term that loosely implies as close an approximation as possible to the world outside the classroom, in the selection both of language material and of the activities and methods used for practice in the classroom. The issue of 'authenticity' has been somewhat controversial, and there is no space here to go into the complexities of the argument: for readers who wish to do so, Mishan (2005) offers an extensive discussion on the relationship between teaching materials and the concept of authenticity. After reviewing 30 years of debate on authenticity including the relationship with Internet technology, she lists

> . . . a set of criteria 'by which the authenticity of texts' might be assessed in the context of language learning materials design:
> 1 Provenance and authorship of the text
> 2 Original communicative and socio-cultural purpose of the text
> 3 Original context (e.g. its source, socio-cultural context) of the text
> 4 Learners' perceptions of and attitudes to the text and the activity pertaining to it. (Mishan, 2005: 18)

In relation to the notion of authenticity, CLT has recently provoked a debate in relation to the perceived clash between the source culture and that of the adopters' cultures (Holliday, 1994; Kramsch and Sullivan, 1996; Holliday, 2005). As Pham (2007:196) puts it, echoing Kramsch and Sullivan (1996), 'What is authentic in London may not be authentic in Hanoi'. Taking the reality outside into the classroom invites discussion of the intercultural appropriacy of introducing language use in different contexts together with the accompanying methodology. We will discuss this issue in Chapter 11. It was CLT that pioneered attempts to capture the reality of language use and to introduce it into classroom materials.

Implication 3

Once we move away from the idea that mastery of grammar = mastery of a language, we are obliged at the same time to move away from evaluating our learners' proficiency on the basis of accuracy alone. It is undoubtedly desirable that their language production should be as 'correct' as possible, but we have seen that grammaticality also takes place in a wider social and

communicative context. The implication here is that we should concern ourselves not only with accuracy of form, but also with appropriacy in relation to the context. This derives in part from Hymes's view of language as including 'what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community' (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 70). The communicative approach has therefore led to a broadening of the criteria by which language proficiency is defined. We now have the concepts of appropriacy as well as accuracy, communicative as well as grammatical competence, use as well as usage (Widdowson, 1978).

For teaching purposes, these considerations clearly lead to a rethinking of attitudes to, and the treatment of, learners' grammatical errors. For example, if a learner tries to buy a train ticket by saying 'Give me a ticket to London (please)', or writes to a college for information with the phrase 'Send me your prospectus', he may show satisfactory mastery of language form, but he is offending certain forms of sociolinguistic behaviour. We may say, 'What?' to a friend we have not understood, but we would be advised to say, 'Pardon?' to the boss; 'Shut the door, will you?' may be appropriate within the family, but 'Excuse me, would you mind closing the door?' for a stranger on the train (example from Littlewood, 1981: 4). We can also look at 'error' from another perspective, and ask whether to prefer *'Please could you to send me your prospectus?' or *'Can I have six air letters, please?' to the choice of an imperative form. (* is a symbol used to denote grammatical inaccuracy.)

We can see from this that the notion of error is no longer restricted only to incorrect grammar or perhaps choice of vocabulary. If 'being communicative' includes also paying attention to context, roles and topics, then it is logically possible to make an error at any of these levels. It is even possible – though this can only be mentioned in passing – to make 'cultural' errors: an English person's way of thanking someone for a present is to say, 'You really shouldn't have done that', readily interpretable as a reprimand by a giver who is not familiar with the normal response. (See also Cook, 1989: 123–5, for other examples and Bartram and Walton, 1991.)

The extent to which error types are significant depends very much on particular teaching situations, and on the objectives of specific programmes. It is certainly not possible to make generalizations, and what may be tolerated in one case may be unacceptable in another. But even a partial acceptance of communicative criteria will allow for a certain amount of creativity and exploration in language learning, and this will inevitably extend the framework in which errors are evaluated. Chapter 9, Writing Skills, offers more detailed discussions on what may constitute so-called 'errors' and various ways of providing error feedback. See also Chapter 8, Speaking, in which we look at the use of language in oral interactions and the characteristics of English as a lingua franca, or world Englishes in relation to changing notions of 'correctness'.

Implication 4

Materials based on an approach to teaching that takes mastery of the formal system of a language as its major objective are likely to use the grammatical concept of the sentence as the basis for exercises. We may find, for example, the instruction 'Put the verb in infinitive form into the present perfect' or 'Join each pair of sentences with a relative pronoun', followed perhaps by 10 numbered sentences. Not much real-life communication proceeds strictly according to such fixed patterning. A letter to a friend, for instance, is unlikely to be only a string of sentences:

I went to the USA.
I went to New York.
I saw the Statue of Liberty.
I flew by Concorde.

Nor does this conversation sound natural, although, like the letter, it practises some useful verb structures, and the questions and answers are at least related:

Where did you go for your holidays? I went to New York.
What did you do? I saw the Statue of Liberty.
How did you travel? I flew by Concorde.

A concept of communication does not have to be based on sentence-level criteria, and it can allow language to be described, and language learning to take place, over longer stretches. In principle it can handle whole conversations, or paragraphs, or even longer texts. In recent years, a number of categories for describing language have been developed that are not based on sentence-level criteria, but on the broader notion of 'discourse'. There is a large and growing background literature on 'discourse analysis', and a detailed explanation of these categories is outside the scope and intention of this book. Essentially, the notion gives us the possibility of showing how different parts of a text or a conversation or any stretch of language are interlinked. This may be, for example, by cross-referencing with pronoun use or definite articles; by semantic links across items of vocabulary; by markers of logical development ('however', 'therefore', 'so', 'because' and the like); by ellipsis in conversation (the 'short answers' of coursebook practice); and by substitution ('this is my book, yours is the other one'). This is usually referred to as the concept of 'cohesion', whereby relationships between different elements in a text (written or spoken) are made explicit. Alternatively, a 'text' in this sense may be described in terms of its intention and its thematic coherence, in simple terms whether it 'makes sense' or not. It is important to note that a stretch of language may be 'coherent' even if it contains no explicit

markers of cohesion; and conversely may be 'cohesive' but make no sense. A useful summary is provided in Nunan (1999: ch. 4). Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) have devoted a whole book to showing how notions of discourse have practical applications in teaching.

Implication 5

Particularly in the early phase of the 'communicative revolution', it was sometimes assumed – mistakenly – that the approach was only really valid for teaching the spoken language, when learners needed to make conversation in English. The assumption is an understandable one, since face-to-face interaction is the most obvious kind of communication with other people, and learners were and are increasingly felt to need oral skills, given the greater opportunities for travel and for communication with English speakers visiting their countries.

It is important to realize that 'communicative' can in fact refer to all four language skills. We can look at this in two different ways. Firstly, we can divide the 'four skills' into 'productive' (speaking and writing) and 'receptive' (listening and reading) and practise them separately. It is possible to do this successfully from a communicative perspective, as we shall see in Part II of this book. However, treating the skills discretely can also lead to a concern for accuracy in production and an emphasis, in comprehension, on the grammatical characteristics of written and spoken material. More usefully, we can group together the oral/aural skills of speaking and listening, and the 'paper skills' of reading and writing. In both cases, we have a giver and a receiver of a message, and the ways in which the information in the message is understood by the receiver is an integral part of the communication. This is true whether we think of a brief exchange, a letter, a book, or an extended discussion. Possibilities of this kind for exploring the four skills, and integrating them with each other, will be examined in more detail in Part II.

> How do you interpret the idea of 'communicating in English' for your own learners? What, in other words, are their particular 'communicative needs', and to what extent are each of the 'four skills' important?

Implication 6

Finally, the term 'communicative' itself has been used in relation to teaching in two distinct though related ways, and this apparent ambiguity has some-

times been a source of confusion. Firstly, as we have seen from a number of the implications outlined in this section, the concept can refer to a view of the nature of language, leading to the procedures that have been detailed for a 'functional' analysis of language. In other words, language is seen to have inherent communicative as well as grammatical properties.

Secondly, a communicative approach also implies a concern with behaviour, with patterns of interaction as well as linguistic content. Morrow (1981) makes a simple and useful distinction between the 'what' – the contents of a language programme – and the 'how' – the ways in which that content might be learned and taught. This behavioural 'how' would cover the kinds of activities we carry out and the tasks we perform, such as writing a letter, or an essay, or talking to a friend, at a meeting, to a stranger and so on. We shall see in the next two parts of the book how such activities can be implemented in the classroom (1) in terms of the framework of skills and activities that we use for language learning activities, and (2) in the various possibilities available for structuring and managing the classroom itself.

Thompson (1996) looks at some of these implications from a different angle, arguing that considerable confusion still surrounds clear definitions of CLT, leading to four fundamental misconceptions, namely that (1) CLT means not teaching grammar, (2) CLT means teaching only speaking, (3) CLT means pairwork, which means role play, and (4) CLT means expecting too much from the teacher. We will discuss these controversies in more detail in Chapter 11.

More recent materials have reacted in various ways to and against the communicative movement of the 1970s. However, the main principles, with varying degrees of change and modification, have had a lasting impact on materials and methods that should not be underestimated. As Thompson (1996: 14–5) puts it: 'CLT is by no means the final answer. . . . But whatever innovations emerge, they will do so against the background of the changes brought about by CLT. . . . Certain of them are too important to lose: the concern with the world beyond the classroom, the concern with the learner as an individual, the view of language as structured to carry out the functions we want it to perform'.

1 Look at the syllabus guidelines for your own situation, if they are available. Are claims made there for 'communicative' objectives? Since it is the teacher who has to interpret them, how are the general objectives translated into your everyday classroom reality? (If you are working in a group of teachers from different backgrounds, you might like to compare your observations with those of others.)
2 How does your coursebook deal with the following issues?
   - What is the role of grammar in the unit?
   - What language skills are practised?
   - To what extent does the unit deal with (1) communicative functions as properties of language, (2) communicative behaviour and activities?
   - How large are the stretches of language that learners are asked to deal with? How much of the language practice is concerned with the manipulation of sentence structure?
   - Do learners have any freedom to 'create' meanings and language for themselves? Can they in any sense 'be themselves', and talk about their own interests, wishes, needs?

2.3 Some Claims for Current Materials

In the previous section, we have looked at the impact of CLT and its implications for materials and methods. We have also considered some controversies and debates. An obvious question, when discussing developments in materials design after CLT, is whether the influences can be detected in current materials after many debates and the test of time. Nunan (1999: 2) thinks that 'contemporary practice represents an evolution, and . . . the best practice incorporates the best of "traditional" practice rather than rejecting it'. We need, then, to ask to what extent current materials show evolution while retaining the best legacies. Let us now look at the kinds of claims that are being made, taken from the blurbs of a number of published global coursebooks (italics are ours):

- 'It enables you to learn English *as it is used in our globalized world*, to *learn through English* using information-rich topics, and to learn about *English as an international language*'.

  '. . . offers a comprehensive range of *interactive digital components for use in class, out of class and even on the move*. These include *extra listening, video material and online practice*'. (Clandfield and Jeffries, 2010)
- 'With its *wide range of support materials*, it meets the *diverse needs of learners* in *a variety of teaching situations* and helps to *bridge the gap between the classroom and the real world*'. (Clare and Wilson, 2011)

- '*Natural, real-world grammar and vocabulary* help students to *succeed in social, professional and academic settings*'. (Dellar and Walkley, 2010)
- '. . . is an *integrated skills* series which is designed to offer flexibility with *different teaching and learning styles*'.

  '*fully integrated grammar, skills and lexical syllabuses* provide a balanced learning experience'

  '*Contextualised vocabulary* focuses on *authentic real-world language*'

  '*Clearly structured grammar presentations* are reinforced with *extensive practice*'

  '*Free MP3 files* for all activities in the Student's Book *available online*'. (Harmer, 2012)
- '. . . prepares learners to *use English independently for global communication*'.

  '*Real life* every step of the way . . . practical *CEF goals at the core of the course* . . . *achieving purposeful real life objectives* . . . language that's natural and dependable – *guaranteed by the* . . . *Corpus* . . . *Authentic audio throughout* builds learners' ability to *understand the natural English of international speakers*'.

  'Building global relationships . . . develop learners' *intercultural competence as a "fifth skill"*, leading to a *more sensitive and more effective communication* . . .'. (Rea et al., 2011)

It is not difficult to identify some mainstream communicative themes in this selection – authentic real-world language, diverse needs of learners, integrated skills, effective communication in various settings. At the same time, there clearly are a number of further elements here. We find more explicit statements about English as an international language; reference to the communicative goals of the Common European Framework (see below, Section 2.6; use of corpora; use of technology in providing multimedia components; contextualized vocabulary and grammar; and mention of 'learning styles' and strategies in learning as well as learner independence). For convenience, we shall now divide these claims into two broad and related areas: content and learning. Several of them come together in the phrase 'the multi-component syllabus', which we shall explore in the first of the next two sections.

2.4 Organization and Coverage

Multi-component syllabus

Teaching materials following a traditional structural approach typically appear as an ordered list of grammatical items – perhaps

1. Simple present active
2. Present continuous
3. Simple past

and so on. There is here a single organizing principle that provides the material to be taught and learned in each unit or section of the course. However, it is likely that learners will not only be expected to formulate rules and manipulate structures in a vacuum; they will probably be given a situation or a topic as a context for practice. In other words, even traditional materials may have a primary organizing principle (structures) and a secondary one (topics or situations) – see the discussion of syllabus in Chapter 1. We might, say, teach the present perfect by asking our students about things they have done or places they have visited; regular activities and habits are often used to teach the simple present. Earlier in this chapter we saw how the development of the communicative approach not only consolidated a two-tier arrangement (functions and structures), but also opened up the possibility of the principled inclusion of other 'layers' of organization (functions, structures, roles, skills, topics, situations), although, with some exceptions, this was not fully explored in the materials of the time. It is in the last 20 years or so that the idea of a multilayered syllabus has begun to be more explicitly and systematically addressed.

The Tables of Contents on pp. 35–38 – referred to as a 'Map' – are two examples of a multi-component syllabus approach. What do you notice? What kinds of categories of content does each coursebook offer? Note down some of the similarities and differences you find between the two maps.

	Goals	Language	Skills	Explore
1 pages 6–13	**Media around the world** ◎ talk about entertainment media ◎ talk about habits ◎ express preferences ◎ talk about information media ◎ evaluate ideas ◎ make recommendations ◎ describe a book or TV show **Target activity** Describe a book or a TV show	**Vocabulary** Habits and preferences p6 Talking about facts and information p8 Evaluating and recommending p9 Describing books and TV shows p10 **Grammar** Talking about the present p7 **Pronunciation** Common pairs of words 1 p7	**Listening** TV and radio habits p6 What's on TV? p7 Four people describe books and TV show p10 **Reading** Can you believe what you read? p8 **Writing and speaking** Media habits p7 **Speaking** Is it true? p9 Make recommendations p9	**Across cultures** Intercultural experiences **EXPLOREWriting** ◎ write a book review for a website **Look again** Spelling and sounds: /f/
2 pages 14–21	**Good communication** ◎ talk about methods of communication ◎ express opinions ◎ talk about using the Internet ◎ speculate about the present and future ◎ speculate about consequences **Target activity** Discuss an issue	**Vocabulary** Expressing opinions p15 *It's* + adjectives p15 Using the Internet p16 Expressing probability p17 Speculating about consequences p18 **Grammar** *will, could, may, might* p17 **Pronunciation** Sentence stress p15	**Listening** Keeping in touch p14 Eric and Graham discuss a management decision p18 **Reading** Online friendships p16 *Email Survival Guide* p18 **Speaking** Express opinions p15 Socialising online p17 Is it likely? p17	**Keywords** *so, such* **EXPLORESpeaking** ◎ ask for clarification ◎ clarify what you're saying **Look again** Spelling and sounds: /tʃ/
3 pages 22–29	**Success** ◎ talk about a business idea ◎ talk about hopes, dreams and ambitions ◎ talk about abilities ◎ talk about achievements ◎ take part in an interview **Target activity** Sell an idea	**Vocabulary** Talking about a business idea p23 Hopes, dreams and ambitions p23 Abilities p24 Facts and feeling p26 **Grammar** Present perfect and time expressions p25 **Pronunciation** Schwa /ə/ p23	**Listening** I've always wanted to … p23 I'm most pround of … p25 Olga's 'easybag' p26 **Reading** Inventors: karaoke; the iPod p22 What is intelligence? p24 **Speaking** Business ideas p23 Your hopes, dreams and ambitions p23 Your achievements p25	**Across cultures** Attitudes to success **EXPLOREWriting** ◎ take notes **Look again** Spelling and sounds: /s/
4 pages 30–37	**What happened?** ◎ talk abou accidents and injuries ◎ explain how something happened ◎ talk about natural events ◎ describe a dramatic experience ◎ say how you feel about an experience **Target activity** Describe a dramatic experience	**Vocabulary** Accidents and injuries p31 Saying how something happened p31 Natural events p32 Adverbs for telling stories p33 Common verbs in stories p34 **Grammar** Narrative verb forms p32 **Pronunciation** Groups of words 1 p33	**Listening** Ouch! Five accidents p31 Stories: tsunami; eclipse p32 Megan's accident p34 **Reading** Why so clumsy? p30 **Speaking** Quiz: Safety first p30 What happened? p31 Retelling a story p33	**Keywords** *over* **EXPLORESpeaking** ◎ Refer to an earlier topic or conversation **Look again** Spelling and sounds: /k/
5 pages 38–45	**A change of plan** ◎ discuss plans and arrangements ◎ make offers and promises ◎ talk about something that went wrong ◎ talk about changes of plan ◎ catch up with old friends' news **Target activity** Attend a reunion	**Vocabulary** *be supposed to, be meant to* p38 *no chace, no way* p41 Catching up p42 **Grammar** Future forms p38 Future in the past p41 **Pronunciation** Common pairs of words 2 p39	**Listening** Locked out p38 Pierre and Munizha talk about fate p40 Maggie's story p41 Carolina and Iqbal catch up p42 **Reading** True Story competition p40 **Speaking** Ask a friend for help p39 Changes of plan p41	**Across cultures** Saying no **EXPLOREWriting** ◎ make offers and promises in emails or letters ◎ refer back in emails or letters **Look again** Spelling and sounds: /r/

	Goals	Language	Skills	Explore
6 pages 46–53	**Let me explain** ◎ give advice ◎ talk about how you manage money ◎ give detailed instructions ◎ give reasons for advice ◎ **Target activity** **Give expert advice**	**Vocabulary** Linking expressions p46 Multi-word verbs: managing money p47 Using equipment p48 Giving reasons p50 **Grammar** Verb + *-ing* p49 **Pronunciation** Linking consonants and vowels p49	**Listening** Vishal phones a computer helpline p48 Managing money p50 **Reading** How I lived on £1 a day pp46–7 Misunderstandings p48 **Speaking** Are you good with money? P47 Give instructions p49 Give advice p49	**Keyword** *mean* **EXPLORESpeaking** ◎ say you don't understand ◎ ask for help ◎ explain something **Look again** Spelling and sounds /ɔː/
7 pages 54–61	**Personal qualities** ◎ describe qualities you need for different activities ◎ describe personality ◎ make comparisons ◎ say how a person has influenced you ◎ **Target activity** **Talk about people who have influenced you**	**Vocabulary** Personal qualities p55 Matching people to jobs and activities p55 Personality p57 Describing someone's influence p58 **Grammar** Comparing p49 **Pronunciation** Contrastive stress p49	**Listening** Interview with a dancer p55 Five different pets p56 Tara talks about her role models p58 **Reading** Interview: Carlos Acosta p54 Pets and their owners p56 **Writing and speaking** 5–minute interviews p54 **Speaking** Match people to jobs P55 Compare people you know p57	**Across cultures** Roles in life **EXPLOREWriting** ◎ compare and contrast two alternatives ◎ organise ideas 1 **Look again** Spelling and sounds /iː/
8 pages 62–69	**Lost and found** ◎ talk about attitudes to possessions ◎ describe objects ◎ talk about unexpected travel situations ◎ discuss options and decide what to do ◎ make deductions ◎ **Target activity** **Find something at lost property**	**Vocabulary** Multi-word verbs: tidying and cleaning p63 Discussing products p63 Travel situations p64 Describing objects p66 **Grammar** Modals of deduction and speculation p65 **Pronunciation** Emphatic stress p65	**Listening** Alice and Javier's nightmare journey p64 Lost property p58 **Reading** Declutter your life! p62 **Writing and speaking** Freecycle P63 **Speaking** Travel problems P64 Find your way home p65	**Keyword** *have* **EXPLORESpeaking** ◎ describe objects you don't know the name of ◎ use vague language to describe things **Look again** Spelling and sounds /ɑː/
9 pages 70–77	**Make up your mind** ◎ describe problems in the home ◎ discuss solutions ◎ talk about decision-making ◎ discuss the consequences of decisions ◎ negotiate ◎ **Target activity** **Reach a compromise**	**Vocabulary** Problems in the home p70 Discussing problems and solutions p71 Decision-making p72 Negotiating p74 **Grammar** Real and unreal conditionals p73 **Pronunciation** Groups of words 2 p73	**Listening** What shall we do? p71 A new business p73 Flatmates p74 **Reading** Blogs: domestic disasters p70 Six Thinking Hats p72 **Speaking** Solve domestic problems P71 Discuss decisions p72 Consequences p73	**Across cultures** Dealing with conflict **EXPLOREWriting** ◎ write a web posting explaining an argument ◎ organise ideas 2 **Look again** Spelling and sounds /ɜː/
10 pages 78–85	**Impressions** ◎ talk about memory ◎ talk about what you remember ◎ talk about complaining ◎ complain about goods or services ◎ ask for a refund or replacement and explain why ◎ make a complaint politely ◎ **Target activity** **Resolve a dispute**	**Vocabulary** Remembering an event p78 Problems with things you've bought p80 Softeners p82 **Grammar** Verb patterns p79 Present perfect simple and progressive p81 **Pronunciation** Intonation in questions p81	**Listening** Hiromi witnesses a crime p78 Complaining in different countries p80 Mariah makes a complaint p80 Good neighbours? p82 **Reading** The problem with witnesses p79 **Speaking** Can you remember ... ? p79 Complain about something you've bought p81	**Keyword** *of* **EXPLORESpeaking** ◎ add comments to say how you feel **Look again** Spelling and sounds /uː/

Source: A. Tilbury, T. Clementson, L. A. Hendra, D. Rea and A. Doff, From *English Unlimited Elementary Coursebook* with e-Portfolio, pp. 2–3. Cambridge University Press, 2010. Reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.

	In this unit you learn how to
01 MY FIRST CLASS p.8	• ask and answer common questions • maintain a conversation • talk about language learning experiences • tell stories
02 FEELINGS p.14	• talk about how you feel – and why • give responses to news • use stress and intonation more effectively • ask double questions
03 TIME OFF p.20	• describe interesting places • ask for and make recommendations • talk about problems • talk about the weather
04 INTERESTS p.26	• talk about free-time activities • talk about sports • talk about music • pronounce, and understand, groups of words
Review 01 p.32 **Writing 01** p.120 **Writing 02** p.122	This Review unit revises units 1–4 Introducing yourself Short emails
05 WORKING LIFE p.36	• talk about jobs • talk about what jobs involve • add comments using *That must be*
06 GOING SHOPPING p.42	• describe things you buy • describe clothes • compare products • make, and respond to, recommendations
07 SCHOOL AND STUDYING p.48	• describe courses, schools, teachers and students • use different forms of a word • talk about different education systems • talk about possible future plans
08 EATING p.54	• describe different dishes and ways of cooking food • explain what is on a menu – and order • describe restaurants
Review 02 p.60 **Writing 03** p.124 **Writing 04** p.126	This Review unit revises units 5–8 Stories Making requests

Grammar	Vocabulary	Reading	Listening	Developing conversations
• Question formation • Narrative tenses • Other uses of the past continuous	• Learning languages • Language words	• 'Language policy a disaster' says head teacher	• Getting to know people • Explaining why you were late	• Asking follow-up questions • *John was telling me …*
• *be, look, seem* etc • *-ing / -ed* adjectives • The present continuous • Present continuous / simple questions	• Feelings • Adjective collocations	• It only takes Juan Mann to save the world!	• How's it going? • How's it going at work?	• Response expressions • Making excuses
• Present perfect questions • The future	• Places of interest • Holiday problems • Weather	• Workers can't bank on holidays	• Deciding where to go sightseeing • Talking about your holiday plans	• Recommendations
• Frequency (present and past) • Duration (past simple and present perfect continuous)	• Evening and weekend activities • Problems and sports • Music	• The playlist of your life	• Did you have a good weekend? • A martial art	• *Are you any good?* • Music, films and books
• Rules: *have to, don't have to, can* • Rules: *allowed to, supposed to, should*	• Jobs • Workplaces and activities • *be used to, get used to*	• Terrible jobs not a thing of the past	• What does your job involve? • Rules at work	• *That must be …*
• *must*	• Describing souvenirs and presents • Clothes and accessories	• Shop till you drop!	• Negotiating prices • Comparing mobile phones • The best way to buy tickets for a gig	• Avoiding repetition • Responding to recommendations
• *after, once* and *when* • Zero and first conditionals	• Describing courses • Forming words • Schools, teachers and students	• Learning to be happy	• Describing how a course is going • Different aspects of education	• *How's the couse going?*
• *tend to* • Second conditionals	• Describing food • Restaurants • *Over-*	• Food for thought	• Ordering dinner in a peruvian restaurant • Conversations about restaurants and food	• Describing dishes

Source: H. Dellar and A. Walkley, Coursebook map from *Outcomes Intermediate* 1E. Heinle/ELT, 2011. Copyright © 2011 Heinle/ELT, a part of Cengage Learning, Inc. Reprinted with permission. http://www.cengage.com/permissions

At first sight both maps seem complex, if rich, views of materials design, because several (in this case, eight) syllabus possibilities are in play. Not only do the details have to be specified for each individual organizing principle, but the principles themselves then have to be linked in a systematic way that does not leave the learner faced with a number of separate lists of items. A more straightforward way of looking at this kind of multi-component syllabus is to see it in terms of a merging of two broad approaches. One of these is concerned with a view of language in use, and includes categories of function, context and language skill. The other is a version of a more formal linguistic syllabus, which comprises elements of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. Obviously these two approaches are not mutually exclusive: pronunciation and vocabulary, for instance, can both be practised in a context of use, or alternatively can be rehearsed in isolation. What a multi-component syllabus does is to build on a range of communicative criteria at the same time as acknowledging the need to provide systematic coverage of the formal properties of language. Bailey and Masuhara (2012) report a successful case in a global coursebook of combining the two strands in a coherent way. Earlier in Implication 1 in Section 2.2, we pointed out that CLT materials in the 1970s and 1980s had problems with the complex relationship between structural (semantico-grammatical) syllabuses and communicative function syllabuses. A similar conflict between the two strands was noted in Bailey and Masuhara (2012) in three out of four global coursebooks published between 2011 and 2012.

Take a close look at the two maps in pp. 35–38 again.

Take one specific unit from each of the two maps. Consider the following points:

1. Is there a particular communicative target with a real-life outcome? Or are the targets contextualized exercises of structures or lexical chunks?
2. Do different components cohere in terms of objective of the unit?

The emphasis on lexis

One of the areas that has recently received considerable attention in approaches to materials design is that of vocabulary or lexis. The teaching of vocabulary is a very large topic, and we shall restrict ourselves here to commenting briefly on its role in some current coursebooks. (For more discussion, see Chapter 6 for more details; see also Chapter 12 of Richards and Rodgers, 2001 and McCarten and McCarthy, 2010). Most of us – whether as learners or teachers – have experience of classrooms where practising

vocabulary means learning lists of words, not always in relation to a real-world context and sometimes in the form of two columns, with a mother tongue equivalent for the foreign language word. We have probably noticed that vocabulary approached in this way is not always efficiently remembered and reused. It is typical of many current coursebooks that they are concerned (1) to rationalize vocabulary as content, in other words, to establish a principled framework and a set of contexts within which vocabulary development can take place, and (2) to base teaching on an understanding of the psychological mechanisms whereby people learn and remember lexical items. We shall comment on the background to the second of these in the next section. As far as the first point is concerned, we can note that it is unusual to find merely a list of words to be learned by rote: the multi-syllabus concept means that vocabulary is selected according to the other dimensions on which the materials are built. For example, English Unlimited (Rea et al., 2011) sets a target activity in each unit, based on one of the communication goals of the Common European Framework of Reference. Take as an example Unit 7 in which the target activity is to 'Talk about people who have influenced you'. The vocabulary sections appear as supporting parts in the sequence of integrated skills activities. The activities are meaning-focused and personalized. There is a lot of meaningful and varied exposure to lexical chunks in relation to personal qualities in roles in work or in life, which gradually prepare learners to achieve the target activity of the unit.

For most of us 'vocabulary' also means using a dictionary. A new dictionary for learners of English was published in 1987. The dictionary is called COBUILD, which stands, rather technically, for the 'Collins [Publisher] – Birmingham University International Language Database'. It is based on an extremely large corpus of language of billions of words, stored on a computer database. Sources of data are both the spoken and written language, and include magazines, books, broadcasts, conversations and many more. The philosophy of the dictionary is to provide 'above all a guide to ordinary everyday English', and frequency of occurrence is a key criterion for inclusion. It focuses particularly on the most common 2000–3000 words, the 'powerhouse of the language', and the examples given in the dictionary entries are taken from the source material. McCarten and McCarthy (2010), after giving an overview of corpus-based coursebooks, discuss how corpora can be used for building a syllabus of lexical chunks as well as single words to help the learners learn the language for communication. They also consider limitations and offer some guidelines in developing corpus-based materials.

The task-based approach

Approaches to task-based learning (TBL) can be seen as a significant further evolution of CLT, both in terms of views of language in use and the development of classroom methodology. Although teachers have been operat-

ing with the notion for some time, it is only in recent years that frameworks have become more explicit and formalized. J. Willis (1996: 23) offers a simple definition: 'tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose . . . *in order to achieve an outcome*' (italics added). In other words, TBL is goal-oriented, leading to a 'solution' or a 'product'. Nunan (1989, cited in Nunan, 1999: 25) makes a further distinction between 'real-world' and 'pedagogical' tasks, the latter defined as 'a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than manipulate form'.

Despite this emphasis on communication and interaction, it is important to note that the TBL approach is concerned with accuracy as well as fluency. It achieves this most obviously through the TBL framework, which has three key phases:

1 the pre-task phase, which includes work on introducing the topic, finding relevant language and so on
2 the task cycle itself
3 language focus.

As Willis (1996: 55) notes, 'to avoid the risk of learners achieving fluency at the expense of accuracy and to spur on language development, another stage is needed after the task itself'. TBL, then, takes a holistic view of language in use. Willis also offers an extensive set of suggestions for task possibilities, from simple to complex, and also shows how mainstream textbooks can be adapted to introduce tasks. A simple task may require learners just to make lists (e.g. 'the features of a famous place'); more complex tasks may incorporate simulation and problem-solving, such as how to plan a dinner menu on a limited budget (Willis's examples) (see also Willis and Willis, 2007 for updates or more examples of tasks). Nunan (2004) and Ellis (2010) also argue that Second Language Acquisition studies support the validity of TBL.

In this section we have discussed the principle of the multi-syllabus, have shown how some coursebooks have highlighted lexical chunks as one particular area of design, and have commented on the task-based approach as an important area of development. In the next section we shall turn our attention to ways in which current approaches view the learners themselves.

2.5 Learners and Learning

There are a number of ways in which current coursebook design is concerned in general terms with a perspective on 'the learner', as well as with the language material itself. These ways can be grouped as follows:

1 Although the majority of learners study in the environment of a whole class, and often in a large one, an analysis of the characteristics of learners as individuals can offer a helpful view on the construction of materials and methods.
2 Learners will naturally need to engage in the process of both comprehending and producing language. In doing this they use a range of strategies, some of which are probably shared by all language users, whether learning a foreign language or using their mother tongue.

The first of these perspectives is normally characterized by the concept of 'individual differences'; the second is studied under the headings of both language acquisition and learning strategies. Both perspectives have come into some prominence as factors affecting materials design, and we shall briefly survey each of them in turn.

Learners

In the previous section on the organization and content of current materials, we did not discuss in any detail the selection of topics for language learning, whether for discussion, or comprehension or writing. We have chosen to start this section with them because they are the most obvious way in which learners' needs and interests can be taken into account. Here is a small selection of themes taken from some of the coursebooks used as examples in the preceding section. You might like to consider whether such topics would be relevant for your own learners, and whether learning context determines topic choice. For instance, materials appropriate for students in an English-speaking environment – social situations, travelling, everyday 'survival' – may not be applicable in other educational settings, and vice versa:

Travelling	Shopping	Success and failure
School and studying	Music and singing	Driving
Food and drink	Health and illness	The environment
Dreams and fears	Television	Technology
Money	Racism	Leisure time
Relationships	Education	Getting old

Topics in this form are listed as content, as material to be covered. Masuhara et al. (2008), in their review of eight global coursebooks, welcome the efforts made towards valuing learner engagement in the selection and treatment of topics.

1 Do you think the topics listed on page 42 would be appropriate or engaging for your students?
2 Look at the materials you use in your classes. Do you think the topics are engaging for your students?

Topics, of course, are by no means the only way in which attention can be paid to the learners themselves. Although for most teachers, especially those faced with big classes, the goal of large-scale individualization of instruction may not be a very realistic one, some differences between learners can be taken into account in a limited way. Chapter 12 of this book will explore the possibilities in more detail. Here we shall simply highlight the 'individual differences' that appear to be significant in current materials.

Researchers in the psychology of second language learning have investigated a number of learner characteristics that have implications for the language classroom. An understanding of such characteristics, or 'variables', can make it possible for teachers and materials designers to adjust and vary certain aspects of the classroom to allow for the different individuals in it. Dörnyei (2005) provides an extensive review of studies on individual differences and considers key learner variables including:

- Personality: learners may be quiet, or extrovert, for instance
- Motivation: learners may have chosen to learn; they may be obliged to take a course or an examination; they may or may not perceive the relevance of material
- Attitude: learners have attitudes to learning, to the target language and to classrooms
- Aptitude: some people seem more readily able than others to learn another language
- Preferred learning styles: some learners are more comfortable in a spoken language situation, others prefer written material
- Intelligence.

We are not concerned here with the relationships between these factors. This is an interesting and complex issue and we will discuss it at some length in Chapter 11 of this book.

Some of the dimensions along which individuals vary, IQ measures for example, do not have an obvious effect on language learning potential. Others are difficult to measure, and certainly to change: it is not normally considered part of a teacher's role to try to adjust students' personalities. Yet others, such as motivation, can more obviously be affected by the learning environment. What we should note, in other words, is that some individual

differences can have an influence on language instruction, and others can be influenced by it. A distinction also needs to be made between the possible effects of the coursebook and those of the structure and management of the classroom itself.

Several of the English language teaching materials now available attempt to incorporate some consideration of learner characteristics into their methodology. As far as variables differentiating between learners are concerned, mention is made most frequently of differences in learning styles. The pedagogic response to this is to allow in a principled way for variety, especially in content and in language skills, and to build in suggestions for variability in pacing – the speed at which learners are able to work through the material. Pacing, in turn, implies a concern for aptitude, a factor that interests all teachers even if no formal measurement of aptitude is available. We also find reference to the importance of understanding learners' attitudes. Students may have expectations, perhaps about the role of correction, or about pronunciation, and ignoring them will certainly have an adverse effect on motivation.

As mentioned earlier, most of the teaching we do is to learners in a class with others, so all materials necessarily have to be a compromise, as do teachers' interpretations of materials. With the development of technology, learning modes are changing: self-access centres, learning through the Internet or making use of mobile technology. We will discuss different ways of encouraging learning in Chapter 5 in relation to the use of technology in learning and in Chapter 12 in relation to individualization, learner autonomy, self-access learning and learner training.

Taking the individual differences discussed in this section, to what extent do you think they influence your own teaching, and how far can you, as a teacher, influence them? Compare your observations if possible with someone who works in a different educational environment.

Learning processes and strategies

Some readers will be familiar with the terms 'learning' and 'acquisition'. The purpose of this subsection is simply to introduce what have arguably been the most significant approaches to materials design and classroom practice in recent years. Details of learning skills and processes in particular are the subject of much of Part II of this book; and the strategies work is taken up again in Part III, in the discussion of learner autonomy and learner training.

This can be considered as typical of an earlier approach to reading comprehension where the text might, for example, be about the life of a famous person, and the questions are there to find out whether the text has been understood. ('Mr X was born in Edinburgh in 1835'. Question: 'When was Mr X born?') Such a format is more like a test of comprehension, and does not itself teach the learners any strategies for understanding the passage. Alternatively, learners were often required to translate the English text into their mother tongue. Despite new ways of analysing and describing language material, it took some time for our profession to turn its attention to the psychology of learning, particularly in relation to the comprehension skills of reading and, subsequently, listening. A 'test' or 'translation' method clearly tries to check that learners have understood a particular piece of language, but does little to develop techniques that can be transferred to other texts. Currently, then, there is a growing concern to ensure that practice is given in activating these generalizable skills that are believed to represent underlying (even universal) processes for all language users. Thus the reading skill, for instance, as we shall see in Chapter 6, is seen in terms of a number of different 'subskills', such as reading for general information, scanning, skimming and so on. These subskills or strategies can then be used as the basis for specific tasks and exercises in a lesson. It is important to note that 'comprehension' is therefore no longer just a way of doing more grammar practice using a text, but opens up a perspective on psychological text-processing mechanisms.

Let us look at how some current materials make use of this perspective. The subskills of comprehension most frequently found are

1. Reading/listening for the general idea, or 'gist'. In relation to reading, this is sometimes referred to as 'skimming'.
2. Looking for specific items of information (or 'scanning' for details).
3. Predicting or anticipating what is coming next.
4. Making inferences or deductions when a 'fact' cannot simply be identified.

These skills are practised through a number of exercises and techniques. For example, we find various activities to be carried out before reading; activities that require different groups in the class to share different information; questions in the middle of a text to help with anticipation; and true–false questions that require learners to combine two or more parts of a text before they can answer. Overall we can observe that different kinds of texts and different reasons for reading or listening can be allowed for in the methodology used. The aim is not primarily to ensure that every word and every grammatical structure are understood – there are more efficient ways of doing this – but to equip learners with useful and transferable skills.

Finally, we should comment on a further dimension of the concept of a 'skill'. The kinds of strategies discussed above have developed from general work in the psychology of language processing which need not necessarily be applied to questions of language learning. Most teachers are also concerned with the conscious skills their students need in order to learn as efficiently as possible. With this in mind, we find that increasing attention is being paid to two related areas. The first of these is usually referred to under the heading of 'study skills', the second of 'learning strategies'.

Study skills can be thought of as a range of learnable and practical techniques that help students to adopt more effective methods of study. In the area of English language teaching known as English for Academic Purposes (EAP), the concept is very well developed, particularly for students studying their own specialism through the medium of English where a mastery of a large number of academic-related skills is very important. In terms of general English coursebooks, study skills have a more restricted scope. Take the skill of using a monolingual dictionary. Learners are taught, for example, to understand the different parts of a dictionary entry, to select relevant information from a longer entry, and to recognize the significance of word parts, especially prefixes. Other skills include keeping a vocabulary book containing definitions and examples in English as well as (or instead of) the mother tongue equivalent, and sometimes the wider reference skills involved in using the different sections – contents page, index and so on – of a textbook.

The second area – learning strategies – owes much to research that analyses the components of successful language learning and offers definitions of a 'good language learner'. 'Success' is thought to be based on such factors as checking one's performance in a language, being willing to guess and to 'take risks' with both comprehension and production, seeking out opportunities to use strategies, developing efficient memorizing strategies, and many others. Many current materials draw on this research, and incorporate practice in 'good learner' strategies across all language skills, often asking learners to be explicit about their own approach to learning so as to be able to evaluate its efficiency for them.

The available literature on learning strategies has grown enormously in recent years, covering strategies and skills, methods for researching strategy use, universality and individuality, strategy 'teachability' and so on. Clear discussion of various aspects of strategy research of particular interest to the language teacher can be found in Oxford and Lee (2008). Griffiths (2008b) provides an extensive historical overview of attempts to classify and define strategies and investigates their commonality.

There has only been space here to look briefly at approaches to materials design drawn from various aspects of the literature on the psychology of language learning. We conclude the chapter by commenting on a rather different focus altogether.

2.6 Related Developments

When we reviewed the claims of current global coursebooks in Section 2.3 above, we noted the influence of changes that have been taking place around English Language Teaching.

Firstly, we are seeing a dramatic spread of English as a lingua franca or world Englishes (Graddol, 2006, 2010; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011). English as a lingua franca is currently seen as a common currency, as it were, to enable communication at global level, be it face to face or through digital means. As Graddol (2006, 2010) predicts, the perception of the significance of English as a lingua franca may be different in years to come, indeed various world Englishes or different languages may claim dominant status. At the moment, however, English seems to be viewed as one of the necessary skills that can lead to social, academic and economic success. Many countries seem to have adopted or be interested in adopting Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (i.e. a cross-curricular approach for learning content through a target language) and/or Teaching English to Young or Very Young Learners to enhance English language education. This situation challenges the foundations of traditional views of 'what constitutes good English'. As Jenkins et al. (2011: 284) put it:

> From an ELF perspective, then, once NNSEs are no longer learners of English, they are not the 'failed native speakers' of EFL, but – more often – highly skilled communicators who make use of their multilingual resources in ways not available to monolingual NSEs, and who are found to prioritize successful communication over narrow notions of 'correctness' in ways that NSEs, with their stronger attachment to their native English, may find more challenging.
>
> NNSEs may, for example, code-switch in order to promote solidarity and/or project their own cultural identity; or they may accommodate to their interlocutors from a wide range of first language backgrounds in ways that result in an 'error' in native English (Jenkins et al., 2011: 284).
>
> *NB*
> *ELF: English as lingua franca*
> *NSE: Native Speaker of English*
> *NNSE: Non-Native Speakers of English*

This new perspective of English as Lingua Franca affects potentially all sorts of aspects of English Language Teaching including assessment. We explore this issue in more detail in Chapter 8 in relation to speaking skills.

Secondly, related to English as Lingua Franca (Jenkins et al., 2011) or World Englishes (Kirkpatrick, 2010), is the issue of intercultural sensitivity. Earlier in this chapter we have discussed how CLT, which originated in Western Europe under the initiative of the Council of Europe, received criticism as the cause of intercultural conflict during the implementation of its

materials and methodology in many parts of the world (see Chapter 11 on this issue; see also Holliday, 1994, 2005). The problem may have more to do with the way CLT was implemented rather than inherent defects of the approach. The importance of intercultural sensitivity and accommodation is becoming important in this globalized world.

Lastly, the global development of World Englishes and the demands for English as a Lingua Franca sits alongside the diversification of learners and learning contexts. We see at least two interesting issues emerging. One is concerted efforts to establish a system, as in the case of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework. The other is the necessity for teachers including those in training to be able to evaluate, adapt and develop their own approaches in the form of principled materials based on their own judgement and experience.

All the global coursebooks we sampled in Section 2.3 in this chapter use the levels specified by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). This framework was the product of collaboration to ensure the mobility of people and ideas within the member countries of the Council of Europe. The mission of the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe is to improve the provision of language education and to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and plurilingualism. CEFR is a tool for the planning and assessment of language learning so that qualifications can be mutually recognized and policies can be coordinated. It has become widely accepted as the standard for grading an individual's language proficiency across European languages (Council of Europe, 2001: 24; updates on their website at http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp). A comparison with various other examination levels can be obtained from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_European_Framework_of_Reference_for_Languages. What is remarkable about CEFR is that the syllabus, methods and assessment are designed to cohere with each other. Methods and assessment specifications in CEFR are written as general suggestions and recommendations. The specification allows methodologists and examination developers to seek ways for the optimal realization of ideals. It would be interesting to see if the common yardstick expressed in terms of skill capabilities can usefully be applied to teachers and learners in different contexts.

The case of CEFR may seem like a distant dream to teachers working on their own in resource-poor conditions. With diversified teaching contexts and learners with different variables, teachers are more likely to face a situation where there are no ready-made materials. Chapter 14 discusses various approaches to teachers' own professional development. Tomlinson (2003a) provides useful chapters for those teachers who are interested in finding out the principles and procedures of materials evaluation, adaptation and development. The section named 'Beyond Approaches and Methods' in Chapter 19 of Richards and Rodgers (2001) gives useful advice in developing teacher autonomy.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter firstly considered the contributions of Communicative Approaches to English Language Teaching. It then discussed a number of important growth areas in materials since the 'communicative revolution' of the 1970s. We looked first at the concept of a multi-component syllabus, where a number of components are interwoven, touched on the lexical syllabus and examined the current focus on TBL. We then commented on the increasing interest in various areas of the psychology of language learning and language use, both in the characteristics of individuals and in underlying processes and strategies. Clearly not all coursebooks incorporate all the elements that have been covered here, and it would probably not be appropriate for them to do so. They are design principles, and cannot have equal and universal applicability: as we have seen, different teaching situations have different requirements and expectations. The next two chapters in this part of the book will discuss procedures for evaluating and adapting general design criteria for specific contexts. The final chapter in Part I will look at how teachers can take advantage of various technologies in their classrooms.

> If you were to design the syllabus, materials and methods for a specific course, what would your syllabus look like? What kinds of methods or approaches are you going to use? Can you design a unit based on your syllabus?

2.8 Further Reading

1 Griffiths, C. (ed) (2008a): *Lessons from Good Language Learners*. This provides an overview of strategy research and its applicability to teaching.
2 Lightbown, P. and N. Spada (2006): *How Languages Are Learned*, 3rd edition. A good introductory book for prospective teachers to understand the field of second language learning.
3 Ortega, L. (2009): *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. A readable book on the field of second language acquisition.
4 Tomlinson, B. (ed) (2003): *Developing Materials for Language Teaching*. Provides a useful collection of chapters that will guide teachers in evaluating, adapting and developing materials.
5 Willis, D. and J. Willis (2007): *Doing Task-based Teaching*. Contains definitions, discussion of principles and procedures, and many practical examples.

3

Evaluating ELT Materials

3.1 Introduction

The ability to evaluate teaching materials effectively is a very important professional activity for all English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, and in this chapter we shall examine the reasons why teachers need to evaluate materials in the first instance. We shall then move on to discuss the criteria that can be used to evaluate materials by suggesting a working model which we hope will be an effective one to use for teachers working in a variety of contexts. The model that we suggest is based on the view that it is useful for us as teachers to perform an external evaluation of materials first of all in order to gain an overview of the organizational principles involved. After this we move on to a detailed internal evaluation of the materials to see how far the materials in question match up to what the author claims as well as to the aims and objectives of a given teaching programme.

3.2 The Context of Evaluation

Let us look at why we need to evaluate materials in the first place. For the term evaluation, we take Tomlinson's (2003c) definition: 'Materials evaluation is a procedure that involves measuring the value (or potential value) of a set of learning materials'. It is probably reasonable to assume that there are very few teachers who do not use published course materials at some stage

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in their teaching career. Many of us find that it is something that we do very regularly in our professional lives. We may wish at this stage to make a distinction between teaching situations where 'open-market' materials are chosen on the one hand, and where a Ministry of Education (or some similar body) produces materials that are subsequently passed on to the teacher for classroom use on the other.

The nature of the evaluation process in each of these scenarios will probably differ as well. In the first type of situation teachers may have quite a large amount of choice in the materials they select, perhaps being able to liaise freely with colleagues and a Director of Studies/Principal with respect to this material. However, there are many situations around the world where teachers in fact get a very limited choice or perhaps no choice at all, and this second scenario mentioned above may well obtain for teachers who are 'handed' materials by a Ministry or a Director and have to cope as best they can within this framework. This situation will more than likely involve teachers in an understanding of why the materials have been written in such a way and how they can make effective use of them in the classroom. For the vast majority of teachers working in the first situation, that of having a good deal of choice in the selection of appropriate materials, writing their own materials can be very time consuming and not necessarily cost-effective; hence the need to be able to discriminate effectively between all the coursebooks on the market. Today there is a wealth of EFL material available, with literally hundreds of new, commercially available titles appearing every year in English-speaking countries. Wider choice means more need for evaluation prior to selection. In response to such a demand, there are some journals which have regular reviews of recently published materials (e.g. *ELT Journal*, *Modern English Teacher*, *English Teaching Professional*, *TESOL Journal* and *RELC Journal*). *Modern English Teacher* includes a section called 'A Book I've Used', which consists of reviews by practitioners reporting their post-use evaluation of coursebooks. Most of the reviews are about specific textbooks or courses, but the *ELT Journal* sometimes includes survey reviews of a number of current textbooks of the same sub-genre (e.g. Tomlinson et al., 2001; Masuhara et al., 2008).

Another fairly typical factor to consider is that teachers or course organizers are often under considerable professional and financial pressure to select a coursebook for an ELT programme that will then become the textbook for years to come. Added to this pressure is the fact that in many contexts, materials are often seen as being the core of a particular programme and are often the most visible representation of what happens in the classroom. Thornbury advocates teacher independence from coursebooks; for instance, writing their own materials (Thornbury 2000, 2005; Meddings and Thornbury, 2009), but the reality for many is that the book may be the only choice open to them. The evaluation of current materials therefore merits serious consideration as an inappropriate choice may waste funds and time, not to

mention the demotivating effect that it would have on students and possibly other colleagues.

For some teachers, the selection of a good textbook can be valuable, particularly in contexts where the assimilation of stimulating, authentic materials can be difficult to organize. Other teachers working with materials given to them by a Ministry or similar body will clearly have some different issues to contend with. They may, for example, have to work with materials they find very limiting, and will probably need to resort to adapting these materials as best they can to suit the needs of their particular context. (See Chapter 4 for a full discussion of materials adaptation.) Even though such teachers will not have to evaluate to adopt materials, they may well be interested in evaluation as a useful process in its own right, giving insight into the organizational principles of the materials and helping them to keep up with developments in the field. This in turn can help the teacher to focus on realistic ways of adapting the materials to a particular group of learners where pertinent. Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) explain how evaluation criteria can be developed by teachers articulating their beliefs on language learning for their students within their contexts and then using them together with learning principles from the literature for the evaluation, adaptation and development of materials. Masuhara (2006) uses an example of an adaptation process that involves the use of self-developed evaluation criteria. She demonstrates how teachers can deepen their critical and creative awareness required for developing principled materials through adaptation.

> We have assumed that as teachers we all use published teaching materials. What do you feel are the reasons for this? What are teaching materials expected to achieve and how might they do it? Could we ever teach a foreign language without published materials? Is it ever possible for everything we need for a course to be contained in one textbook?

No textbook or set of materials is likely to be perfect, and there does not seem as yet an agreed set of criteria or procedures for evaluation (see critical reviews of the evaluation literature in Tomlinson, 2012a; Mukundan and Ahour, 2010). This is inevitable 'as the needs, objectives, backgrounds and preferred styles of the participants differ from context to context' (Tomlinson, 2003c: 15). We nonetheless need some model for hard-pressed teachers or course planners that will be brief, practical to use and yet comprehensive in its coverage of criteria, given that everyone in the field will need to evaluate materials at some time or other. We hope to do this by offering a model that distinguishes the purpose behind the evaluation – be it to keep up to date with current developments or to adopt/select materials for a given course.

As Mukundan and Ahour (2010) argue, evaluation procedures should not be too demanding in terms of time and expertise and must be realistically useful to teachers. For those who are interested in analysing the literature on evaluation, Tomlinson (2012a) provides a critical review covering the period from the 1970s to the present day.

In the first instance, teachers may be interested in the evaluation exercise for its own sake. For example, we may wish to review all the materials that have come out during a given period of time and require some criteria with which to assess these materials (see Masuhara *et al.*, 2008 for an example of this sort of evaluation for adult courses). In doing this, we may of course find materials suitable for adoption/selection at some future date. For teachers wishing to select, however, there is no point in doing a full evaluation for selection purposes if a preliminary evaluation can show that those materials will be of little use for a particular group.

We thus examine criteria in two stages; an external evaluation that offers a brief overview of the materials from the outside (cover, introduction, table of contents), which is then followed by a closer and more detailed internal evaluation. We cannot be absolutely certain as to what criteria and constraints are actually operational in ELT contexts worldwide and some teachers might argue that textbook criteria often are very local. We may cite examples of teachers who are involved in the evaluation process. One teacher from a secondary school in Europe is able to 'trial' a coursebook with her students for two weeks before officially adopting it. Some secondary school teachers in Japan team-teach their classes with native speakers and are able to evaluate materials jointly with them. However, as we pointed out in Chapter 1, we are attempting to look at areas where our professional framework shares similar interests and concerns, and with this in mind, the criteria that we shall examine here will be as comprehensive as possible for the majority of ELT situations on a worldwide basis. Of course the evaluation process is never static; when materials are deemed appropriate for a particular course after a preliminary evaluation, their ultimate success or failure may only be determined after a certain amount of classroom use (while- and post-use evaluation).

1 In Chapter 1 we looked at the educational framework in which we all work. With reference to this, you might like to think about who actually evaluates materials in your educational system; that is, what is the role of published materials and therefore the role of evaluation? Do teachers do it (by themselves, jointly with other teachers/students?), or does the Ministry of Education choose or write the materials for you?

(*Continued*)

2 You might also like to think about the criteria you used to select the ELT materials you are using at the moment. Or, if you did not select the materials, think about the criteria you would use. Discuss your answers with a colleague if at all possible. Did you select the same criteria? Note down your answers because we shall refer to them again at the end of this chapter to see how far the criteria you mention overlap with ours.

3.3 The External Evaluation

In this central stage of the model we have included criteria that will provide a comprehensive, external overview of how the materials have been organized. Our aim is basically that of examining the organization of the materials as stated explicitly by the author/publisher by looking at

- the 'blurb', or the claims made on the cover of the teacher's/students' book
- the introduction and table of contents

that should enable the evaluator to assess what Tomlinson (2003c: 16) calls analysis in that 'it asks questions about what the materials contain, what they aim to achieve and what they ask learners to do' (Littlejohn, 2011 makes a similar distinction). We also find it useful to scan the table of contents page in that it often represents a 'bridge' between the external claim made for the materials and what will actually be presented 'inside' the materials themselves. At this stage we need to consider why the materials have been produced. Presumably because the author/publisher feels that there is a gap in the existing market that these materials are intended to fill: so we shall have to investigate this further to see whether the objectives have been clearly spelt out. To illustrate what we mean, here is an example of one such 'blurb' taken from a well-known EFL textbook published in 2012:

> . . . an integrated skills series which is designed to offer flexibility with different teaching and learning styles. Fun for learners to use and easy for teachers to adapt . . .
>
> - Fully integrated grammar, skills and lexical syllabuses provide a balanced learning experience
> - Engaging topics motivate students and offer greater personalization
> - A wide range of approaches exploit different learning styles
> - Clearly structured grammar presentations are reinforced with extensive practice
> - Contextualized vocabulary focuses on authentic real-world language

- A variety of listening and speaking activities develop learning fluency
- Learner training throughout the Student's Book and Workbook maximizes skills development.

It appears that this textbook is aimed at intermediate level students with different learning styles and different levels of motivation who will benefit from learner training. This textbook also seems to be designed for flexible use and to offer an integrated learning experience covering grammar, lexis and skills. Later, when the evaluator investigates the organization of the materials she will have to ascertain whether or not this is really the case.

Let us see the types of claim that can be made for materials in the introduction. The following example is part of the introduction taken from a recent EFL series. We have italicized certain terms and key concepts that we feel need further investigation:

- Tasks and activities are designed to have a *real communicative purpose* rather than simply being an excuse to practise specific features.
- We have placed a special emphasis on representing *an accurate multicultural view of English as it is spoken today.* Many courses still represent the English-speaking world as being largely UK- and US-based. Considering the fact that there are now more non-native English speakers than native, we have also included a variety of accents from a wide range of countries and cultures.
- Throughout the Student's Book, *learner autonomy* is promoted via clear cross-referencing to features in the Workbook and elsewhere. Here students can find all the help and extra practice they need.

We can deduce from this that the claims made for the materials by the author/publisher can be quite strong and will need critical evaluation in order to see if they can be justified. From the 'blurb' and the introduction we can normally expect comments on some/all of the following:

- The intended audience. We need to ascertain who the materials are targeted at, be it teenagers aged 13 and upwards or adults, for example. The topics that will motivate one audience will probably not be suitable for another.
- The proficiency level. Most materials claim to aim at a particular level, such as false beginner or lower intermediate. This will obviously require investigation as it could vary widely depending on the educational context.
- The context in which the materials are to be used. We need to establish whether the materials are for teaching general learners or perhaps for teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). If the latter, what degree of specialist subject knowledge is assumed in the materials?
- How the language has been presented and organized into teachable units/lessons. The materials will contain a number of units/lessons, and their

respective lengths need to be borne in mind when deciding how and if they will fit into a given educational programme. Some materials will provide guidelines here such as 'contains 15 units, providing material for 90–120 hours of teaching'. In other words, the author expects that between 6 and 8 hours will be required to cover the material.

- The author's views on language and methodology and the relationship between the language, the learning process and the learner.

In many cases the date of publication of the materials will be of importance here. For materials written over the last 20 years or so designed to fit into a multi-component syllabus or corpus-based lexical syllabus, we might expect the author to make claims about including quite a large amount of learner involvement in the learning process. This will require investigation. For example, the materials may claim to help the learner in an understanding of what is involved in language learning and contain various activities and tasks to develop this.

Look at the 'blurb' and the introduction to the materials you typically use. Also look back at the 'blurbs' we examined in Chapter 2. What kinds of information do they give you?

To give an overview of some typical 'blurbs', we have selected a range of examples taken from EFL coursebooks. We may notice how certain 'key' words and expressions come up time and time again.

As you are reading them, note down some of the claims that are made for the materials that you would want to investigate further in the next (internal evaluation) stage.

1 'It enables you to learn English as it is used in our globalized world, to learn through English using information – rich topics and texts, and to learn about English as an international language'.
2 '. . . offers a comprehensive range of interactive digital components for use in class, out of class and even on the move. These include extra listening, video material and online practice'.
3 'Natural, real-world grammar and vocabulary help students to succeed in social, professional and academic settings'.
4 '. . . is a goals-based course for adults, which prepares learners to use English independently for global communication'.

When evaluating materials, it is useful to keep a note of these claims, which we can then refer back to later in the process. Other factors to take into account at this external stage are as follows:

- Are the materials to be used as the main 'core' course or to be supplementary to it? This will help to evaluate their effectiveness in a given context as well as the total cost. It may be that sheer economics will dissuade the evaluator from selecting these particular materials, especially if they are not going to be the core part of the course.
- Is a teacher's book in print and locally available? It is also worth considering whether it is sufficiently clear for non-native speaker teachers to use. Some teacher's books offer general teaching hints while others have very prescribed programmes of how to teach the material including lesson plans. Non-availability of the teacher's book may make the student edition difficult to work with.
- Is a vocabulary list/index included? Having these included in the materials may prove to be very useful for learners in some contexts, particularly where the learner might be doing a lot of individualized and/or out-of-class work. Some materials explicitly state that they are offering this: 'student's book with an introductory unit, 40 double-page units, 4 self-check units, . . . an interaction appendix, a vocabulary appendix with phonetic spelling, a list of irregular verbs, and a listening appendix', and the claims made are worthy of investigation. The table of contents may sometimes be seen as a 'bridge' between the external and internal stages of the evaluation and can often reveal useful information about the organization of the materials, giving information about vocabulary study, skills to be covered, additional interactive digital materials and so on, possibly with some indication as to how much class time the author thinks should be devoted to a particular unit. Consequently, it is often useful to see how explicit it is.
- What visual material does the book contain (photographs, charts, diagrams) and is it there for cosmetic value only or is it integrated into the text? Glossy prints in the published materials seem to make the book appear more attractive. It is worth examining if the visual material serves any learning purpose (see Hill, 2003 for an example of an evaluation of visual materials); that is, in the case of a photograph or a diagram, is it incorporated into a task so that the learner has to comment on it/interpret it in some way?
- Is the layout and presentation clear or cluttered? Some textbooks are researched and written well, but are so cluttered with information on every page that teachers/learners find them practically unusable. Hence a judicious balance between the two needs to be found. Tomlinson (2003c) suggests that we also include clarity of instructions and stipulate which activity goes with which instruction as part of the overall concept of the layout of the materials. The potential durability of the materials is another

important factor in teaching contexts where materials may be selected for several groups over a period of years. Factors such as paper quality and binding need to be assessed.
- Is the material too culturally biased or specific?
- Do the materials represent minority groups and/or women in a negative way? Do they present a 'balanced' picture of a particular country/society? It is possible that the content of some materials will cause offence to some learners. The investigation by Bao (2006) into teaching materials shows how textbooks may be 'biased' in subtle, and in some cases not so subtle, ways in their representation of ethnic background.
- What is the cost of the inclusion of digital materials (e.g. CD, DVD, interactive games, quizzes and downloadable materials from the web)? How essential are they to ensure language acquisition and development?
- The inclusion of tests in the teaching materials (diagnostic, progress, achievement); would they be useful for your particular learners?

During this external evaluation stage we have examined the claims made for the materials by the author/publisher with respect to the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context and presentation of language items, whether the materials are to be core or supplementary, the role and availability of a teacher's book, the inclusion of a vocabulary list/index, the table of contents, the use of visuals and presentation, the cultural specificity of the materials, the provision of digital materials and inclusion of tests.

After completing this external evaluation, and having funds and a potential group of learners in mind, we can arrive at a decision as to the materials' appropriacy for adoption/selection purposes. If our evaluation shows the materials to be potentially appropriate and worthy of a more detailed inspection, then we can continue with our internal or more detailed evaluation. If not, then we can 'exit' at this stage and start to evaluate other materials if we so wish, as figure 3.1 illustrates.

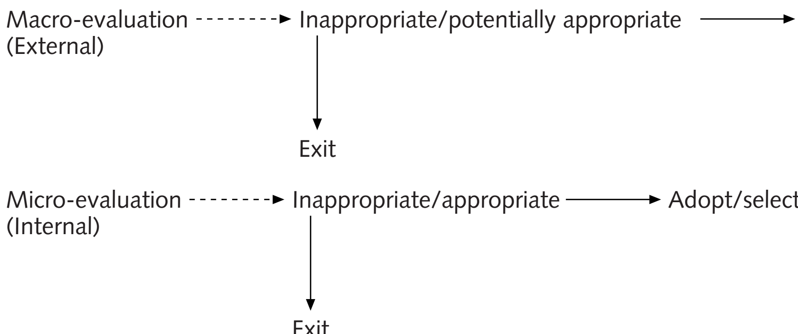

Figure 3.1 An overview of the materials evaluation process.

3.4 The Internal Evaluation

We now continue to the next stage of our evaluation procedure by performing an in-depth investigation into the materials. The essential issue at this stage is for us to analyse the extent to which the aforementioned factors in the external evaluation stage match up with the internal consistency and organization of the materials as stated by the author/publisher – for, as we saw in the previous section, strong claims are often made for these materials. In order to perform an effective internal inspection of the materials, we need to examine at least two units (preferably more) of a book or set of materials to investigate the following factors:

- The presentation of the skills in the materials. We may want to investigate if all the language skills are covered, in what proportion, and if this proportion is appropriate to the context in which we are working. Are the skills treated discretely or in an integrated way? The author's presentation and treatment of the skills may conflict with the way in which we wish to teach – if the skills are presented too much in isolation, for example. If they are integrated, is this integration natural? (See Chapter 10 for a discussion of integrated skills.)
- The grading and sequencing of the materials. This criterion is an important one and merits some investigation as it is not always patently clear what the principle is. Some materials are quite 'steeply' graded while others claim to have no grading at all.

  In this example the materials are based on a lexical frequency count: 'The course is in three levels, each covering about 100 hours of classwork, and each level is complete in itself. Together they cover the most useful patterns of 2500 of the most frequently used words in English. Book 1 covers the first 700 of these . . . .' Sometimes the grading of the materials will be within the unit, other materials will be graded across units allowing a progression of difficulty in a linear fashion. Other materials claim to be modular by grouping a set of units at approximately the same level. In cases where there is virtually no grading at all – 'Most of the units do not have to be taught in any particular order . . .' – we have to investigate the extent to which we think this is true, and how such a book would suit our learners.
- Where reading/'discourse' skills are involved, is there much in the way of appropriate text beyond the sentence? As teachers we sometimes find that materials provide too much emphasis on skills development and not enough opportunity for students to learn to use those skills on extended reading passages.
- Where listening skills are involved, are recordings 'authentic' or artificial? We need to ascertain whether or not dialogues have been specially written, thereby missing the essential features of spontaneous speech.

- Do speaking materials incorporate what we know about the nature of real interaction or are artificial dialogues offered instead?
- The relationship of tests and exercises to (1) learner needs and (2) what is taught by the course material. Where these are included as part of the materials, we need to see if they are appropriate in context.
- Do you feel that the material is suitable for different learning styles? Is a claim and provision made for self-study and is such a claim justified? With the growth of interest in independent learning and learner autonomy, many materials will claim that 'self-study modes' are also possible. From the knowledge that we have of our learners, we will need to assess this particular claim.
- Are the materials engaging to motivate both students and teachers alike, or would you foresee a student/teacher mismatch? Some materials may seem attractive for the teacher but would not be very motivating for the learners. A balance therefore has to be sought. At this stage it is also useful to consider how the materials may guide and 'frame' teacher–learner interaction and the teacher–learner relationship. Rubdy (2003: 45) proposes three broad categories that are essential for evaluation:
  1. The learners' needs, goals and pedagogical requirements
  2. The teacher's skills, abilities, theories and beliefs
  3. The thinking underlying the materials writer's presentation of the content and approach to teaching and learning respectively.

In the internal evaluation stage we have suggested that as evaluators we need to examine the following criteria: the treatment and presentation of the skills, the sequencing and grading of the materials, the type of reading, listening, speaking and writing materials contained in the materials, appropriacy of tests and exercises, self-study provision and teacher–learner 'balance' in use of the materials.

3.5 The Overall Evaluation

At this stage we hope that we may now make an overall assessment as to the suitability of the materials by considering the following parameters:

1. The usability factor. How far the materials could be integrated into a particular syllabus as 'core' or supplementary. For example, we may need to select materials that suit a particular syllabus or set of objectives that we have to work to. The materials may or may not be able to do this.
2. The generalizability factor. Is there a restricted use of 'core' features that make the materials more generally useful? Perhaps not all the material will be useful for a given individual or group but some parts might be. This factor can in turn lead us to consider the next point.

3 The adaptability factor. Can parts be added/extracted/used in another context/modified for local circumstances? There may be some very good qualities in the materials but, for example, we may judge the listening material or the reading passages to be unsuitable and in need of modification. If we think that adaptation is feasible, we may choose to do this. (Refer to Chapter 4 for a full discussion of materials adaptation.)
4 The flexibility factor. How rigid is the sequencing and grading? Can the materials be entered at different points or used in different ways? In some cases, materials that are not so steeply graded offer a measure of flexibility that permits them to be integrated easily into various types of syllabus.

The following remarks illustrate the types of comments that teachers have made to us regarding the suitability of certain published ELT materials for their teaching situations:

> There is a wide variety of reading and listening material available but the speaking material is not very good and is too accuracy based. I would therefore have to add something in terms of fluency. The book is usable and could be adapted, but given the cost factor I would prefer to look for something else.
>
> The materials are very good. I was looking for something that would present the skills in an integrated way and would make a connection with the real lives of my students. I checked the 'blurb', the table of contents and made a detailed inspection of several units. On the whole the author's claims are realized in the materials. Consequently, I could use this as a core course with very few adaptations.

Thus, when all the criteria that we have discussed have been analysed, we can then reach our own conclusions regarding the suitability of the materials for specified groups or individuals, as the aim of this final stage is intended to enable the evaluator to decide the extent to which the materials have realized their stated objectives. Even after the internal evaluation we still have the option of not selecting the materials if we so wish. (Refer back to figure 3.1.) This is usually avoided, however, if we undertake a thorough internal inspection of the material outlined above. But once materials have been deemed appropriate for use on a particular course, we must bear in mind that their ultimate success or failure can only be determined after trying them in the classroom with real learners. Tomlinson (2003c) discusses the often overlooked areas of while- and post-use evaluation. While-use evaluation involves trying to evaluate the value of materials while using them through teaching them and/or observing them being taught (see Chapter 13 for a full discussion). Jolly and Bolitho (2011) describe case studies in which students' feedback during lessons provided useful evaluation of materials and led to improvements of the materials during and after the lessons. Tomlinson

(2003c) suggests various while- and post-use evaluation questions. Post-use evaluation is the least explored but is potentially the most informative as it can provide information on not only the short-term effects but also those of durable learning. Such while- and post-use evaluation would also have the advantage of enabling teachers to reflect on their practice, which links very closely with the small-scale action research notion that has gained wide currency in the last decade. (Refer to Chapter 14 for a full discussion of the teacher.)

1 At the beginning of the chapter we asked you to note down some criteria you would use to evaluate materials. Now refer back to those criteria. How far do they match the ones we have mentioned? Are any different?
2 Now take a coursebook or set of ELT materials unfamiliar to you and put into operation the criteria we have examined in this chapter.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter we have suggested that materials evaluation can be carried out in two complementary stages, which we have called the external and internal stages. We then outlined and commented upon the essential criteria necessary to make pertinent judgements with reference to ELT materials in order to make a preliminary selection. We suggested that this particular model should be flexible enough to be used in ELT contexts worldwide, as it avoids long checklists of data and can operate according to the purpose the evaluator has in evaluating the materials in the first place. We also suggested that materials evaluation is one part of a complex process and that materials, once selected, can only be judged successful after classroom implementation and feedback.

3.7 Further Reading

The following contain useful information on materials evaluation:

1 McGrath, I. (2002): *Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching*.
2 Mukundan, J. and T. Ahour (2010): A review of textbook evaluation checklists across four decades.
3 Tomlinson, B. (2003c): Materials evaluation.

4 Adapting Materials

4.1 Introduction

The main concern of all the chapters in this part of the book has been to examine the principles on which current teaching materials and classroom methodology are built. This chapter looks at some of the factors to be considered in the process of adapting teaching materials within particular classroom environments where there is a perceived need for change and manipulation of certain design features. There is clearly a direct relationship between evaluating and adapting materials, both in terms of the reasons for doing so and the criteria used: this chapter can therefore usefully be seen as forming a pair with Chapter 3. We shall first set the scene for a discussion of adaptation by looking at ways in which the concept can be understood. We shall then try to enumerate some of the reasons why teachers might need to adapt their teaching material. Finally, in the main part of the chapter, these reasons will be examined in terms of the procedures typically used in adaptation.

4.2 The Context of Adaptation

A straightforward starting point for considering the relationship between evaluation and adaptation is to think of the terms 'adopting' and 'adapting'. We saw in the previous chapter that a decision about whether a particular coursebook should be used in a specific teaching situation can be taken on

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the basis of a number of evaluative criteria. These criteria, formulated as a set of questions to ask about the materials, provide answers that will lead to acceptance or perhaps rejection. For instance, typical questions concerned aspects of 'skills', different ways in which language content is handled, and the authenticity of both language and tasks. However, a decision in favour of adoption is an initial step, and is unlikely to mean that no further action needs to be taken beyond that of presenting the material directly to the learners. It is more realistic to assume that, however careful the design of the materials and the evaluation process, some changes will have to be made at some level in most teaching contexts. As Tomlinson points out:

> Most materials, whether they be written for a global market, for an institution or even for a class, aim to satisfy the needs and wants of an idealized group of target learners who share similar needs and levels of proficiency . . . . No matter how good the materials are, they will not by themselves manage to cater to the different needs, wants, learning styles, attitudes, cultural norms and experiences of individual learners. (Tomlinson, 2006: 1)

Adaptation, then, is a process subsequent to, and dependent on, adoption. Furthermore, whereas adoption is concerned with whole coursebooks, adaptation concerns the parts that make up that whole.

An important perspective on evaluation – though of course not the only one – is to see it as a management issue whereby educational decision-makers formulate policy and work out strategies for budgeting and for the purchasing and allocation of resources. In this sense, teachers do not always have direct involvement: they may well influence decisions about whole textbooks only if they are part of a Ministry of Education team concerned with trialling or writing materials, for example. Others, perhaps, may be invited to make suggestions and comments as part of a corporate process of materials selection, but even then, the final decision will be taken at a managerial point in the school hierarchy. A far more widespread, and necessary, activity among teachers is therefore that of adaptation, because the smaller-scale process of changing or adjusting the various parts of a coursebook is, as we shall see, more closely related to the reality of dealing with learners in the dynamic environment of the classroom.

This said, let us remind ourselves of another major and persuasive reason for evaluating textbooks even in a context where teachers have little direct say in decision-making. Evaluation as an exercise can help us develop insights into different views of language and learning and into the principles of materials design, and is something we do against the background of a knowledge of our learners and of the demands and potential of our teaching situation. It is difficult to see how the dependent activity of adaptation can take place without this kind of understanding – how can we change something unless we are clear about what it is we are changing?

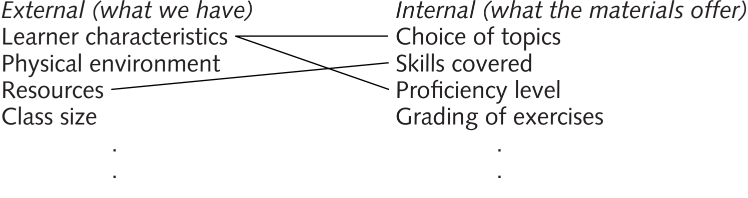

Figure 4.1 Matching external and internal criteria.

With this wider perspective in mind, and as a starting point for thinking about the process of adaptation, it will be useful to extend a little the criteria put forward in Chapter 3 under the headings of 'external' and 'internal' (see figure 4.1). External factors comprise both the overt claims made about materials and, more significantly for the present chapter, the characteristics of particular teaching situations. Internal factors are concerned with content, organization and consistency. For instance, teaching materials may be coherent but not totally applicable in context. In this case, internal factors are acceptable, but there is an external problem. Alternatively, materials may be largely appropriate for the teaching situation, so external factors are met, but show signs of an inconsistent organization – an internal problem. Thus, to adapt materials is to try to bring together these individual elements under each heading in figure 4.1, or combinations of them, so that they match each other as closely as possible.

Madsen and Bowen refer to this matching as the principle of 'congruence': 'Effective adaptation is a matter of achieving "congruence" . . . . The good teacher is . . . constantly striving for congruence among several related variables: teaching materials, methodology, students, course objectives, the target language and its context, and the teacher's own personality and teaching style' (Madsen and Bowen, 1978: ix). This view is echoed in more recent publications on adaptation (McGrath, 2002; Islam and Mares, 2003; Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2004). McGrath points out that 'non-compatibility' is inherent when the materials are not written for particular teaching and learning contexts (e.g. learner needs and wants, syllabus). He also argues for the benefits of adaptation: appropriate and relevant adapted materials are likely to increase learner motivation and therefore contribute to enhanced learning. Tomlinson and Masuhara point out that adapting materials can not only contribute to the learners' learning but also to the teachers' enjoyment of teaching.

The final point in this section is frequently overlooked, perhaps because it is so much a part of our everyday professional practice that we are unaware of its implications. Adaptation tends to be thought of as a rather formal

process in which the teacher makes a decision about, say, an exercise that needs changing, and then writes out a revised version for the class. In fact, although the concept of adaptation clearly includes this kind of procedure, it is also broader than this. Adapted material does not necessarily need to be written down or made permanent. It can be quite transitory: we might think of the response to an individual's learning behaviour at a particular moment, for instance, when the teacher rewords – and by doing so adapts – a textbook explanation of a language point that has not been understood. The recognition of the short-term needs of a group may similarly require teachers to 'think on their feet' by introducing extra material, such as a grammatical example or some idiomatic language, from their own repertoire in the real-time framework of a class. Madsen and Bowen make the point clearly:

> the good teacher is constantly adapting. He adapts when he adds an example not found in the book or when he telescopes an assignment by having students prepare 'only the even-numbered items'. He adapts even when he refers to an exercise covered earlier, or when he introduces a supplementary picture . . . . While a conscientious author tries to anticipate questions that may be raised by his readers, the teacher can respond not merely to verbal questions . . . but even to the raised eyebrows of his students. (Madsen and Bowen, 1978: vii)

To focus only on these kinds of activities would obviously not give us a complete picture of the concept of adaptation, because it would be necessary at some stage to extend and systematize its possibilities. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the task of adapting is not an entirely new skill that teachers must learn.

1. Before you read on, consider the materials you use most frequently: to what extent do you feel they need, in principle, to be adapted? Try to note down the main aspects of change or modification you think are necessary or at least desirable.
2. It will also be useful to think about adaptation from the point of view of the source of your materials. Are they commercially produced and widely used internationally; are they designed at national level by your Ministry of Education; or are they perhaps more localized, produced by a team of teachers for a particular area or school?
3. If possible, share your comments with other teachers. You could also discuss the scope you have for adapting materials – do you have time? Is it acceptable to do so in your teaching situation? Are you required to adapt?

In this part of the chapter, we have tried to show that adaptation is essentially a process of 'matching'. Its purpose is to maximize the appropriacy of teaching materials in context, by changing some of the internal characteristics of a coursebook to suit our particular circumstances better. We shall now look in more detail at possible reasons for adaptation and at some of the procedures commonly used.

4.3 Reasons for Adapting

We have just asked you to consider your reasons for needing to make modifications to your own materials, and some of the changes you would wish to make. These reasons will depend, of course, on the whole range of variables operating in your own teaching situation, and one teacher's priorities may well differ considerably from those of another. It is certainly possible that there are some general trends common to a large number of teaching contexts: most obviously there has been a widespread perception that materials should aim to be in some sense 'communicative' and 'authentic'. Nevertheless, it is worth bearing in mind that priorities are relative, and there is no absolute notion of right or wrong, or even just one way of interpreting such terms as 'communicative' and 'authentic'. It is also the case that priorities change over time even within the same context. For instance, decontextualized grammar study is not intrinsically 'wrong' in a communicatively oriented class, just as role play is not automatically 'right'. Nor does a need to adapt necessarily imply that a coursebook is defective.

It will be useful to compare your own reasons with those in the following list. The list is not intended to be comprehensive, but simply to show some of the possible areas of mismatch ('non-congruence') that teachers identify and that can be dealt with by adaptation:

- Not enough grammar coverage in general.
- Not enough practice of grammar points of particular difficulty to these learners.
- The communicative focus means that grammar is presented unsystematically.
- Reading passages contain too much unknown vocabulary.
- Comprehension questions are too easy, because the answers can be lifted directly from the text with no real understanding.
- Listening passages are inauthentic, because they sound too much like written material being read out.
- Not enough guidance on pronunciation.
- Subject matter inappropriate for learners of this age and intellectual level.
- Photographs and other illustrative material not culturally acceptable.

- Amount of material too much or too little to cover in the time allocated to lessons.
- No guidance for teachers on handling group work and role-play activities with a large class.
- Dialogues too formal and not representative of everyday speech.
- Audio material difficult to use because of problems to do with room size and technical equipment.
- Too much or too little variety in the activities.
- Vocabulary list and a key to the exercises would be helpful.
- Accompanying tests needed.

Undoubtedly much more could be added to this list, but it serves as an illustration of some of the possibilities. All aspects of the language classroom can be covered: the few examples above include (1) aspects of language use, (2) skills, (3) classroom organization and (4) supplementary material. Cunningsworth (1995) seems to generally agree with the list above but adds learner perspectives to his list such as expectations and motivation. Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004:12) summarize what factors may trigger feelings of incongruence among teachers. They categorize the sources as

- teaching contexts (e.g. national, regional, institutional, cultural situations)
- course requirements (e.g. objectives, syllabus, methodology, assessment)
- learners (e.g. age, language level, prior learning experience, learning style)
- teachers (e.g. teaching style, belief about learning and teaching)
- materials (e.g. texts, tasks, activities, learning and teaching philosophy, methodology).

Islam and Mares (2003) discuss principles and procedures of adaptation and provide three scenarios (i.e. materials for public junior high schools in Japan, materials for an adult language school in Spain, materials for university English as a second language in the United States) and their more learner-centred adapted version for each case. Some practical and useful examples of adaptation using task-based learning can also be found in Willis and Willis (2007), who also offer some articles on Task-Based Teaching and lesson plans on their web site (http://www.willis-elt.co.uk). Saraceni (2003) advocates learner-centred adaptation and explores this promising new area. She reports that there is very little, if any, literature showing how exactly students could be involved in the adaptation process. She argues that learners as well as teachers should develop awareness of principles of learning and materials design through adapting and evaluating courses. She then proposes a model of adapting courses and provides an example of materials in which activities are designed to be adapted by the learners.

4.4 Principles and Procedures

The reasons for adapting that we have just looked at can be thought of as dealing with the modification of content, whether that content is expressed in the form of exercises and activities, texts, instructions, tests and so on. In other words, the focus is on what the materials contain, measured against the requirements of a particular teaching environment. That environment may necessitate a number of changes that will lead to greater appropriacy. This is most likely to be expressed in terms of a need to personalize, individualize or localize the content. We take 'personalizing' here to refer to increasing the relevance of content in relation to learners' interests and their academic, educational or professional needs. 'Individualizing' will address the learning styles both of individuals and of the members of a class working closely together. 'Localizing' takes into account the international geography of English language teaching and recognizes that what may work well in Mexico City may not do so in Edinburgh or in Kuala Lumpur. Madsen and Bowen (1978) include a further category of 'modernizing', and comment that not all materials show familiarity with aspects of current English usage, sometimes to the point of being not only out of date or misleading but even incorrect. Islam and Mares propose and explain some additional principles including 'Catering for all learner styles', 'Providing for learner autonomy', and 'Making the language input more engaging' (Islam and Mares, 2003: 89–90). Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) demonstrate how incorporating systematic as well as impressionistic evaluation helps adaptation to be more principled and coherent. They also show how the principles of evaluation as part of the adaptation process can be different from those for selection and adoption purposes.

In this section we shall now look at questions of procedure – at the main techniques that can be applied to content in order to bring about change. There are a number of points to bear in mind. Firstly, this can be seen as another kind of matching process or 'congruence', where techniques are selected according to the aspect of the materials that needs alteration. Secondly, content can be adapted using a range of techniques; or, conversely, a single technique can be applied to different content areas. For example, a reading passage might be grammatically simplified or its subject matter modified, or it can be made shorter or broken down into smaller parts. The technique of simplification can be applied to texts, to explanations and so on. Thirdly, adaptation can have both quantitative and qualitative effects. In other words, we can simply change the amount of material, or we can change its methodological nature. Finally, techniques can be used individually or in combination with others, so the scale of possibilities clearly ranges from straightforward to rather complex. All these points will be raised again in the discussion of individual techniques.

The techniques that we shall cover are as follows:

Adding, including expanding and extending
Deleting, including subtracting and abridging
Modifying, including rewriting and restructuring
Simplifying
Reordering

Each will be briefly introduced, and a few examples given. There are implications for all of them in Parts II and III of this book where we consider language skills and classroom methodology. Readers interested at this stage in more detailed examples of procedures for adaptation are referred to the 'Further reading' at the end of this chapter. The first references have broadly similar lists of techniques, and offer a large number of worked examples.

1. When you have finished reading through the discussion of techniques, select one or two of them and consider their application to any materials with which you are familiar.
2. It will be useful at this stage to work on a small scale, taking single-content areas, such as an exercise, a text, or a set of comprehension questions.

Adding

The notion of addition is, on the face of it, straightforward, implying that materials are supplemented by putting more into them, while taking into account the practical effect on time allocation. We can add in this simple, quantitative way by the technique of extending, and might wish to do this in situations such as the following:

- The materials contain practice in the pronunciation of minimal pairs (bit/bet, hat/hate, ship/chip) but not enough examples of the difficulties for learners with a particular L_1. Japanese speakers may need more l/r practice, Arabic speakers more p/b, Spanish speakers more b/v and so on.
- A second reading passage parallel to the one provided is helpful in reinforcing the key linguistic features – tenses, sentence structure, vocabulary, cohesive devices – of the first text.
- Our students find the explanation of a new grammar point rather difficult, so further exercises are added before they begin the practice material.

The point to note here is that adding by extension is to supply more of the same. This means that the techniques are being applied within the methodological framework of the original materials: in other words, the model is not itself changed.

Another, more far-reaching perspective on addition of material can be termed expanding. Consider these possibilities:

- The only pronunciation practice in the materials is on individual sounds and minimal pairs. However, this may be necessary but not sufficient. Our students need to be intelligible, and intelligibility entails more than articulating a vowel or a consonant correctly. Therefore, we decide to add some work on sentence stress and rhythm and on the related phenomenon of 'weak' and 'strong' forms in English. A further advantage is that students will be better able to understand naturally spoken English.
- If there is insufficient coverage of the skill of listening, the reading passage provided may also be paralleled by the provision of listening comprehension material, using the same vocabulary and ideas but presented through a different medium, making sure that it is authentic in terms of the spoken language.
- Although the new grammar material is important and relevant, the addition of a discussion section at the end of the unit will help to reinforce and contextualize the linguistic items covered, particularly if it is carefully structured so that the most useful points occur 'naturally'.

These kinds of additions are not just extensions of an existing aspect of content. They go further than this by bringing about a qualitative as well as a quantitative change. Expanding, then, as distinct from extending, adds to the methodology by moving outside it and developing it in new directions, for instance, by putting in a different language skill or a new component. This can be thought of as a change in the overall system. Note that there are some minor terminological issues between writers on adaptation techniques (e.g. McGrath, 2002; Islam and Mares, 2003; Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2004). For example, McGrath advocates that creative addition involving qualitative changes should be called 'exploitation'. What matters, however, is not so much the art of categorization but that teachers can make creative use of the techniques described in their own adaptations.

Finally in this section, it is worth pointing out that additions do not always have to be made onto the end of something. A new facet of material or methodology can be introduced before it appears in the framework of the coursebook. For example, a teacher may prepare the ground for practice in an aspect of grammar or communicative function determined by the syllabus through a 'warm-up' exercise involving learners talking about themselves and their everyday lives.

Deleting or omitting

Deletion is clearly the opposite process to that of addition, and as such needs no further clarification as a term. However, although material is taken out

rather than supplemented, as a technique it can be thought of as 'the other side of the same coin'. We saw in the previous section that material can be added both quantitatively (extending) and qualitatively (expanding): the same point applies when a decision is taken to omit material. Again, as with addition, the technique can be used on a small scale, for example, over part of an exercise, or on the larger scale of a whole unit of a coursebook.

We shall refer to the most straightforward aspect of reducing the length of material as subtracting from it. The following kinds of requirements might apply:

- Our pronunciation exercises on minimal pairs contain too much general material. Since our students all have the same mother tongue and do not make certain errors, many of the exercises are inappropriate. Arabic speakers, for example, will be unlikely to have much difficulty with the l/r distinction.
- Although a communicative coursebook has been selected as relevant in our situation, some of the language functions presented are unlikely to be required by learners who will probably not use their English in the target language environment. Such functions as 'giving directions' or 'greetings' may be useful; 'expressing sympathy' or 'ordering things' may not.

Deletion in these cases, as with extending, does not have a significant impact on the overall methodology. The changes are greater if material is not only subtracted, but also what we shall term abridged:

- The materials contain a discussion section at the end of each unit. However, our learners are not really proficient enough to tackle this adequately, since they have learnt the language structures but not fluency in their use. The syllabus and its subsequent examination does not leave room for this kind of training.
- Students on a short course are working with communicative materials because of their instrumental reasons for choosing to learn English: some of them wish to travel on international business, others plan to visit a target language country as tourists. The lengthy grammatical explanations accompanying each functional unit are therefore felt to be inappropriate.

Addition and deletion often work together, of course. Material may be taken out and then replaced with something else. Where the same kind of material is substituted, as for instance one set of minimal pairs for another, the internal balance of the lesson or the syllabus is not necessarily altered. The methodological change is greater when, for example, grammar practice is substituted after the omission of an inappropriate communicative function, or when a reading text is replaced by a listening passage. This takes us directly into the next section.

Modifying

'Modification' at one level is a very general term in the language applying to any kind of change. In order to introduce further possibilities for adaptation, we shall restrict its meaning here to an internal change in the approach or focus of an exercise or other piece of material. It is a rather important and frequently used procedure that, like all other techniques, can be applied to any aspect of 'content'. It can be subdivided under two related headings. The first of these is rewriting, when some of the linguistic content needs modification; the second is restructuring, which applies to classroom management. Let us look at some examples of each of these in turn. You will undoubtedly be able to think of many more.

Rewriting Currently the most frequently stated requirement for a change in focus is for materials to be made 'more communicative'. This feeling is voiced in many teaching situations where textbooks are considered to lag behind an understanding of the nature of language and of students' linguistic and learning needs. Rewriting, therefore, may relate activities more closely to learners' own backgrounds and interests, introduce models of authentic language, or set more purposeful, problem-solving tasks where the answers are not always known before the teacher asks the question. Islam and Mares (2003) provide an extensive discussion and examples for making textbooks more learning-centred through rewriting.

It is quite common for coursebooks to place insufficient emphasis on listening comprehension, and for teachers to feel that more material is required. If accompanying audio material is either not available, or cannot be purchased in a particular teaching context, then the teacher can rewrite a reading passage and deliver it orally, perhaps by taking notes from the original and then speaking naturally to the class from those notes.

Sometimes new vocabulary is printed just as a list, with explanatory notes and perhaps the mother tongue equivalent. We may wish to modify this kind of presentation by taking out the notes and writing an exercise that helps students to develop useful and generalized strategies for acquiring new vocabulary. Equally, a text may have quite appropriate language material for a specific group, but may not 'match' in terms of its cultural content. For example, a story about an English family, with English names, living in an English town, eating English food and enjoying English hobbies can in fact be modified quite easily by making a number of straightforward surface changes.

A last example here is that of end-of-text comprehension questions. Some of these are more like a test, where students can answer by 'lifting' the information straight from the text. These questions can be modified so that students have to interpret what they have read or heard, or relate different sections of the text to each other. Chapter 6 looks at these kinds of tasks.

The point was made in the introduction to this chapter that content changes are not always written down. Adaptation of linguistic content may just require rewording by the teacher as an oral explanation.

Restructuring For many teachers who are required to follow a coursebook, changes in the structuring of the class are sometimes the only kind of adaptation possible. For example, the materials may contain role-play activities for groups of a certain size. The logistics of managing a large class (especially if they all have the same L1) are complex from many points of view, and it will probably be necessary to assign one role to a number of pupils at the same time. Obviously the converse – where the class is too small for the total number of roles available – is also possible if perhaps less likely.

Sometimes a written language explanation designed to be read and studied can be made more meaningful if it is turned into an interactive exercise where all students participate. For instance, it is a straightforward matter to ask learners to practise certain verb structures in pairs (say the present perfect: 'Have you been to/done X?'; or a conditional: 'What would you do if . . . ?'), and it can be made more authentic by inviting students to refer to topics of direct interest to themselves.

Modifying materials, then, even in the restricted sense in which we have used the term here, is a technique with a wide range of applications. It refers essentially to a 'modality change', to a change in the nature or focus of an exercise, or text or classroom activity.

Simplifying

Strictly speaking, the technique of simplification is one type of modification, namely, a 'rewriting' activity. Since it has received considerable attention in its own right, it is considered here as a separate procedure. Many elements of a language course can be simplified, including the instructions and explanations that accompany exercises and activities, and even the visual layout of material so that it becomes easier to see how different parts fit together. It is worth noting in passing that teachers are sometimes on rather dangerous ground, if a wish to 'simplify' grammar or speech in the classroom leads to a distortion of natural language. For example, oversimplification of a grammatical explanation can be misleadingly one-sided or partial: to tell learners that adverbs are always formed by adding '-ly' does not help them when they come across 'friendly' or 'brotherly', nor does it explain why 'hardly' cannot be formed from 'hard'. A slow style of speech might result in the elimination of the correct use of sentence stress and weak forms, leaving learners with no exposure to the natural rhythms of spoken English.

However, the main application of this technique has been to texts, most often to reading passages. Traditionally, the emphasis has been on changing various sentence-bound elements to match the text more closely to the pro-

ficiency level of a particular group of learners. Thus, for instance, we can simplify according to

1 Sentence structure. Sentence length is reduced, or a complex sentence is rewritten as a number of simpler ones, for example, by the replacement of relative pronouns by nouns and pronouns followed by a main verb.
2 Lexical content, so that the number of new vocabulary items is controlled by reference to what students have already learned.
3 Grammatical structures. For instance, passives are converted to actives; simple past tense to simple present; reported into direct speech.

These kinds of criteria form the basis of many of the published graded 'simplified readers' available for English language teaching.

Simplification has a number of further implications. Firstly, it is possible that any linguistic change, lexical or grammatical, will have a corresponding stylistic effect, and will therefore change the meaning or intention of the original text. This is particularly likely with literary material, of course, but in principle it can apply to any kind of text where the overall 'coherence' can be affected. Widdowson (1979) goes into these arguments in more detail. Secondly, some teaching situations require attention to the simplification of content when the complexity of the subject matter is regarded as being too advanced. This could be the case for some scientific explanations, for example, or for material too far removed from the learners' own life experiences. Thirdly, simplification can refer not only to content, but also to the ways in which that content is presented: we may decide not to make any changes to the original text, but instead to lead the learners through it in a number of graded stages. We shall come back to this notion of 'task complexity' in the chapters on reading and listening comprehension.

Reordering

This procedure, the final one discussed in this section, refers to the possibility of putting the parts of a coursebook in a different order. This may mean adjusting the sequence of presentation within a unit, or taking units in a different sequence from that originally intended. There are limits, of course, to the scale of what teachers can do, and too many changes could result, unhelpfully, in an almost complete reworking of a coursebook. A reordering of material is appropriate in the following kinds of situations:

- Materials typically present 'the future' by 'will' and 'going to'. However, for many learners, certainly at intermediate level and above, it is helpful to show the relationship between time reference and grammatical tense in a more accurate way. In this example we would probably wish to

include the simple present and the present continuous as part of the notion of 'futurity', perhaps using 'Next term begins on 9 September' or 'She retires in 2015' as illustrations.

- The length of teaching programme may be too short for the coursebook to be worked through from beginning to end. It is likely in this case that the language needs of the students will determine the sequence in which the material will be taken. There is little point in working systematically through a textbook if key aspects of grammar, vocabulary or communicative function are never reached. For instance, if the learners are adults due to study in the target language environment, it will be necessary to have covered several aspects of the tense system and to have introduced socially appropriate functions and frequently used vocabulary.
- Finally, 'reordering' can include separating items of content from each other as well as regrouping them and putting them together. An obvious example is a lesson on a particular language function felt to contain too many new grammar points for the present proficiency level of the learners.

4.5 A Framework for Adaptation

There are clear areas of overlap among the various techniques discussed in this section, but it would be beyond the scope of this chapter to try to cover all the combinations and permutations. The intention here has been to offer a workable framework into which the main possibilities for adaptation can be fitted (not to offer some 'how to do' recipes, which are well covered elsewhere). Figure 4.2 shows how the considerations on which the principle of adaptation is based fit together:

1. Choose some materials with which you are familiar, or any others you would like to work with. (If you do not have any to hand, look back at the unit reprinted at the end of Chapter 2.)
2. Decide on any features of the material you would like to change because it is not entirely suitable for your own teaching situation.
3. Referring as much as possible to the techniques we have been discussing, draw up some suggestions for how to adapt the material to achieve greater 'congruence'.
4. If possible, discuss with other colleagues the reasons for your decisions.

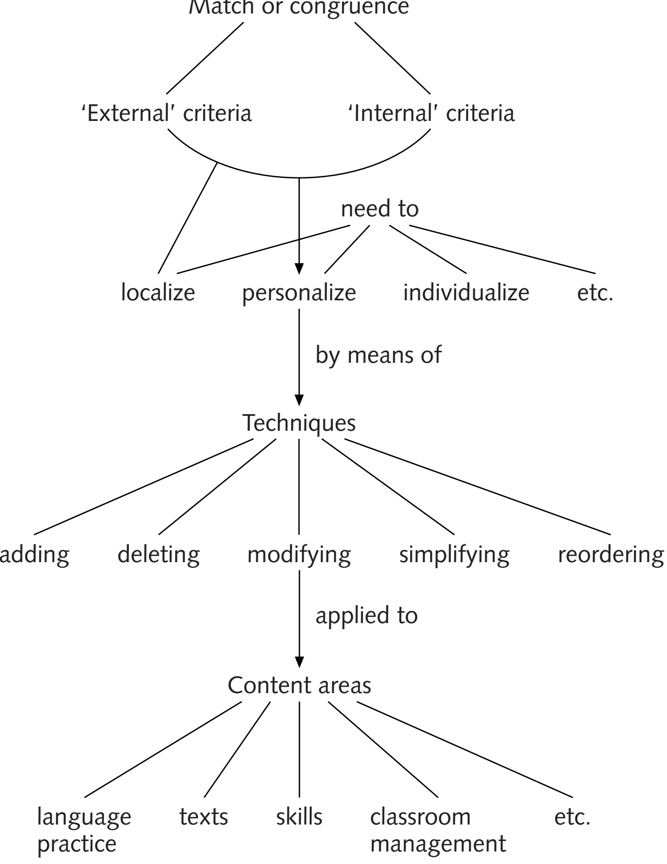

Figure 4.2 A framework for adaptation.

4.6 Conclusion

At one end of the scale, adaptation is a very practical activity carried out mainly by teachers in order to make their work more relevant to the learners with whom they are in day-to-day contact. It is, however, not just an exercise done in self-contained methodological isolation. Like all our activity as teachers, it is related, directly and indirectly, to a wider range of professional concerns. Adaptation is linked to issues of administration and the whole management of education, in so far as it derives from decisions taken about material to be adopted. Further, the need to adapt is one consequence of the setting of objectives in a particular educational context. Finally, adaptation

can only be carried out effectively if it develops from an understanding of the possible design features of syllabuses and materials.

This chapter completes our discussion of the principles on which materials and methods are based. In Part II, we shall show how some of these principles have been expressed in relation to the concept of language skill.

4.7 Further Reading

1 McGrath, I. (2002): Chapter 4 discusses how coursebooks might be adapted with some examples.
2 Tomlinson, B. (2006): Localising the global: matching materials to the context of learning. In J. Mukundan, 1–16. Tomlinson shows practical ways of how global coursebooks can be localized.

5

Technology in ELT

Diane Slaouti

Our aim in this chapter is to explore relationships between technology and language teaching and learning. This is not to suggest that technology 'does things better'. We need to maintain a healthily critical stance, reflecting on how the potentials we identify might play out in our own practice and in the specific contexts in which we teach. Salaberry (2001: 51), reflecting on developments in technologies and the roles that they have played in language teaching, provides us with two useful questions which are central to this exploration:

- What technical attributes specific to the new technologies can be profitably exploited for pedagogical purposes?
- How can new technologies be successfully integrated into the curriculum?

In this chapter, we firstly invite you to reflect upon your own use of technologies. We then provide a brief overview of recent developments, and move on to explore ways in which we might harness specific technologies for specific purposes in our language classrooms. We will illustrate some of this thinking through examples of tasks and particular language learning resources.

5.1 The Teacher and Technology

Historically, we have looked for understandings of how technology 'fits' with current language learning paradigms. Warschauer and Healey (1998)

Materials and Methods in ELT: A Teacher's Guide, Third Edition.
Jo McDonough, Christopher Shaw, and Hitomi Masuhara.
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rehearsed these periods of development. Early form-focused, question-response drills that can be easily programmed for computer-based practice were in line with behaviourist methodologies in the 1960s and 1970s. A shift towards meaning-focused communicative methodology brought attention to learner choice, opportunities to explore language through programmes which presented learners with language in context (concordancing, text manipulation) or provided opportunities to receive feedback on their language use. The development of the Internet and broader communication opportunities, they argued, saw us move into what they termed a phase of integrative computer-assisted language learning (CALL), drawing on sociocognitive views of learning, where authentic task and text are central, and teachers draw on tools such as word processors and the Internet to put learners into positions in which they use technology for authentic activity.

While this historical analysis provides us with a way of understanding how different technologies, and more specifically their use, reflect pedagogical thinking, it has been critiqued as not easily reconcilable with neat phases in time by Bax (2003). There is a good deal of overlap and just as teachers make use of eclectic approaches with different learners, Bax argues that technology use needs to also be understood in relation to a teacher's intentions and role, and where it is used in the curriculum. He describes technology as being 'restricted', focusing on aspects of the language system with minimal interaction with other students, often reflecting individual language practice; 'open', which involves teachers choosing particular tools and tasks to focus learners on language in context and cognitive processes; and 'integrated', where learners move back and forth to computer-based activities as an integrated part of their learning. Bax suggests that fully integrated technology use might be described as 'normalised' (Bax 2003, 24), where the technology has to a large extent become 'invisible'. CALL then ceases to deserve specific labelling, just as we would never think of talking about the pen in any special way.

You may identify various technologies as normalized into your daily lives or indeed in your professional practice. However, it is also difficult to talk about technology or even computers in such a sweeping way, applicable to all contexts. How technology is integrated into teachers' practice is very much related to a number of issues that we have to acknowledge as we explore this area. Access to specific technologies and how your institution supports their use is clearly important. Personal confidence in using technology is also a factor in teachers' decision-making. Our learners, their specific needs, and their own expectations of technology use are also powerful influences on eventual technology use. Most importantly, these factors interact with our beliefs about the teaching and learning of English to form a powerful filter to ideas that we read about and engage with.

Before you read further, reflect on your own technology use.

- What technologies would you say are 'normalized' in your own daily life?
- What technologies would you say are 'normalized' in your learners' daily lives?
- Do you make use of any of the technologies you list in (1) and (2) for language teaching or learning?
- If so, which technologies are they? Do you use them for the same purposes?
- Do you use technologies you have not listed in (1) or (2) for language teaching or learning?
- What influences your decisions to use or not to use different technologies for language teaching?

5.2 The Technologies

We will now look at this developing field.

Exploring terms and technologies

As you read this chapter, we cite various technologies with which you may be more or less familiar. Use your search skills to check out named instances; tap into shared knowledge at Wikipedia http://www.wikipedia.org/.

To further explore specific terms, a useful search strategy for you and your learners is the **define:** function in google. For example:

Define: Web 2.0 returns a list of definitions and links to the sites which have provided these.

Mobile technologies, wireless networking, increasingly compact computers such as palm tops are all representative of the ways in which technology has become potentially integral to our lives. It may be that a good number of the technologies you have identified as 'normalized' in your personal usage include various communication tools. The whole area of computer-mediated communication has developed at speed with an array of synchronous

tools such as Messenger programmes (e.g. MSN and Yahoo), telephony software such as Skype (http://www.skype.com) and video conferencing, and asynchronous communication through bulletin boards or forum spaces, BLOGs and email. With the arrival of the 'social web' (see Karpati, 2009) and applications which provide a locus for group exchange and activity such as Ning and Facebook, google docs, Twitter, social networking and collaboration have taken on new meaning.

We also need to remember that many technologies are still with us as they were 20 years ago, only with a 'new look'. Research into the use of word processing in language learning has a long tradition (e.g. Piper, 1987; Pennington, 1996; Slaouti, 2000). The word processor has not gone away; newer iterations simply provide evermore sophisticated functions, and increasing integration with other tools, including the Internet. However, there are new kids on the block; what is known as Web 2.0, which describes the second generation of Web structure, allows us not only to read content disseminated via the Internet but also write to the Web as well. This means that we can interact with others in more open structures, freely publishing and editing content. The wiki is one such structure, and perhaps the most well-known example is *Wikipedia*, the encyclopaedia which all can construct. Through a wiki, users can contribute to text generation in distributed contexts as immediately as working with a word processor on a local computer; the texts generated might be an assembly of words, pictures and links to audio and video and other files capable of being hyperlinked; those texts can be freely edited; in turn those edits can be tracked and decisions reversed, if judged preferable.

Another technology with an interesting history is video. With the arrival of digital video we have begun to see renewed interest with interesting research into Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and DVD use (e.g. Tschirner, 2001; Gruba, 2004); attention to video as an authentic resource again (Sherman, 2003); DVD feature films and language learning (King, 2002). Moving online, *YouTube* seems to be a first port of call for many teachers searching for video content. Of course as with all unmoderated online content, this needs a discerning teacher eye to identify extracts for meaningful use. In response to this, however, in line with the ways in which Web 2.0 content can be shared and manipulated, an intriguing tool is Safeshare TV (http://www.safeshare.tv/). This allows teachers to not only link to or display a YouTube clip without surrounding distractions, but also to set specific start and end points within the whole to create more usable chunks. And of course with respect to video production, there is renewed interest in putting the technology into the learners' hands to produce their own multimedia texts, viewable in a myriad of ways including local movie clips (using, for example, Windows Moviemaker or Apple's iMovie) or online podcasts and vodcasts. Voicethread (http://voicethread.com), for example, a Web 2.0 tool described as 'conversations in the cloud', facilitates collaborative, multimedia text gen-

eration allowing learners to simply upload photos or videos and create a storyboard, adding further text, written or audio. More than this display, however, these texts are open to comment from peers, teachers, family, and interested others. Learners immediately have a real audience for their language endeavours.

In all of these examples so far, we are already recognizing the ubiquity of the World Wide Web. Not only is this a huge library of authentic content, but its significance in terms of how it mediates our access to learning materials has to be acknowledged. Our print coursebook is not yet redundant, but published English language teaching (ELT) packages may contain a traditional book and some form of Web-based supplement. This latter may be downloadable or interactive to be used online; see, for example, Cambridge ESOL (http://www.cambridge.org/gb/elt/students/zones/item2325598/ESOL/). As with other supplementary material, online content may be used to extend whole class activity or be targeted for independent learning. Some such activities allow for flexibility in use; take for example, *New English File* (OUP) which includes topic-based reading which a learner can 'gap' for themselves (elt.oup.com/student/englishfile/intermediate). Learner use of staples such as dictionaries or a thesaurus seems to change in contexts where the use of the Web is encouraged. These are in turn in constant development, providing what print can never do in one resource. In the online Cambridge Advanced Learner's dictionary, for example, learners find UK and US pronunciation files, a link to a visual thesaurus, a topic-based smart thesaurus. Try for example http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/tomato.

Furthermore, the online dissemination of language learning activities, ideas, tips among our professional community means there is usually something to be found to fit a particular need. This may be thematically linked content in different media formats such as this around St. Patrick's Day in Ireland (http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish-central-magazine-st-patrick.htm) from the British Council's *LearnEnglishCentral*; or this around breaking news items http://breakingnewsenglish.com/; it may be content addressing a particular skill such as Podcasts in English at http://www.podcastsinenglish.com/index.shtml or providing language practice opportunities. Learners preparing for Cambridge examination, for example, can find specific needs addressed at Flo Joe's http://www.flo-joe.co.uk/ or Splendid Speaking's http://splendidspeaking.podomatic.com/.

Technology is clearly bringing expanded opportunities to learners both within and beyond the boundaries of our language classrooms. Understanding how technology impacts on language teaching practice might, therefore, also be appreciated in terms of a potential shift in locus of activity. That developing locus of activity increasingly reflects technology use in the world beyond the context of language learning, whether physical or virtual; that technology use in turn also relates to contexts of language use. Figure 5.1 illustrates these shifts from locally accessed technologies to those that

There are, of course, too many resources to do justice to in one chapter. However, as you locate and bookmark your own favourites, consider the potential of these resources on the Web as an enormous self-access centre for your learners. This self-access centre is indeed huge, and we need to ask ourselves 'How do I provide the support my learners need to make the most of these resources'?

How am I helping learners to locate relevant resources?

Would it be useful to explore some form of 'online class tool' to direct my learners towards relevant resources, for example, a class web site, blog, virtual learning environment such as *Moodle* (http://moodle.org/) or *Nicenet Classroom Assistant* (http://www.nicenet.org/)?

How are my learners organizing their learning resources locally (e.g. bookmarking as a vital digital literacy)?

Am I encouraging strategies to record their onscreen learning (e.g. taking notes, saving URLs, keeping a learning blog)?

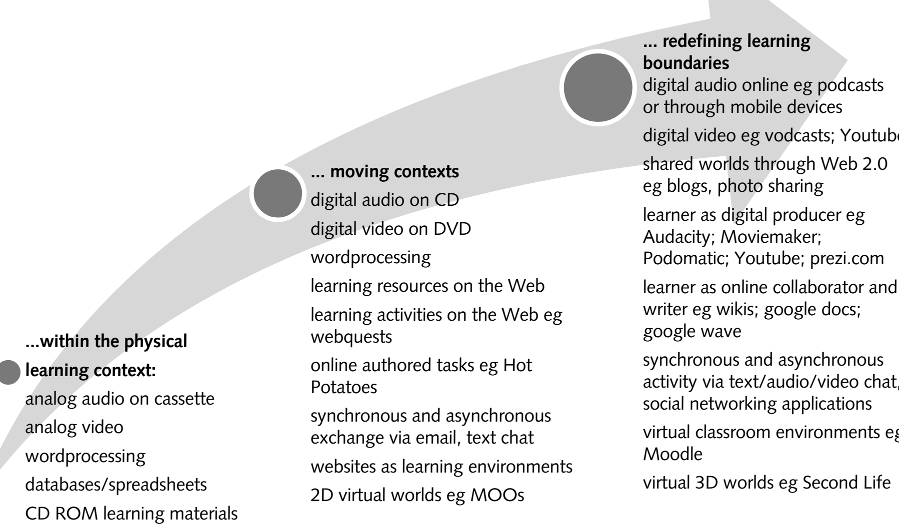

Figure 5.1 Shifts in technology use.

transitioned classroom and Internet-facilitated activity to current online technologies that redefine the boundaries of language learning.

5.3 Views of Technology

To help us explore how we might think about these technologies in relation to language learning activities, we will first of all look to a well-rehearsed metaphor, that of the 'tutor, tutee, tool'. Developed by Taylor (1980), its relevance for language learning was first explored by Levy (1997). (See also Hubbard and Siskin, 2004, and Levy and Stockwell, 2006, for more recent discussions.) The 'tutor' view sees software as having a teacher 'built' in, so there will be instructions, support and feedback in the material itself. This describes language practice software on CD ROMs or DVDs or accessed on teacher and publisher web sites. The tutee metaphor sees the computer at the control of the learner and thus requires the user to programme the computer in some way. An often-cited example is LOGO, a programming language used with robots or other devices. School learners may be familiar with the 'Turtle', for example, a robot which can be made to move in different directions, if programmed successfully. The concept of 'tool' is adapted from more generic software. This is the kind of software we might use on a daily basis, a word processor, or a Web browser, or other tools that enable us to complete a specific task. We would see a search engine such as google or a wiki or a blog in this category. Meskill (2005: 33) points to two implications of this metaphor:

> Like other human tools, computers can be used to assemble, construct, attach, detach, disassemble, connect and fashion products. Like other tools their use influences the ways we think, behave and communicate.

While tools are 'content neutral', the influence on thinking is an interesting dimension. A word processor may simply be seen by some as a rather sophisticated typewriter; it comes into its own as a problem-solving tool, supporting the process of text composition. Tools can, therefore, scaffold thinking or problem solving, and the term 'mindtool' refers to these attributes (Jonassen, 2000). Tools such as spreadsheets, concordancers, databases, mindmapping software such as Inspiration (http://www.inspiration.com) carry heuristic qualities, to enable learners to think their way through to a solution or outcome.

The notion of tool is thus associated with authentic endeavour. It relates to views of language teaching as empowering learner autonomy, that is, the ability for learners to take their knowledge and apply it for the purposes they require. Thinking about purpose, there is a further dimension to what tools allow us to do. Yes, they are workhorses that allow us to generate and revise

text, process and display numerical information, access and retrieve information. However, if these workhorses, and if the encounters with language to which they give access are increasingly part of our learners' real-world interactions, we need to look at the particular skills and awareness that make for empowered use. These are encapsulated in the term 'electronic literacy', defined by Warschauer (2002: 455) as including:

> computer literacy (i.e., comfort and fluency in keyboarding and using computers), information literacy (i.e., the ability to find and critically evaluate online information), multimedia literacy (i.e., the ability to produce and interpret complex documents comprising texts, images, and sounds), and computer-mediated communication literacy (i.e., knowledge of the pragmatics of individual and group online interaction).

The increasing interest in developing electronic literacy as part of language learning processes reflects the growing emphasis in the world of work on knowledge over industrial production and on key or transferable skills. As 'social computing' (e.g. wikis, BLOGs, Facebook, Twitter) has developed, it is the construction of connections between people that has also come to the fore. In this major development, online community is central and the Web has become a world to share in both read and write mode.

We will consider Web 2.0 tools within the following discussion, and return to its specific implications at the end of this chapter. Before we come to that point, we will look to create some connections between technology use and aspects of our practice as language teachers which have been explored earlier in this book.

5.4 Computers and Reading

Our first set of connections revolves around shifting understandings of computers and reading from cognitive and sociocognitive perspectives. Writing in 1987, Jones and Fortescue (p. 31) identified three ways in which the computer can aid reading:

- incidental reading
- reading comprehension
- text manipulation.

The incidental reading they referred to occurs in all kinds of software, from word processors to programmes designed to actually teach reading. It occurs in the instructions, in the menus, in the help files. All of these actions require reading skills, and the learners are exposed to written language without being

conscious of it. The purpose of such reading is in relation to the actual task they are pursuing, and of course, there is the implication here that learners need to understand a metalanguage that is beyond the texts themselves. Reading comprehension is obvious. It is very easy to get computers to replicate traditional reading comprehension exercises including wh- questions, true or false or multiple choice. Such tasks may be part of language teaching software or provided by publishers on web sites accompanying coursebooks; they may also be developed by the teacher. This latter activity is not difficult with various authoring softwares such as Hot Potatoes (http://hotpot.uvic.ca/) or Clarity English (http://www.clarityenglish.com/). Text manipulation involves the 'degrading' of a text in some way, requiring the learner to 'restore' it to its whole. This works on the basis of a template. A text is typed into the computer software, and the software applies a systematic manipulation to that text. Some software can operate more than one manipulation, for example, jumbling the sentences, removing all punctuation, removing all of the text (total text deletion).

In identifying the three areas of reading practice cited previously, Jones and Fortescue (1987) suggested very much a summary of the types of reading 'task' that we find in our coursebooks. However, at the time the classification neglected a huge area of reading nowadays which is that provided by the potential of the World Wide Web. This has brought learners increasingly into contact with authentic resources that require skills and strategies to cope with the demands of sifting and processing information. Such information in a hypertext world can be complex and media rich. There is also a strong interest in how engaging with these different texts affects our perception of literacy and challenges the very world of reading.

As explored earlier in this book, reading is acknowledged to be a complex process. Reading involves strategies that encourage interaction between reader and text. That interaction involves the use of various schema which may be resident in the L2 reader from L1 experience or be developing as they encounter texts in L2. It also involves approaching the text in different ways. If we consider the nature of reading skills work in our 'paper-based' classrooms, depending on the text-type (e.g. whether a book, an article, a magazine extract, a story, a newspaper item), engaging with a text might include locating the resource; reading with a purpose; making predictions; skimming and scanning; determining text structure/frames; interpreting graphic information; drawing inferences; analysing voice. These skills, familiar to all of us as reading teachers, are clearly related to the nature of textual data in its paper-based format either in journals or in books. They are also closely related to literally 'handling' the text. It is relatively easy to have a feel for a full article or book when we hold it in our hands. We can take in titles, introduction, conclusion, headings, subheadings, general content in seconds. There is no reason why such skills should still not be part of accessing online texts. It is clear that this can be done on screen.

What specific skills do you employ as part of your online reading behaviours?

Think about
- locating a resource;
- locating information within a resource;
- making predictions;
- skimming and scanning;
- determining text structure/frames;
- interpreting graphic information.

Thinking about these behaviours gives us opportunities to create particular tasks. Information searching, for example, involves thinking round a particular topic and is a highly 'lexical' activity, seen, for example, as we 'google' keywords or use menu systems to find our way to specific information. Raising awareness of such linguistic clues is a cognitive strategy that will make for more efficient information location.

Konishi (2003) and Anderson (2003) also observe the relationship between effective Web-based reading and the use of metacognitive strategies, arguing that for learners to fully exploit the wealth of authentic texts offered on the Web, they need to be aware of how they are reading the screen. This can be built into task design at an evaluation stage (e.g. see Slaouti, 2000). An example of such approaches is what is known as a webquest (Dodge, 1997). This is an enquiry task, which typically sees learners working collaboratively to research information towards a given outcome. Learners share the load by taking on specific roles in the enquiry, looking for particular information, or undertaking specific micro tasks such as monitoring progress of the activity or managing the final display of the outcome. Dodge (1997) describes their attributes:

- An introduction that provides background and aims;
- A doable, motivating task that draws on Web-based resources;
- A set of information resources, providing pointers so that learners are not immediately lost in cyberspace;
- A description of the process that scaffolds the achievement of the task (steps; roles);
- Guidance on organizing information (supporting documents to record information);
- Concluding guidance to bring the task to a close; often involves evaluation of both process and product.

The final outcome may in turn make use of specific technologies depending on its purpose and on the technology context: a printed poster giving information about an outdoor pursuit; a presentation delivered in a face-to-face setting, supported by presentation software in which the group shows their peers where they have travelled on a 'virtual trip'; a video clip produced in multimedia editing software such as Windows Moviemaker, showing how learners would introduce their locality to visitors.

Explore this webquest to identify elements which correspond to the attributes described by Dodge http://www.teacherweb.com/IN/PNC/Cassady/

Browse this 'Webquest Taskonomy' http://webquest.sdsu.edu/taskonomy.html to identify different aims of a webquest.

The challenges of working with authentic resources on the Web means we have to think about how we scaffold reading activity, achieving a balance between overly prescriptive 'reading comprehension' and what can sometimes seem rather open and unsupported project work. A webquest aims to achieve this. Brandl (2002) looks at three different approaches to the inclusion of authentic Internet-based reading materials into lessons: teacher-determined, teacher-facilitated and learner-determined. Brandl argues that all three approaches may be employed depending on the 'teacher's pedagogical approach, her/his technological expertise, and the students' language proficiency' (Brandl, 2002: 87).

Read Brandl (2002), Integrating Internet-based reading materials into the foreign Language curriculum: from teacher to student-centred approaches. *Language Learning and Technology*, 6(3), 87–107 (http://llt.msu.edu/vol6num3/brandl/default.html).

- How does thinking about 'control' differ across the approaches?
- What does Brandl see as the advantages and disadvantages of each approach?
- To what extent do you see a role for all three approaches in your own teaching context?
- If you use the Internet for reading skills in your context, which of the approaches is most similar to the one you adopt?
- Use the principles outlined in this section of this chapter to design a Web-based enquiry activity for your learners.

As we look to the Web for such activity, there is no less an interest in the cognitive processes associated with reading; however, the Web also provides texts that are socioculturally situated and we have opportunities to provide learners with access to these as part of real-world discourse communities. We see a similar shift in potential if we look to the roles that computers play in writing development.

5.5 Computers and Writing

The process approach to writing is often juxtaposed with a product-oriented one. White and Arndt (1991: 5) describe how writing

> . . . in a process approach is divergent, with as many different outcomes as there are writers. In a typical product-oriented approach, on the other hand, writing will converge towards a pre-defined goal, with a model text being presented to form the focus of comprehension and text manipulation activities.

This is not say that the process approach is not interested in the product. As White and Arndt (1991: 5) say: ‘On the contrary, the main aim is to arrive at the best product possible’. Much of the early understanding of this approach emerged from research into L1 writing development carried out through protocol analysis, that is, the recording and study of verbalized description of the processes writers engage in. One of the earliest models widely quoted in the literature of this process is that of Flower and Hayes (1981). Their model, reproduced below, graphically illustrates the various influences on the writing product and the stages they discovered to be part of real-world writing procedures (figure 5.2).

- Looking at Flower and Hayes’ model, where might the word processor play a particular role in the writing process?
- Might other technologies be used to support the same or other stages of this model?

The word processor is the most obvious writing tool. It allows us to generate, develop and make modifications to a text while retaining a ‘tidy look’ to the page. Resulting text can, importantly, be stored for future retrieval. Because of the flexibility word processors offer to generate and modify text as well as to allow the writer to interrupt, stand back and resume the text as he/she wishes, the process writing approach is inextricably linked to the use

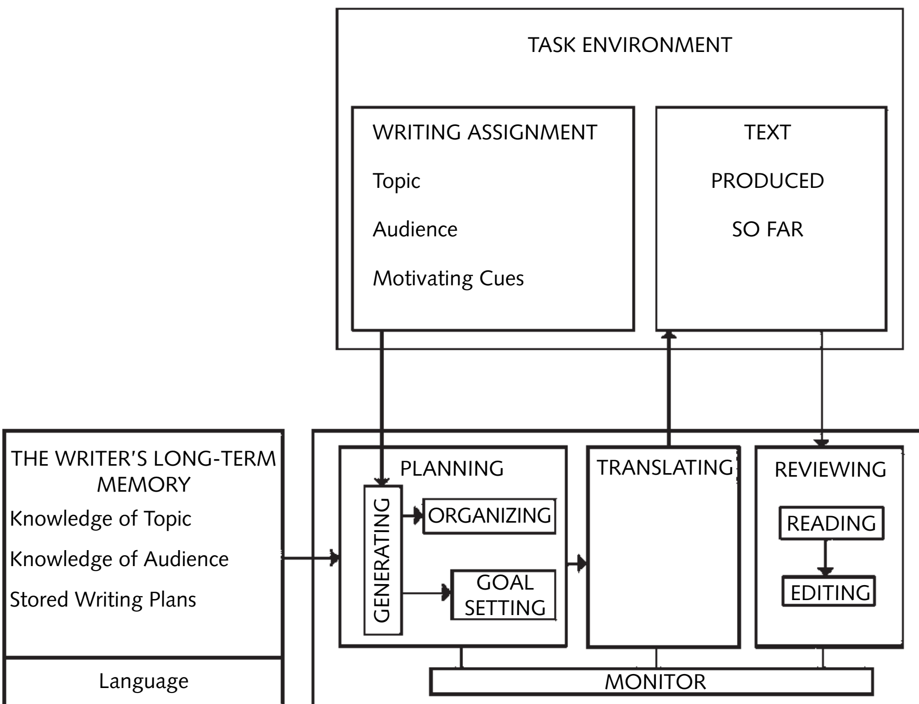

Figure 5.2 The writing process adapted from Flower and Hayes (1981).

of the word processors in the language classroom, whether it be in L1 or L2. Piper's early research (1987) into her learners' use of the word processor reported willingness to spend more time composing, greater concentration on the task in hand, willingness to see the writing as a 'fluid' piece of work, therefore editing where required. We earlier suggested that technology might play a heuristic role, supporting thinking. The functional attributes of the word processor might also be seen to be directly linked to the writing process. Positioning the cursor in the text, deleting, inserting, using copy and paste all relate to thinking about the text in terms of both accuracy and organizational cohesion. As we use these keyboard functions, there is purposeful thinking associated with each decision and the effects of those decisions are seen on screen.

The immediate visualization of text developments is an important attribute of working on screen. Take, for example, paragraphing. Teachers may indicate paragraph breaks in their marking codes, but paragraphing is signalled by 'white space' on the final paper product. Unless the learner rewrites, the full significance of this is not seen. Piper (1987: 121) describes how she was able to illustrate the concept of paragraphing to a learner by introducing the

visible, physical separation on the screen in front of the learner. This would be impossible to do on paper. The ability to demonstrate other text improvements such as moving blocks and pointing to resulting improvements in coherence is also immediate. This may be done over an individual's shoulder. It may be achieved by using an interactive whiteboard or a computer projector in a computer lab context or in a classroom where there is teacher equipment at the front of a class. We might also design specific tasks to focus learner thinking on these textual elements.

Here is a task which requires learners to repair a text from which all the verbs have been deleted.

- What is the language focus?
- What keyboard functions would learners use as they problem solve?

These friends of mine a new carpet, so they to the shop and one and the carpet-fitter round to fit it while they out at work. When he, he that there a bump right in the middle. He that this be a pack of cigarettes that he absent-mindedly, so he up and down on the bump until it flat. The family home and the carpet. Then they the man if he their pet canary which missing. It then that he his cigarettes on the hall table!

If we look again at Flower and Hayes' framework, this activity does not really sit within the more obvious stages of 'translating of ideas onto the page' nor in the cyclical revision stages as more text is generated. However, it does contribute to the language element that is part of the writer's long-term memory, informing how subsequent writing takes place. Other text repair or embellishment activities such as this might, for example, focus on the use of cohesive devices in specific text types; or learners might be given a text for reorganization, using copy and paste to see the result of their thinking about text. We see such various activities in our coursebooks, and it may just be that there are opportunities for a computer-based approach, allowing learners to experiment fluidly, review based on teacher or peer feedback and take away a tidy text.

Such activities are also a means of moving learners towards longer texts and of scaffolding writing quality in a more structured way. Research findings in studies of writing quality are generally diverse, however, with numerous variables impacting on outcomes: word processing familiarity, individual

Look at a coursebook that you frequently use.

Are there any activities which focus on elements of text composition, for which you might exploit the particular attributes of the word processor?

writing ability, technology provision (both numbers of computers and regularity of access), curriculum constraints. The latter is a key challenge, and teachers often identify challenges in allocating time to implement a 'process-oriented' approach to writing development – with or without the aid of technology. Acknowledging the mixed findings in this area, Pennington (1996) provides useful food for thought, which may influence our approach to word-processed writing instruction. Her work suggests that improved quality is an outcome over a period of time. She suggests a cause-effect cycle in which we see writing events linked to a series of stages through which the developing computer writer will pass. Pennington sees those developmental stages in terms of four outcomes:

- Writing easier
- Writing more
- Writing differently
- Writing better.

Learners need to be supported towards producing more text in order that thinking *about* text development be activated: without more extensive text, we cannot attend to text cohesion and coherence. These general outcomes describe more specific effects in terms of:

- cognitive/affective effects, 'which impact on the learner's concept of writing and attitudes towards writing';
- process effect, which 'comprise the learner's way or manner of writing';
- product effects which 'are the learner's written texts'.

The word processor can support learners in that development. We started this section, however, by asking whether other tools might play a role, and we return to that question. Look at this description of the stages of a lesson aiming towards a writing outcome. Note which technologies are used, and how uses might support specific stages of the writing process as described by Flower and Hayes.

Task

A number of sports are known as 'extreme sports'. You can practice these in centres with specialist equipment. These are sometimes known as Outdoor Pursuits Centres. You are going to design a poster to tell people attending an Outdoor Pursuits week about one of these sports. You will need to make the sport attractive but give them information about what they need and how to stay safe.

Technologies

Single computer and projection (or interactive whiteboard)

Video clip on topic. (This task used a particular off air video clip, but there are numerous online sources.)

Teacher-created text reconstruction task using WebRhubarb from Text-toys http://www.cict.co.uk/software/textoys/index.htm

Class wiki

Stage	*Activity and technology*	*Purpose (in relation to writing stages)*
Stage 1: whole class	Display poster template through computer projection.	Raising awareness of stored writing plan and audience
Stage 2: whole class	Display still frame from start of video; encourage prediction of sport; learners contribute personal experiences.	Schema raising
Stage 3: whole class	Learners view first part of video clip and complete guided note taking task on the equipment and uses.	Generating ideas and knowledge of topic
Stage 4: whole class	Learners collaborate on text reconstruction to complete a description of equipment. Figure 5.3	Rehearsing lexical items and language form for writing

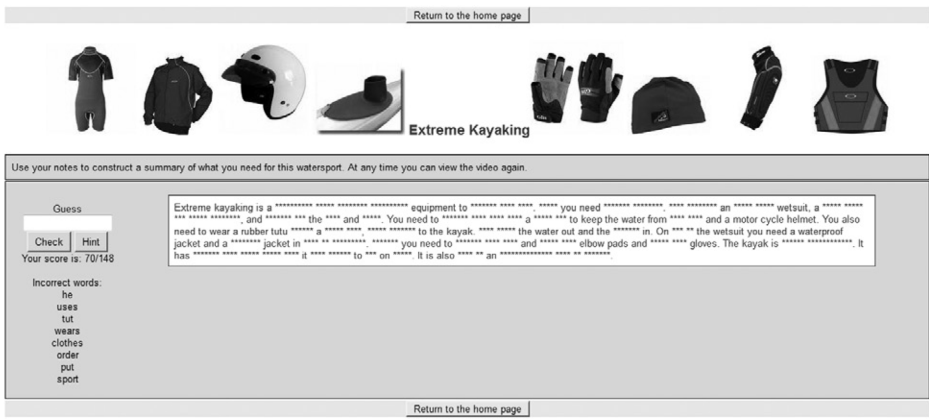

Figure 5.3 Integrating technologies to support the writing process.

Stage 5: pairs	Pairs watch remainder of video and note dangers and safety precautions.	Generating ideas
Stage 6: pairs (home task)	Pages in wiki divided into sections according to poster template. Pairs use class wiki to collaboratively draft the poster content, choosing sections to draft individually before coming back to edit together for display and evaluation in the following lesson.	Translating ideas; reading, reviewing, editing

If we think back to the two questions posed by Salaberry (2001), the specific attributes of the tools cited here support learners both in the writing process and in attention to the written product. A wiki is an interesting replacement for the word processor here. Its most notable attributes are the collaborative writing functions that allow learners to not only edit each other's texts, but to see a history of those edits. These also provide the teacher with a picture of the collaborative processes. In research doing just that, Kessler (2009) found that, despite such attributes, wiki use without teacher intervention did not necessarily result in focus on form in meaning-focused writing activity. In this task sequence, text reconstruction goes some way towards raising awareness of the writing plan, that is, the language and form of the end product; the public display of the final outcome both within the wiki and shared with the whole class also reminds learners of an audience

for their writing. A further aspect of this lesson is its ecological setting. This was not a series of tasks undertaken in a room with enough computers for all or even half of the learners; it makes use of a single computer and projection, with the wiki writing being done outside the classroom context. As we identified at the start of this chapter, it is these local factors that will determine how we orchestrate technology-supported learning. With the growth of Web 2.0 tools such as wikis, and where our learners have access to the Internet, the four walls of the classroom seem to almost disappear.

5.6 Networked Technologies: Computers, Communication and Collaboration

Warschauer and Kern (2000) emphasize the links between developing communicative competence and real-world needs, with language use being described as 'helping students enter into the kinds of authentic social discourse situations and discourse communities that they would later encounter outside the classroom' (Warschauer and Kern, 2000: 5). The speedy developments in global networking have resulted in a focus on the potential of establishing opportunities for such encounters with other language users through computers, not only because computer-mediated communication offers such opportunities but also because learners are, in the main, users of the associated tools. Kern and Warschauer (2000: 13) argue that:

> if our goal is to help students enter into new authentic discourse communities, and if those discourse communities are increasingly located online, then it seems appropriate to incorporate online activities for their *social* utility as well as for their perceived particular *pedagogical* value.

We have already suggested that approaches to using computers for reading and writing reflect similar thinking. In terms of computer-mediated communication, we identify a number of familiar tools: synchronous technologies such as messenger applications and asynchronous tools such as email or discussion forums. Increasingly, audio and video capability is part of both of these communication modes. We are also talking about Web 2.0 developments, which have broadened our thinking beyond 'online conversations' to revolutionary ways of building community, sharing content such as podcasts and vodcasts via YouTube; negotiating content collaboratively through wikis; creating networks of shared knowledge through tagging (labelling content so that semantic relationships can be both retrieved and added to by others); organizing such content in social bookmarking tools such as *del.icio.us* (http://delicious.com/) or *Diigo* (http://www.diigo.com/).

Networked technologies put social interaction at their centre. The contributions that such technologies can make to language learning have been explored from both second language interactionist and sociocultural perspectives. We start by taking a look at 'online conversations' to explore how these might be understood through an SLA lens.

Premised on the fact that input alone is not sufficient, the acquisition perspective addresses how learners might be provided with opportunities to engage in authentic interaction. Its pillar is how language is made salient. Negotiation of meaning is central to this process; this accounts for how interlocutors make adjustments in their interactions to negotiate mutual understanding. As they engage in such adjustments, language features are highlighted, directing attention to form. In research into CALL the interaction account of SLA has enlightened what happens in face-to-face interactions *around* the computer, that is, seeing the computer as a catalyst, and *through* the computer. Second language research in this area has largely been in relation to synchronous communication (e.g. Smith, 2005), where real-time conversation has been explored as an approximation to face-to-face interaction. Jepson (2005) identifies this as 'a wellspring for negotiation of meaning, a communicative exchange that sustains and repairs conversations'.

Chapelle (1998, 2001) outlines the conditions for SLA in her review of arguments for SLA and multimedia:

1 the linguistic characteristics of target language input need to be made salient;
2 learners should receive help in comprehending semantic and syntactic aspects of linguistic input;
3 learners need to have opportunities to produce target language output;
4 learners need to notice errors in their own output;
5 learners need to correct their linguistic output;
6 learners need to engage in target language interaction whose structure can be modified for negotiation of meaning; and
7 learners should engage in L2 tasks designed to maximize opportunities for good interaction.

The synchronous conversation on the next page demonstrates the opportunities that exchange with other L2 users can bring. In exploiting computer-mediated communication (CMC), it is worth reflecting on the nature of the tool and the type of language we tend to see within. Other CMC tools have different attributes to the chat tool that was used in this encounter, and these impact on the characteristics of the language generated. Asynchronous tools such as email or forum spaces provide more thinking time, allowing learners to rehearse language use before committing to sharing their ideas (Slaouti, 2000). Thinking more broadly about how available tools can support interaction then brings us to further dimensions of this networked picture. There

Look at this extract from an exchange between an L2 learner and an L1 speaker of English. How many of the 'conditions' would appear to be accommodated through this communication opportunity?

rachaelegray2003: Hello!
hoontaek_yang: hello
rachaelegray2003: Hope you have not had a very busy day at University today
hoontaek_yang: Next week is Middle exam, it's unhappy
rachaelegray2003: I don't enjoy exams either
hoontaek_yang:^^
rachaelegray2003: ^^ ?
hoontaek_yang: Do you know this emoticon? ^^
hoontaek_yang: ^^ is smile.
rachaelegray2003: Ah!
hoontaek_yang: My teacher told is smile in England
hoontaek_yang: What time is there?
hoontaek_yang: What time is it?

hoontaek_yang: Is this correct text?
rachaelegray2003: Yes perfect. It's evening in Korea isn't it?

rachaelegray2003: It's 12 noon here.
hoontaek_yang: Thank you ^^. Yes, I ate dinner before just.
rachaelegray2003: Anything nice?
hoontaek_yang: I ate Kimchi soup
rachaelegray2003: Whats that made from
hoontaek_yang: Kimchi is main source of Kimchi soup
rachaelegray2003: I've never heard of Kimchi – is it a vegetable
hoontaek_yang: yes
rachaelegray2003: Very healthy. Students in England are known for eating lots of 'junk' food
rachaelegray2003: It's cheap here but it means we all get very fat ^^
hoontaek_yang: Like burger?
rachaelegray2003: yes and chips
hoontaek_yang: I like that too
hoontaek_yang: Kimchi is pickled cabbage in dictionary
rachaelegray2003: I like soup too but I have not tried cabbage soup
hoontaek_yang: Kimchi soup's taste is a little hot.

are various examples of exchange projects that have aimed at developing both language and intercultural awareness through computer mediated collaborative activity using both longer standing CMC tools and Web 2.0 spaces (see e.g. Liaw and Johnson, 2001; O'Dowd, 2007; Lee, 2009). We turn our attention to the collaborative activity itself.

The synchronous extract we have just read is from the early stages of a collaboration in which the two participants explored each other's shared and diverse perspectives on cultural values. This was not an open discussion, but framed by a staged process. They were encouraged to 'meet' synchronously to get to know each other and to negotiate their project focus. This involved individually brainstorming associations with keywords such as 'family' and 'the Internet', and then deciding on one theme which they mutually found interesting to explore together. They used different technologies to support that exploration: the generation of 'word clouds' around their theme using http://www.wordle.net/ (figure 5.4); the sharing of anecdotes, interesting online texts, YouTube clips or other media content.

The learners in their international settings were brought together via a class wiki built using http://pbworks.com/ (figure 5.5).

This latter was not only a home base for all of the different project pairs, but the location for their negotiation of the final project outcome, a summary of their explorations to their class colleagues. From each wiki page, learners provided a link to a short online presentation of what they had learnt from each other using *Prezi* (http://prezi.com/).

Figure 5.4 Wordle cloud – 'family' http://www.wordle.net/.

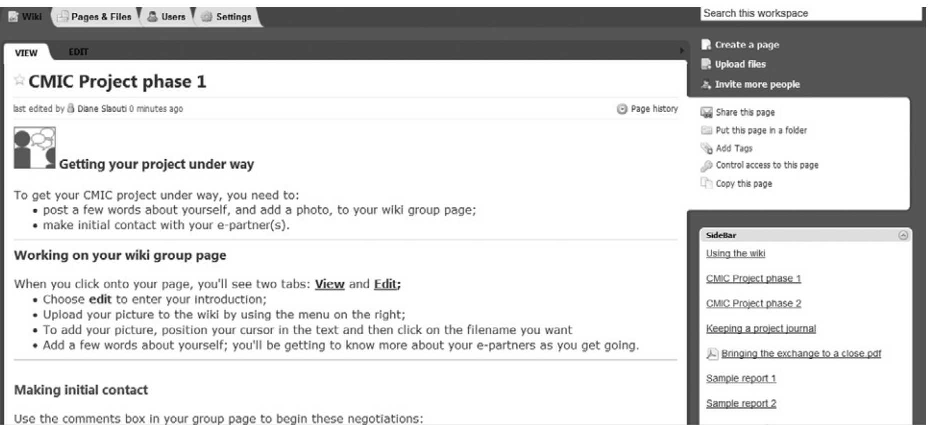

Figure 5.5 A wiki home base for an intercultural collaboration.

This brief description exemplifies learning through social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's contribution to our understanding of learning places the social as a precedent to the individual; language is a mediating tool, allowing access to higher level learning. In this theorization, it is not only the teacher but also peers who play a role in scaffolding learners to a point at which they become able to use language independently. Of interest to CALL practitioners is also the fact that different technologies also play a mediating role; as we identified earlier in this chapter, tools can provide heuristic frames for thinking and problem solving (see e.g. Gutierrez, 2003). Such sociocultural perspectives on learning thus provide us with a useful framework for thinking about the opportunities that specific technologies and particular collaborative learning activities bring to our classroom settings, whether physical or virtual.

Such activities do need careful planning, however. Talking of CMC, Stockwell and Levy (2001: 420) warn us that 'learners tend to use this medium of communication more substantially in the early stages and reduce their usage as the initial excitement wears off'. Figure 5.6 illustrates how online collaboration is facilitated by various tools that are freely available to the teacher; it also illustrates, however, an approach to harnessing specific tools for specific purposes. Thinking about the attributes of specific technologies in relation to language learning activity also lies behind this mapping of an exchange between teenagers in Spain and the United Kingdom. This staged exchange gave the children in the two locations an opportunity to find an authentic audience for their language use; it also involved close integration into their class activity.

The two projects described are clearly realized in different ways, each taking account of the local realities of the curriculum, the age of the learners,

Time	Curriculum activity	Project activity	Technology
Week 1	Teachers introduce children to project; background research on exchange location; tasks to check comfort receiving and sending emails		
Weeks 2–3	Review talking about yourself and family; question formation	Initial email contact Manchester - Spain; getting to know you	Email; digital camera
Weeks 4–5	Talking about someone; use of third person	Individual writing about partners; ask for more information by email	Word processing; digital photo from partners; share on class wall poster
Weeks 6–7	Describing a place; my school; my town	Children in both locations take photos through the school window, moving out into the local community; mount and describe in Powerpoint	Email; digital camera; Powerpoint
Weeks 8–9	Food; favourite food; food at Easter	Exchange of information; recipe	Email; present recipe to class (and make if possible!)
Week 10	Closing the project	Children create class video message	Video recorded by school technician; sent on DVD (due to size of file)

Figure 5.6 Stages in an exchange project between teenage English L2 and Spanish L2 learners.

their capacity for independent activity, and each demonstrates different decision-making in terms of the specific technology use. Of note in the planning of the exchange activities illustrated in figure 5.6 is the fact that the teachers made use of tools which were not only fit for purpose, but which were a focus of ICT skills development elsewhere in the learners' secondary school curriculum.

The examples here illustrate the potential of technology to create bridges out from our learners' cultural contexts. They also exemplify technology as a vehicle for extending the locus of language learning activity. Such thinking is not exclusive to intercultural exchanges. As identified earlier in this book, much of our work as language teachers involves encouraging and scaffolding learning which extends beyond the bounds of the physical classroom. Many institutions have a virtual learning environment which they may have

Figure 5.7 A listening blog with embedded video clips, tagged for theme and language level.

purchased; they may alternatively use Moodle, which is a well-known open source environment, and teachers are usually invited to populate these with materials and activities that may either be used in class, or as a self-access resource – very often both. Many teachers harness the tools we have mentioned earlier to provide a more local, personal home base for independent learning. In figure 5.7 we see a teacher blog, created using https://www.blogger.com, and dedicated to listening sources, a combination of embedded video clips from Youtube and RSS feeds to podcasts, for example, from the BBC Learning English web site. Each of these is tagged, that is, labelled, according to recommended minimum language level, general theme and specific source, allowing learners to navigate their way through. Guidance can be provided through a comment feature on each post; a widget is added to poll on what they would like to see more of. Thoughtful planning around available functionality soon allows for a simple but effective resource to be easily built.

As we consider how these find a place in our practice, we would do well to reflect on the words of Cochran-Smith, reviewing the research literature in 1991 on word processing and writing, who wrote that computer use

> is dependent on the learning organisation of the classroom which, in reciprocal fashion, may also be shaped and changed by the capacities of computer technology to accommodate new patterns of social organisation and interaction. (Cochran-Smith, 1991: 122)

We have illustrated in this chapter how the technology itself is not only able to accommodate new patterns of previously unanticipated patterns of

interaction; it is in fact beginning to have a very firm influence on where our classroom practice is going. As we also suggested, more and more learners have access to computer-mediated communications technologies outside their learning environment. The fact that networked technologies exist, and that more people access them as authentic tools as part of their lives, is resulting in teachers looking for ways in which to accommodate the patterns of interaction the technology brings.

5.7 Teachers and Technology in Context

We started this chapter by flagging context-sensitive integration, and we finish with this perspective. Having reviewed various theories that frame thinking about technology and language learning, Levy and Stockwell (2006: 141) conclude that theory should not 'replace a principled approach', and this is a position that we hope to have exemplified in this chapter. Principled approaches can, however, be informed by an understanding of how what we do in a specific context is likely to impact on learning.

It is an awareness of contexts of learning that may also determine where research into language learning and technology use continues to move. Many of the classrooms in which we find ourselves may already be equipped with a computer, projection, Internet access; our institutions may already have virtual learning environments; the ubiquitous nature of Web 2.0 tools will also help to expand those classroom boundaries. How we use technology on a daily basis will no doubt influence learner expectations of how and where learning takes place; growth in wireless connectivity brings further implications for where learners potentially learn. Our very classrooms are likely to straddle the physical and the virtual, or even move ever more into the virtual such as Second Life, (http://secondlife.com/) where language learning communities are establishing themselves (see e.g. http://www.avalonlearning.eu/) (figure 5.8).

We also take you back to our two framing questions from Salaberry (2001):

- What technical attributes specific to the new technologies can be profitably exploited for pedagogical purposes?
- How can new technologies be successfully integrated into the curriculum?

We have rehearsed ways of thinking about the attributes of specific technologies, and how these relate to views of technology-supported pedagogy. There are of course many more specific tools which we have not mentioned here. However, understanding the attributes of available tools is one part of our decision-making. We have also emphasized how decisions to use

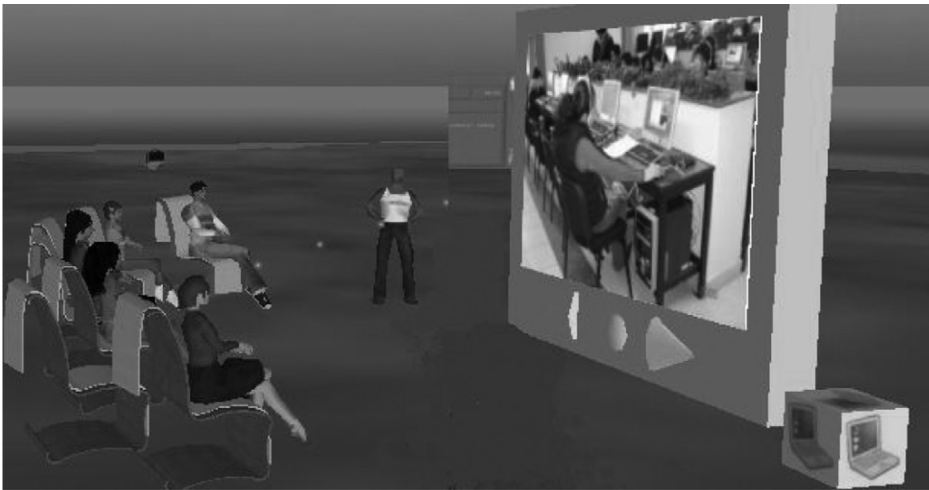

Figure 5.8 Virtual learning spaces: Second Life.

technology will be filtered by various factors, not least your own beliefs about teaching and learning language, your confidence in using specific tools, your understanding of learner needs. Importantly, Kennedy and Levy (2009) advocate that those seeking to integrate technology into their teaching should see such projects as an iterative process of 'tailoring and integration' (Kennedy and Levy, 2009: 460). As you look for opportunities to use technology in principled ways either in following ideas illustrated in this chapter, or in supporting activities which you have seen and reflected on in the rest of this book, you might be guided by these questions:

Learning assumptions (current approaches to teaching and learning a second or foreign language)

Think about your own perspectives on language teaching. What approach(es) do you take to orchestrating specific aspects of language learning? What do your learners feel comfortable with? Does using a specific technology in a specific way shake learner expectations? Does a specific technology seem to 'fit' with your own pedagogical approach?

Learner needs

Can you identify a gap between needs and response? How can technology provide opportunities to satisfy those needs? For example, can it extend the learning context beyond classroom hours in specific ways; do learners need

more opportunities to interact with authentic texts, with other learners or L2 users; can technology-supported activities motivate learner engagement with particular aspects of learning?

Context (teaching and technology)

What sort of technology infrastructure do you have: a computer room or computer in the classroom; how many machines; how does this impact on task organization?

How hard does the syllabus drive you in terms of time for creativity? What ways can you find to integrate technology into textbook tasks?

5.8 Further Reading

Our professional community is also a very active one. The teacher interested in exploring the use of technology can look to the various sources cited in this chapter for practical inspiration, special interest groups in professional organisations such as IATEFL http://ltsig.org.uk/, and practitioner-maintained initiatives such as ICT for Language Teachers founded and developed by Graham Davies at http://www.ict4lt.org/, Nik Peachey's Learning Technology Blog http://nikpeachey.blogspot.com/ or Larry Ferlazzo's http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/. We also recommend regular browsing of the online journal *Language Learning and Technology* http://llt.msu.edu.

1 Beatty, K. (2010): *Teaching and Researching CALL*. London: Pearson Education, 2nd edition.
2 Dudeney, G. (2007): *The Internet and the Language Classroom*. Cambridge, UK: CUP, 2nd edition.