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Materials Development in Language Teaching

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Preface

Brian Tomlinson

This is a book of original chapters on current issues in materials development written by well-known contributors to the fields of applied linguistics and TEFL, most of whom have made presentations at MATSDA conferences.

MATSDA (The Materials Development Association) is an international materials development association founded in 1993 by Brian Tomlinson to contribute to the development of quality materials for learners of second and foreign languages. It aims to bring together teachers, researchers, materials writers and publishers in a joint endeavour to stimulate and support principled research, innovation and development. It does this by holding conferences, running workshops, providing consultants, publishing a journal (*Folio*) and stimulating books like this one.

For further information about MATSDA and for application forms for membership contact Brian Tomlinson, President of MATSDA, brianjohntomlinson@gmail.com, or go to the MATSDA website at www.matsda.org.uk. The main aim of this book is to further the work of MATSDA in providing information, ideas and stimulus which will facilitate the application of current thinking and research to the practical realities of developing and exploiting classroom materials. It also aims to stimulate further experimentation and innovation and thus to contribute to the continuing development of quality materials.

More and more applied linguistics and teacher development courses are including components on materials development (there are even MA courses focusing on L2 materials development at the International Graduate School of English in Seoul and at Leeds Metropolitan University), and more and more presentations at ELT conferences are focusing on issues related to the writing and exploitation of materials. And yet until 1998 few books had been published which investigated these issues. *Materials Development for Language Teaching* filled this gap by providing an opportunity for researchers, teachers, writers and publishers to communicate their informed views and suggestions to an audience seeking to gain new insights into the principles and procedures which were informing the current writing and exploitation of L2 materials. This revised edition of *Materials Development for Language Teaching* aims to retain the insights of the 1998 edition whilst adding new ideas and information related to developments since its initial publication. It includes five new chapters, two extra chapters on making use of new technologies in materials development and three replacement chapters on the pre-use evaluation of materials by publishers, on making use of corpora in published materials and on the post-use evaluation of tasks. The other chapters are revised and updated versions of chapters published in the 1998 edition.

Glossary of basic terms for materials development in language teaching

Brian Tomlinson

The following terms are used frequently in this book. Unless they are differently defined by the author(s) of the chapter, they are used with the meanings given below.

Authentic task (or real world task)

A task which involves learners in using language in a way that replicates its use in the 'real world' outside the language classroom. Filling in blanks, changing verbs from the simple past to the simple present and completing substitution tables are, therefore, not authentic tasks. Examples of authentic tasks would be answering a letter addressed to the learner, arguing a particular point of view and comparing various holiday brochures in order to decide where to go for a holiday.

See **pedagogic task**.

Authentic text

A text which is not written or spoken for language-teaching purposes. A newspaper article, a rock song, a novel, a radio interview, instructions on how to play a game and a traditional fairy story are examples of authentic texts. A story written to exemplify the use of reported speech, a dialogue scripted to exemplify ways of inviting and a linguistically simplified version of a novel would not be authentic texts.

See **simplified texts**; **text**.

CLIL

Content and Language Integrated Learning – an approach in which students acquire a second or foreign language whilst focusing on learning new content knowledge and skills (e.g. about science, about composing music, about playing football).

See **experiential learning**.

Communicative approaches

Approaches to language teaching which aim to help learners to develop communicative competence (i.e. the ability to use the language effectively for communication). A **weak communicative approach** includes overt teaching of language forms and functions in order to help learners to develop the ability to use them for communication. A **strong communicative approach** relies on providing learners with experience of using language as the main means of learning to use the language. In such an approach learners, for example, talk to learn rather than learn to talk.

Communicative competence

The ability to use the language effectively for communication. Gaining such competence involves acquiring both sociolinguistic and linguistic knowledge and skills (or, in other words, developing the ability to use the language fluently, accurately, appropriately and effectively).

Concordances (or concordance lines)

A list of authentic samples of language use each containing the same key word or phrase, for example:

The bus driver still didn't have **any** change so he made me wait.

I really don't mind which one. **Any** newspaper will do.

I just know what they are saying. **Any** teacher will tell you that it's

Concordances are usually generated electronically from a corpus.
See **authentic text**; **corpus**.

Corpus

A bank of authentic texts collected in order to find out how language is actually used. Often a corpus is restricted to a particular type of language use, for example, a corpus of newspaper English, a corpus of legal documents or a corpus of informal spoken English, and it is usually stored and retrieved from electronically.

See **text**.

Coursebook

A textbook which provides the core materials for a language-learning course. It aims to provide as much as possible in one book and is designed so that it could serve as the only book which the learners necessarily use during a course. Such a book usually includes work on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, functions and the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

See **supplementary materials**.

Discovery activity

An activity which involves learners in investing energy and attention in order to discover something about the language for themselves. Getting learners to work out the rules of direct speech from examples, asking learners to investigate when and why a character uses the modal 'must' in a story and getting learners to notice and explain the use of ellipsis in a recorded conversation would be examples of discovery activities.

ELF

English as a lingua franca – the English used by non-native speakers or the use of English by non-native speakers to achieve communication with each other. Some applied linguists consider ELF to be a variety of English whereas others consider it to be a way of using English.

See **World English**.

Experiential learning

Referring to ways of learning language through experiencing it in use rather than through focusing conscious attention on language items. Reading a novel, listening to a song and taking part in a project are experiential ways of learning language.

Foreign language

A language which is not normally used for communication in a particular society. Thus English is a foreign language in France and Spanish is a foreign language in Germany.

Global coursebook

A coursebook which is not written for learners from a particular culture or country but which is intended for use by any class of learners in the specified level and age group anywhere in the world.

Language awareness approaches

Approaches to teaching language which emphasise the value of helping learners to focus attention on features of language in use. Most proponents of language awareness approaches emphasise the importance of learners gradually developing their own awareness of how the language is used through discoveries which they make for themselves.

See **discovery activity**.

Language data

Instances of language use which are used to provide information about how the language is used. Thus a corpus can be said to be made up of language data.

See **corpus**.

Language practice

Activities which involve repetition of the same language point or skill in an environment which is controlled by the framework of the activity. The purpose for language production and the language to be produced are usually predetermined by the task or the teacher. The intention is not to use the language for communication but to strengthen, through successful repetition, the ability to manipulate a particular language form or function. Thus, getting all the students in a class, who already know each other, repeatedly to ask each other their names would be a practice activity.

See **language use**.

Language use

Activities which involve the production of language in order to communicate. The purpose of the activity might be predetermined but the language which is used is determined by the learners. Thus, getting a new class of learners to walk around and introduce themselves to each other would be a language use activity; and so would getting them to complete a story for which they have been given the beginning.

See **language practice**.

Learning styles

The way(s) that particular learners prefer to learn. Some language learners have a preference for hearing the language (auditory learners), some for seeing it written down (visual learners), some for learning it in discrete bits (analytic learners), some for experiencing it in large chunks (global or holistic or experiential learners), and many prefer to do something physical whilst experiencing the language (kinaesthetic learners). Learning styles are variable and people often have different preferences in different learning contexts.

Lexical approaches

These are approaches which focus on the use of vocabulary and especially on the choices available to users of English when wanting to communicate particular meanings in particular contexts for particular purposes.

Lexical chunks

These are phrases in which a group of words are used with only one meaning (e.g. 'have no option but'). They can be fixed terms in which the words never change (e.g. 'at the end of the day') or they can be routines in which one of the elements can change (e.g. 'All the best for the future/next week/exam/interview', etc.).

L2

A term used to refer to both foreign and second languages.

See **foreign language**; **second language**.

Materials

Anything which is used to help language learners to learn. Materials can be in the form, for example, of a textbook, a workbook, a cassette, a CD-ROM, a video, a photocopied handout, a newspaper, a paragraph written on a whiteboard: anything which presents or informs about the language being learned.

Materials adaptation

Making changes to materials in order to improve them or to make them more suitable for a particular type of learner. Adaptation can include reducing, adding, omitting, modifying and supplementing. Most teachers adapt materials every time they use a textbook in order to maximise the value of the book for their particular learners.

Materials evaluation

The systematic appraisal of the value of materials in relation to their objectives and to the objectives of the learners using them. Evaluation can be pre-use and therefore focused on predictions of potential value. It can be whilst-use and therefore focused on awareness and description of what the learners are actually doing whilst the materials are being used. And it can also be post-use and therefore focused on evaluation of what happened as a result of using the materials.

Multimedia materials

Materials which make use of a number of different media. Often they are available on a CD-ROM which makes use of print, graphics, video and sound. Usually such materials are interactive and enable the learner to receive feedback on the written or spoken language that they produce.

New technologies

A term used to refer to recently developed electronic means of delivering language-learning materials or of facilitating electronic communication between learners. It includes the Internet, as a resource as well as emails, YouTube, chat rooms, blogs, Facebook, video conferencing and mobile phone technology.

Pedagogic task

A task which does not replicate a real world task but which is designed to facilitate the learning of language or of skills which would be useful in a real world task. Completing one half of a dialogue, filling in the blanks in a story and working out the meaning of ten nonsense words from clues in a text would be examples of pedagogic tasks. Pedagogic tasks can, however, require the use of real world skills. A task requiring a group to reproduce a diagram which only one member of the group has seen, for example, involves the use of visualisation, giving precise instructions and asking for clarification. It is arguable that such tasks, despite not being real world tasks, are in fact authentic.

PPP

An approach to teaching language items which follows a sequence of presentation of the item, practice of the item and then production of the item. This is the approach still currently followed by most commercially produced coursebooks. Some applied linguists prefer, however, an experiential PPP approach in which production comes before presentation and practice.

See **language practice**; **SLA**; **language use**.

Second language

The term is used to refer to a language which is not a mother tongue but which is used for certain communicative functions in a society. Thus, English is a second language in Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Singapore, and French is a second language in Senegal, Cameroon and Tahiti.

See **foreign language**.

Self-access materials

Materials designed for learners to use independently (i.e. on their own without access to a teacher or a classroom). They are normally used by the learner at home, in a library or in a self-study centre and can be paper-based or electronic.

Simplified texts

These are texts which have been made simpler so as to make it easier for learners to read them. The usual principles of simplification involve reduction in length of the text, shortening of sentences, omission or replacement of difficult words or structures, omission of qualifying clauses and omission of non-essential detail. Some applied linguists prefer to simplify texts by adding examples, by using repetition and paraphrase and by increasing redundant information. In other words, by lengthening rather than shortening the text, by elaboration rather than reduction.

SLA

This is an abbreviation for Second Language Acquisition and is normally used to refer to research and theory related to the learning of second and foreign languages.

Supplementary materials

Materials designed to be used in addition to the core materials of a course. They are usually related to the development of the skills of reading, writing, listening or speaking rather than to the learning of language items, but also include dictionaries, grammar books and workbooks.

See coursebook.

Tasks

These are activities in which the learners are asked to use the target language in order to achieve a particular outcome within a particular context (e.g. solving a problem; planning a meeting; selecting candidates for an interview).

Task-based approaches

This refers to materials or courses which are designed around a series of authentic tasks which give the learners experience of using the language in ways in which it is used in the 'real world' outside the classroom.

They usually have no pre-determined language syllabus and the aim is for learners to learn from the tasks the language that they need for successful participation in them. Examples of such tasks would be working out the itinerary of a journey from a timetable, completing a passport application form, ordering a product from a catalogue and giving directions to the post office.

See **authentic task**.

Text

Any extended sample of a language presented to learners of that language. A text can be written or spoken and could be, for example, a poem, a newspaper article, a passage about pollution, a song, a film, a live conversation, an extract from a novel or play, a passage written to exemplify the use of the past perfect, a recorded telephone conversation, a scripted dialogue or a speech by a politician.

Text-based approaches

Approaches in which the starting point is a text rather than a teaching point. The learners first of all experience and respond to the text before focusing attention on salient language or discourse features of it.

See **experiential learning**.

Workbook

A book which contains extra practice activities for learners to work on in their own time. Usually the book is designed so that learners can write in it and often there is an answer key provided in the back of the book to give feedback to the learners.

World English

A variety of English which is used for international communication.

See **ELF**.

For definitions of other terms frequently used in EFL and applied linguistics see:

Crystal, D. 1985. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Davies, A. 2005. *A Glossary of Applied Linguistics*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press.
Ellis, R. 1994. 'Glossary'. In *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 692–729.
Johnson, K. and H. Johnson, H. 1999. *The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Applied Linguistics: A Handbook for Language Teaching*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
Richards, J. and R. Schmidt, H. Platt and M. Schmidt. 2010. *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*, 4th edn. Harlow: Longman.
Tomlinson, B. 1984. 'A glossary of basic EFL terms'. In A. Cunningsworth, *Evaluating and Selecting EFL Teaching Materials*. London: Heinemann, pp. 80–102.

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p. 39, fig. 2, Davies, Mark. (2008-) The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA): 410+ million words, 1990-present. Available online at http://www.americancorpus.org; pp. 42–43, figs. 2.3, 2.4, Michigan Corpus of Upper-level Student Papers. (2009). Ann Arbor, MI: The Regents of the University of Michigan; p. 53, fig 3.1, *Collins Cobuild data sheets* Concordance for 'any', 1986. Collins Cobuild; p. 79. Nunan, D. and Lockwood, J. 1991. *The Australian English Course.* Cambridge University Press; pp. 79–80, Burns, A. Joyce, H. and Gollin, S. 1996. *'I see what you mean.' Using Spoken Discourse in The Classroom: A Handbook for Teachers.* NCELTR, Macquarie University (Sydney); pp. 192–195, Littlejohn, A. and Hicks, D. 2008. *Primary Colours Pupil's Book 5.* Cambridge University Press; pp. 284–289, Goodey and Goodey. 2005. *Messages.* Cambridge University Press; p. 307, fig. 12.2 © Oxford University Press 2008; p. 333, fig. 13.2, screenshot reproduced with permission; p. 333, fig. 13.3, Screenshot reproduced courtesy of Languagelab.com; p. 399–400, McGinley, P. *"The Adversary"* from *Times Three.* Martin Secker & Warburg; p. 400, Thomas, R. S. 1963 *"Sorry"* from *The Bread of Truth* HarperCollins Publishers Ltd.; p. 401, Leon Leszek Szkutnik, *"He Never Sent me Flowers".* (Warsaw); pp. 423–424, Gordimer, N. 1991. *My Son's Story.* Reproduced with permission of A P Watt Ltd on behalf of Felix Licensing BV.

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1 Introduction: principles and procedures of materials development

Brian Tomlinson

1.1 Introduction

This book concerns itself with what we could do in order to improve the quality of materials which are used for the teaching and learning of second languages. I would like to start the book by considering some of the steps which I think we could take and at the same time introducing issues which are dealt with in the various chapters of the book. I should stress that although the contributors to this book are basically like-minded in their approach to the development of L2 materials, many of the issues raised are controversial and some of the stances taken in the book are inevitably contradictory. In such cases we hope you will be informed, stimulated and able to make up your own mind by relating the authors' stances to your own experience.

I am going to argue that what those of us involved in materials development should do is to:

1. Clarify the terms and concepts commonly used in discussing materials development.
2. Carry out systematic evaluations of materials currently in use in order to find out to what degree, how and why they facilitate language learning.
3. Consider the potential applications for materials development of current research into second language acquisition and into language use.
4. Consider the potential applications of what both teachers and learners believe is valuable in the teaching and learning of a second or foreign language.
5. Pool our resources and bring together researchers, writers, teachers, learners and publishers in joint endeavours to develop quality materials.

1.2 Terms and concepts

Let me start by clarifying some of the basic terms and concepts which you will frequently encounter in this book.

1.2.1 Materials

Most people associate the term 'language-learning materials' with coursebooks because that has been their main experience of using materials. However, in this book the term is used to refer to anything which is used by teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language. Materials could obviously be videos, DVDs, emails, YouTube, dictionaries, grammar books, readers, workbooks or photocopied exercises. They could also be newspapers, food packages, photographs, live talks by invited native speakers, instructions given by a teacher, tasks written on cards or discussions between learners. In other words, they can be anything which is deliberately used to increase the learners' knowledge and/or experience of the language. Keeping this pragmatic concept of materials in mind can help materials developers to utilise as many sources of input as possible and, even more importantly, can help teachers to realise that they are also materials developers and that they are ultimately responsible for the materials that their learners use. It can also be useful to keep in mind that materials 'can be instructional in that they inform learners about the language, they can be experiential in that they provide exposure to the language in use, they can be elicitative in that they stimulate language use, or they can be exploratory in that they facilitate discoveries about language use' (Tomlinson 2001: 66).

1.2.2 Materials development

'Materials development is both a field of study and a practical undertaking. As a field it studies the principles and procedures of the design, implementation and evaluation of language teaching materials' (Tomlinson 2001: 66). As a practical undertaking it refers to anything which is done by writers, teachers or learners to provide sources of language input, to exploit those sources in ways which maximise the likelihood of intake and to stimulate purposeful output: in other words the supplying of information about and/or experience of the language in ways designed to promote language learning. Ideally the 'two aspects of materials development are interactive in that the theoretical studies inform and are informed by the development and use of classroom materials' (Tomlinson 2001: 66).

Materials developers might write textbooks, tell stories, bring advertisements into the classroom, express an opinion, provide samples of language use or read a poem aloud. Whatever they do to provide input, they do so ideally in principled ways related to what they know about how languages can be effectively learned. All the chapters in this book concentrate on the three vital questions of what should be provided for the learners, how it should be provided and what can be done with it to promote language learning.

Although many chapters in this book do focus on the development of coursebook materials (e.g. Jan Bell and Roger Gower in Chapter 6, Hitomi Masuhara in Chapter 10 and Frances Amrani in Chapter 11), some focus on electronic ways of delivering materials (e.g. Gary Motteram in Chapter 12 and Lisa Kervin and Beverly Derewianka in Chapter 13), a number of others focus on teacher development of materials (e.g. David Jolly and Rod Bolitho in Chapter 5 and Rod Ellis in Chapter 9), and some suggest ways in which learners can develop materials for themselves (e.g. Jane Willis in Chapter 3 and Alan Maley in Chapter 15).

1.2.3 Materials evaluation

This term refers to attempts to measure the value of materials. In many cases this is done impressionistically and consists of attempts to predict whether or not the materials will work, in the sense that the learners will be able to use them without too much difficulty and will enjoy the experience of doing so. A number of chapters in this book challenge this vague, subjective concept of evaluation and advocate more systematic and potentially revealing approaches. For example, Frances Amrani in Chapter 11 reports ways of reviewing materials prior to publication which can improve the quality of the materials, Andrew Littlejohn in Chapter 8 proposes a more objective, analytical approach to evaluation and Rod Ellis in Chapter 9 argues the need for whilst-use and post-use evaluation of materials in order to find out what the actual effects of the materials are. Other recent publications which propose systematic approaches to the evaluation of language-learning materials include McGrath (2002), McDonough, Shaw and Masuhara (2011), Rubdi (2003) and Tomlinson (2003a).

All the chapters in this book implicitly accept the view that for materials to be valuable, the learning points should be potentially useful to the learners and that the learning procedures should maximise the likelihood of the learners actually learning what they want and need to learn. It is not necessarily enough that the learners enjoy and value the materials.

1.2.4 Language teaching

Most people think of teaching as the overt presentation of information by teachers to learners. In this book the term 'teaching' is used to refer to anything done by materials developers or teachers to facilitate the learning of the language. This could include the teacher standing at the front of the classroom explaining the conventions of direct speech in

English, it could include a textbook providing samples of language use and guiding learners to make discoveries from them, it could include a textbook inviting learners to reflect on the way they have just read a passage or it could include the teacher providing the vocabulary a learner needs whilst participating in a challenging task. Teaching can be direct (in that it transmits information overtly to the learners) or it can be indirect (in that it helps the learners to discover things for themselves). It can also be pre-emptive (in that it aims to prevent problems), facilitative (in that it aims to help the learners do something), responsive (in that it responds to a need for language when it occurs) or remedial in that it aims to remedy problems. Most chapters in this book focus on indirect teaching as the most effective way of facilitating the learning of a language. For example, in Chapters 2 and 3 Randi Reppen and Jane Willis suggest ways in which learners can be helped to make discoveries about language use by analysing samples of language in use, in Chapter 16 Grethe Hooper Hansen looks at ways in which learners can be helped to learn from information which is actually peripheral to the task they are focusing on, and in Chapter 17 Brian Tomlinson proposes procedures which could enable self-access learners to learn for and about themselves.

1.2.5 Language learning

Learning is normally considered to be a conscious process which consists of the committing to memory of information relevant to what is being learned. Whilst such direct learning of, for example, spelling rules, conventions of greetings and vocabulary items can be useful to the language learner, it is arguable that much language learning consists of subconscious development of generalisations about how the language is used and of both conscious and subconscious development of skills and strategies which apply these generalisations to acts of communication. Language learning can be explicit (i.e. the learners are aware of when and what they are learning) or it can be implicit (i.e. the learners are not aware of when and what they are learning). Language learning can also be of declarative knowledge (i.e. knowledge about the language system) or of procedural knowledge (i.e. knowledge of how the language is used). Most of the chapters in this book take the position that communicative competence is primarily achieved as a result of implicit, procedural learning. But most of them also acknowledge that explicit learning of both declarative and procedural knowledge is of value in helping learners to pay attention to salient features of language input and in helping them to participate in planned discourse (i.e. situations such as giving a presentation or writing a story which allow time for planning and monitoring). Consequently many of the chapters view the main objectives of materials development as the provision of the meaningful experience of language in use and of opportunities to reflect on this experience. This is the position taken by Ronald Carter, Rebecca Hughes and Michael McCarthy in Chapter 4, in which they argue for the need to expose learners to spoken English as it is actually used. It is also the position taken by Brian Tomlinson in Chapter 14 in which he proposes experiential ways of helping learners to transfer the high level skill of visualisation from their L1 reading process, by Grethe Hooper Hansen in Chapter 16 when she advocates multi-level experience of language in use and by Brian Tomlinson in Chapter 17 when he suggests an experiential approach to self-access learning of language.

1.3 Systematic evaluation of materials

In Chapter 7 Philip Prowse gets a number of well-known materials writers to reveal how they set about writing materials. The remarkable thing is that most of them follow their intuitions rather than an overt specification of objectives, principles and procedures. Obviously these intuitions are informed by experience of what is valuable to learners of a language and in many cases they lead to the development of valuable materials. But how useful it would be if we were able to carry out long-term, systematic evaluations of materials which are generally considered to be successful. I know of a number of famous textbook writers who do sit down and identify the popular and apparently successful features of their competitors so that they can clone these features and can avoid those features which appear to be unpopular and unsuccessful. Doing much more than this sort of ad hoc impressionistic evaluation of materials would involve considerable time and expenditure and would create great problems in controlling such variables as learner motivation, out-of-class experience and learner–teacher rapport. But longitudinal, systematic evaluations of popular materials could be undertaken by consortia of publishers, universities and associations such as MATSDA, and they could certainly provide empirically validated information about the actual effects of different types of language-learning materials. Such research is carried out by publishers, but it tends to focus on what makes the materials popular rather than on what effect the materials have on language acquisition, and most of this research is understandably confidential (see Chapter 11 by Frances Amrani for information about this type of research).

A number of chapters in this book try to push the profession forward towards using more systematic evaluation procedures as a means of informing materials development. In Chapter 8 Andrew Littlejohn exemplifies procedures for achieving thorough and informative analysis of what materials are actually doing, in Chapter 11 Frances Amrani reports on systematic evaluations of materials carried out by publishers prior to the publication of materials, and in Chapter 5 David Jolly and Rod Bolitho propose ways in which learner evaluations of materials feed into the development process. In Chapter 9 Rod Ellis insists that we should stop judging materials by their apparent appeal and start evaluating them by observing what the learners actually do when using the materials and by finding out what they seem to learn as a result of using them.

1.4 Second language acquisition research and materials development

> It seems clear that researchers cannot at present agree upon a single view of the learning process which can safely be applied wholesale to language teaching. (Tarone and Yule 1989)

> no second language acquisition research can provide a definitive answer to the real problems of second language teaching at this point. … There is no predetermined correct theory of language teaching originating from second language acquisition research. (Cook 1996)

The quotations above are still true today and it is also still true that we should not expect definitive answers from second language acquisition (SLA) research, nor should we expect one research-based model of language acquisition to triumph over all the others. We must therefore be careful not to prescribe applications of unsubstantiated theories. But this should not stop us from applying what we *do* know about second and foreign language learning to the development of materials designed to facilitate that process. What we do know about language learning is a result of thousands of years of reflective teaching and of at least a century of experimental and observational research. If we combined the convincing anecdotal and empirical evidence available to us, we could surely formulate criteria which could contribute to the development of successful materials. From the reports of many of the writers in this volume it would seem that they rely on their intuitions about language learning when they set out to write textbooks. This also seems to be true of many of the authors who have contributed reports on their processes for materials development to a book called *Getting Started: Materials Writers on Materials Writing* (Hidalgo, Hall and Jacobs 1995). The validity of their intuitions is demonstrated by the quality of their materials. But intuitions are only useful if they are informed by recent and relevant classroom experience and by knowledge of the findings of recent second language acquisition research. And all of us could benefit from more explicit guidelines when setting out to develop materials for the classroom.

What I am arguing for is a compilation of learning principles and procedures which most teachers agree contribute to successful learning plus a compilation of principles and procedures recommended by most SLA researchers. A marriage of the two compilations could produce a list of principles and procedures which would provide a menu of potentially profitable options for materials developers from the classroom teacher adapting a coursebook unit to the author(s) setting out to develop a series of commercially published textbooks for the global market. Such a list should aim to be informative rather than prescriptive and should not give the impression that its recommendations are supported by conclusive evidence and by all teachers and researchers. And, of course, it needs to be supplemented by information about how the target language actually works (for ways of gaining such information, see, for example, Chapter 2 in this book by Randi Reppen, Chapter 3 by Jane Willis and Chapter 4 by Ronald Carter, Rebecca Hughes and Michael McCarthy). My own list of basic principles is as follows:

1. A prerequisite for language acquisition is that the learners are exposed to a rich, meaningful and comprehensible input of language in use.
2. In order for the learners to maximise their exposure to language in use, they need to be engaged both affectively and cognitively in the language experience.
3. Language learners who achieve positive affect are much more likely to achieve communicative competence than those who do not.
4. L2 language learners can benefit from using those mental resources which they typically utilise when acquiring and using their L1.
5. Language learners can benefit from noticing salient features of the input and from discovering how they are used.
6. Learners need opportunities to use language to try to achieve communicative purposes.

For a justification of these principles and a discussion of ways of applying them to materials development see Tomlinson (2010). See also McGrath (2002), McDonough, Shaw and Masuhara (2011) and Tomlinson (2008) for discussion of the application of learning principles to materials development.

Of course, one problem is that there is considerable disagreement amongst researchers about some of the main issues relevant to the teaching and learning of languages. Some argue that the main prerequisite for language acquisition is comprehensible input (i.e. being exposed to language you can understand); others argue that the main prerequisite is opportunity for output (i.e. situations in which you have to actually use the language). Some researchers argue that the best way to acquire a language is to do so naturally without formal lessons or conscious study of the language; others argue that conscious attention to distinctive features of the language is necessary for successful language learning. Try skimming through an overview of second language acquisition research (e.g. Ellis 2008) and you will soon become aware of some of the considerable (and, in my view, stimulating) disagreements amongst SLA researchers. Such disagreements are inevitable, given our limited access to the actual mental processes involved in the learning and using of languages, and often the intensity of the arguments provoke additional and illuminating research. However, I believe that there is now a sufficient consensus of opinion for SLA research to be used as an informative base for the formulation of criteria for the teaching of languages. The following is a summary of what I think many SLA researchers would agree to be some of the basic principles of second language acquisition relevant to the development of materials for the teaching of languages.

1.4.1 Materials should achieve impact

Impact is achieved when materials have a noticeable effect on learners, that is when the learners' curiosity, interest and attention are attracted. If this is achieved, there is a better chance that some of the language in the materials will be taken in for processing.

Materials can achieve impact through:

(a) novelty (e.g. unusual topics, illustrations and activities);
(b) variety (e.g. breaking up the monotony of a unit routine with an unexpected activity; using many different text-types taken from many different types of sources; using a number of different instructor voices on a CD);
(c) attractive presentation (e.g. use of attractive colours; lots of white space; use of photographs);
(d) appealing content (e.g. topics of interest to the target learners; topics which offer the possibility of learning something new; engaging stories; universal themes; local references);
(e) achievable challenge (e.g. tasks which challenge the learners to think).

One obvious point is that impact is variable. What achieves impact with a class in Brazil might not achieve the same impact with a class in Austria. And what achieves impact with ten learners in a class might not achieve impact with the other five. In order to maximise the likelihood of achieving impact, the writer needs to know as much as possible about the target learners and about what is likely to attract their attention. In order to achieve impact with most of the learners, the writer also needs to offer choice. The more varied the choice of topics, texts and activities, the more likely is the achievement of impact.

1.4.2 Materials should help learners to feel at ease

> Research has shown … the effects of various forms of anxiety on acquisition: the less anxious the learner, the better language acquisition proceeds. Similarly, relaxed and comfortable students apparently can learn more in shorter periods of time. (Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982)

Although it is known that pressure can stimulate some types of language learners, I think that most researchers would agree that most language learners benefit from feeling at ease and that they lose opportunities for language learning when they feel anxious, uncomfortable or tense (see, for example, Oxford 1999). Some materials developers argue that it is the responsibility of the teacher to help the learners to feel at ease and that the materials themselves can do very little to help. I disagree.

Materials can help learners to feel at ease in a number of ways. For example, I think that most learners:

- feel more comfortable with written materials with lots of white space than they do with materials in which lots of different activities are crammed together on the same page;
- are more at ease with texts and illustrations that they can relate to their own culture than they are with those which appear to them to be culturally alien;
- are more relaxed with materials which are obviously trying to help them to learn than they are with materials which are always testing them.

Feeling at ease can also be achieved through a ‘voice’ which is relaxed and supportive, through content and activities which encourage the personal participation of the learners, through materials which relate the world of the book to the world of the learner and through the absence of activities which could threaten self-esteem and cause humiliation. To me the most important (and possibly least researched) factor is that of the ‘voice’ of the materials. Conventionally, language-learning materials are de-voiced and anonymous. They are usually written in a semi-formal style and reveal very little about the personality, interests and experiences of the writer. What I would like to see materials writers do is to chat to the learners casually in the same way that good teachers do and to try to achieve personal contact with them by revealing their own preferences, interests and opinions. I would also like to see them try to achieve a personal voice (Beck, McKeown and Worthy 1995) by ensuring that what they say to the learners contains such features of orality as:

- informal discourse features (e.g. contracted forms, informal lexis);
- the active rather than the passive voice;
- concreteness (e.g. examples, anecdotes);
- inclusiveness (e.g. not signalling intellectual, linguistic or cultural superiority over the learners).

1.4.3 Materials should help learners to develop confidence

> Relaxed and self-confident learners learn faster (Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982).

Most materials developers recognise the need to help learners to develop confidence, but many of them attempt to do so through a process of simplification. They try to help the learners to feel successful by asking them to use simple language to accomplish easy tasks such as completing substitution tables, writing simple sentences and filling in the blanks in dialogues. This approach is welcomed by many teachers and learners. But in my experience it often only succeeds in diminishing the learners. They become aware that the process is being simplified for them and that what they are doing bears little resemblance to actual language use. They also become aware that they are not really using their brains and that their apparent success is an illusion. And this awareness can even lead to a reduction in confidence. I prefer to attempt to build confidence through activities which try to 'push' learners slightly beyond their existing proficiency by engaging them in tasks which are stimulating, which are problematic, but which are achievable too. It can also help if the activities encourage learners to use and to develop their existing extra-linguistic skills, such as those which involve being imaginative, being creative or being analytical. Elementary-level learners can often gain greater confidence from making up a story, writing a short poem or making a grammatical discovery than they can from getting right a simple drill. For more discussion of the value of setting learners achievable challenges see de Andres (1999) and Tomlinson (2003b, 2006).

The value of engaging the learners' minds and utilising their existing skills seems to be becoming increasingly realised in countries that have decided to produce their own materials through textbook projects rather than to rely on global coursebooks, which seem to underestimate the abilities of their learners. See Tomlinson (1995) for a report on such projects in Bulgaria, Morocco and Namibia, and Popovici and Bolitho (2003) for a report on a project in Romania. See Tomlinson *et al.* (2001)

and Masuhara *et al.* (2008) for evaluations of global coursebooks, and Tomlinson (in press) for a discussion of the importance of engagement.

1.4.4 What is being taught should be perceived by learners as relevant and useful

Most teachers recognise the need to make the learners aware of the potential relevance and utility of the language and skills they are teaching. And researchers have confirmed the importance of this need. For example, Stevick (1976) cites experiments which have shown the positive effect on learning and recall of items that are of personal significance to the learner. And Krashen (1982) and Wenden (1987) report research showing the importance of apparent relevance and utility in language acquisition.

In ESP (English for specific purposes) materials it is relatively easy to convince the learners that the teaching points are relevant and useful by relating them to known learner interests and to 'real-life' tasks, which the learners need or might need to perform in the target language. In general English materials this is obviously more difficult; but it can be achieved by narrowing the target readership and/or by researching what the target learners are interested in and what they really want to learn the language for. An interesting example of such research was a questionnaire in Namibia which revealed that two of the most important reasons for secondary school students wanting to learn English were so they would be able to write love letters in English and so that they would be able to write letters of complaint for villagers to the village headman and from the village headman to local authorities.

Perception of relevance and utility can also be achieved by relating teaching points to interesting and challenging classroom tasks and by presenting them in ways which could facilitate the achievement of the task outcomes desired by the learners. The 'new' learning points are not relevant and useful because they will help the learners to achieve long-term academic or career objectives, but because they could help the learners to achieve short-term task objectives now. Of course, this only works if the tasks are begun first and the teaching is then provided in response to discovered needs. This is much more difficult for the materials writer than the conventional approach of teaching a predetermined point first and then getting the learners to practise and then produce it. But it can be much more valuable in creating relevance and utility for the teaching point; and it can be achieved by, for example, referring learners to 'help pages' before and/or after doing sub-tasks or by getting learners to make decisions about strategies they will use in a task and then referring them to 'help pages'. So, for example, learners could be asked to choose from (or add to) a list of project tasks and then to decide on strategies for achieving their project targets. Those learners who decide to research local documents could be referred to a section in the book which provides advice on scanning, whereas those learners who decide to use questionnaires could be referred to a section which deals with writing questions.

Obviously providing the learners with a choice of topic and task is important if you are trying to achieve perception of relevance and utility in a general English textbook.

1.4.5 Materials should require and facilitate learner self-investment

Many researchers have written about the value of learning activities that require the learners to make discoveries for themselves. For example, Rutherford and Sharwood-Smith (1988) assert that the role of the classroom and of teaching materials is to aid the learner to make efficient use of the resources in order to facilitate self-discovery. Similar views are expressed by Bolitho and Tomlinson (1995); Bolitho *et al.* (2003), Tomlinson (1994a, 2007) and Wright and Bolitho (1993).

It would seem that learners profit most if they invest interest, effort and attention in the learning activity. Materials can help them to achieve this by providing them with choices of focus and activity, by giving them topic control and by engaging them in learner-centred discovery activities. Again, this is not as easy as assuming that what is taught should be learned, but it is possible and extremely useful for textbooks to facilitate learner self-investment. In my experience, one of the most profitable ways of doing this is to get learners interested in a written or spoken text, to get them to respond to it globally and affectively and then to help them to analyse a particular linguistic feature of it in order to make discoveries for themselves (see Tomlinson 1994a for a specific example of this procedure). Other ways of achieving learner investment are involving the learners in mini-projects, involving them in finding supplementary materials for particular units in a book and giving them responsibility for making decisions about which texts to use and how to use them (an approach I saw used with great success in an Indonesian high school in which each group in a large class was given responsibility for selecting the texts and the tasks for one reading lesson per semester).

1.4.6 Learners must be ready to acquire the points being taught

> Certain structures are acquired only when learners are mentally ready for them. (Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982)

Meisel, Clahsen and Pienemann (1981) have put forward the Multidimensional Model in which learners must have achieved readiness in order to learn developmental features (i.e. those constrained by developing speech-processing mechanisms – e.g. word order) but can make themselves ready at any time to learn variational features (i.e. those which are free – e.g. the copula 'be'). Pienemann (1985) claims that instruction can facilitate natural language acquisition processes if it coincides with learner readiness, and can lead to increased speed and frequency of rule application and to application of rules in a wider range of linguistic contexts. He also claims that premature instruction can be harmful because it can lead to the production of erroneous forms, to substitution by less complex forms and to avoidance. Pienemann's theories have been criticised for the narrowness of their research and application (restricted mainly to syntax, according to Cook 1996), but I am sure most teachers would recognise the negative effects of premature instruction as reported by Pienemann.

Krashen (1985) argues the need for roughly tuned input, which is comprehensible because it features what the learners are already familiar with, but which also contains the potential for acquiring other elements of the input which each learner might or might not be ready to learn (what Krashen refers to as i + 1 in which i represents what has already been learned and 1 represents what is available for learning). According to Krashen, each learner will only learn from the new input what he or she is ready to learn. Other discussions of the need for learner readiness can be found in Ellis (1990) (see especially pp. 152–8 for a discussion of variational and developmental features of readiness) and in Ellis (2008).

Readiness can be achieved by materials which create situations requiring the use of variational features not previously taught, by materials which ensure that the learners have gained sufficient mastery over the developmental features of the previous stage before teaching a new one, and by materials which roughly tune the input so that it contains some features which are slightly above each learner's current state of proficiency. It can also be achieved by materials which get learners to focus attention on features of the target language which they have not yet acquired so that they might be more attentive to these features in future input.

But perhaps the most important lesson for materials developers from readiness research is that we cannot expect to select a particular point for teaching and assume that all the learners are ready and willing to learn it. It is important to remember that the learner is always in charge and that 'in the final analysis we can never completely control what the learner does, for HE [*sic*] selects and organises, whatever the input' (Kennedy 1973: 76).

1.4.7 Materials should expose the learners to language in authentic use

Krashen (1985) makes the strong claim that comprehensible input in the target language is both necessary and sufficient for the acquisition of that language provided that learners are 'affectively disposed to "let in" the input they comprehend' (Ellis 1994: 273). Few researchers would agree with such a strong claim, but most would agree with a weaker claim that exposure to authentic use of the target language is necessary but not sufficient for the acquisition of that language. It is necessary in that learners need experience of how the language is typically used, but it is not sufficient because they also need to notice how it is used and to use it for communicative purposes themselves.

Materials can provide exposure to authentic input through the advice they give, the instructions for their activities and the spoken and written texts they include. They can also stimulate exposure to authentic input through the activities they suggest (e.g. interviewing the teacher, doing a project in the local community, listening to the radio, etc.). In order to facilitate acquisition, the input must be comprehensible (i.e. understandable enough to achieve the purpose for responding to it). This means that there is no point in using long extracts from newspapers with beginners, but it does not mean that beginners cannot be exposed to authentic input. They can follow instructions intended to elicit physical responses, they can listen to dramatic renditions of stories, they can listen to songs, they can fill in forms.

Ideally materials at all levels should provide frequent exposure to authentic input which is rich and varied. In other words the input should vary in style, mode, medium and purpose and should be rich in features which are characteristic of authentic discourse in the target language. And, if the learners want to be able to use the language for general communication, it is important that they are exposed to planned, semi-planned and unplanned discourse (e.g. a formal lecture, an informal radio interview and a spontaneous conversation). The materials should also stimulate learner interaction with the input rather than just passive reception of it. This does not necessarily mean that the learners should always produce language in response to the input; but it does mean that they should at least always do something mentally or physically in response to it.

See in particular Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17 of this book for arguments in favour of exposing learners to authentic materials, and also see Gilmore (2007) and Mishan (2005).

1.4.8 The learners' attention should be drawn to linguistic features of the input

There seems to be an agreement amongst many researchers that helping learners to pay attention to linguistic features of authentic input can help them to eventually acquire some of those features. However, it is important to understand that this claim does not represent a back-to-grammar movement. It is different from previous grammar teaching approaches in a number of ways. In the first place the attention paid to the language can be either conscious or subconscious. For example, the learners might be paying conscious attention to working out the attitude of one of the characters in a story, but might be paying subconscious attention to the second conditionals which the character uses. Or they might be paying conscious attention to the second conditionals, having been asked to locate them and to make a generalisation about their function in the story. The important thing is that the learners become aware of a gap between a particular feature of their interlanguage (i.e. how they currently understand or use it) and the equivalent feature in the target language. Such noticing of the gap between output and input can act as an 'acquisition facilitator' (Seliger 1979). It does not do so by immediately changing the learner's internalised grammar but by alerting the learner to subsequent instances of the same feature in future input. So there is no immediate change in the learners' proficiency (as seems to be aimed at by such grammar teaching approaches as the conventional Presentation–Practice–Production approach). There is, however, an increased likelihood of eventual acquisition provided that the learners receive future relevant input.

White (1990) argues that there are some features of the L2 which learners need to be focused on because the deceptively apparent similarities with L1 features make it impossible for the learners to otherwise notice certain points of mismatch between their interlanguage and the target language. And Schmidt (1992) puts forward a powerful argument for approaches which help learners to note the gap between their use of specific features of English and the way these features are used by native speakers. Inviting learners to compare their use of, say, indirect speech with the way it is used in a transcript of a native speaker conversation would be one such approach and could quite easily be built into coursebook materials.

Randi Reppen in Chapter 2 of this book and Jane Willis in Chapter 3 exemplify ways of helping learners to pay attention to linguistic features of their input. Kasper and Roever (2005) and Schmidt (2001) also discuss the value of noticing how the language is actually used.

1.4.9 Materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes

Most researchers seem to agree that learners should be given opportunities to use language for communication rather than just to practise it in situations controlled by the teacher and the materials. Using language for communication involves attempts to achieve a purpose in a situation in which the content, strategies and expression of the interaction are determined by the learners. Such attempts can enable the learners to 'check' the effectiveness of their internal hypotheses, especially if the activities stimulate them into 'pushed output' (Swain 1985) which is slightly above their current proficiency. They also help the learners to automatise their existing procedural knowledge (i.e. their knowledge of how the language is used) and to develop strategic competence (Canale and Swain 1980). This is especially so if the opportunities for use are interactive and encourage negotiation of meaning (Allwright 1984: 157). In addition, communicative interaction can provide opportunities for picking up language from the new input generated, as well as opportunities for learner output to become an informative source of input (Sharwood-Smith 1981). Ideally teaching materials should provide opportunities for such interaction in a variety of discourse modes ranging from planned to unplanned (Ellis 1990: 191).

Interaction can be achieved through, for example:

- information or opinion gap activities which require learners to communicate with each other and/or the teacher in order to close the gap (e.g. finding out what food and drink people would like at the class party);
- post-listening and post-reading activities which require the learners to use information from the text to achieve a communicative purpose (e.g. deciding what television programmes to watch, discussing who to vote for, writing a review of a book or film);
- creative writing and creative speaking activities such as writing a story or improvising a drama;
- formal instruction given in the target language either on the language itself or on another subject:

> We need to recognise that teaching intended as formal instruction also serves as interaction. Formal instruction does more than teach a specific item: it also exposes learners to features which are not the focus of the lesson. (Ellis 1990)

The value of materials facilitating learner interaction is stressed in this book by Alan Maley in Chapter 15 and by Brian Tomlinson in Chapter 17. See Swain (2005) for an overview of the literature on the Output Hypothesis and its insistence that output is not just the product of language learning but part of the process of language learning too.

1.4.10 Materials should take into account that the positive effects of instruction are usually delayed

Research into the acquisition of language shows that it is a gradual rather than an instantaneous process and that this is equally true for instructed as well as informal acquisition. Acquisition results from the gradual and dynamic process of internal generalisation rather than from instant adjustments to the learner's internal grammar. It follows that learners cannot be expected to learn a new feature and be able to use it effectively in the same lesson. They might be able to rehearse the feature, to retrieve it from short-term memory or to produce it when prompted by the teacher or the materials. But this does not mean that learning has already taken place. I am sure most of you are familiar with the situation in which learners get a new feature correct in the lesson in which it is taught but then get it wrong the following week. This is partly because they have not yet had enough time, instruction and exposure for learning to have taken place.

The inevitable delayed effect of instruction suggests that no textbook can really succeed if it teaches features of the language one at a time and expects the learners to be able to use them straightaway. But this incremental approach is popular with many publishers, writers, teachers and learners as it can provide a reassuring illusion of system, simplicity and progress. Therefore, adaptation of existing approaches rather than replacement with radical new ones is the strategy most likely to succeed. So, for example, the conventional textbook approach of PPP (Presentation–Practice–Production) could be used to promote durable learning if the objective of the Production phase was seen as reinforcement rather than correct production and if this was followed in subsequent units by more exposure and more presentation relating to the same feature. Or the Production phase could be postponed to another unit which is placed after further exposure, instruction and practice have been provided. Or the initial Production phase could be used to provide output which would enable the learners to notice the mismatch between what they are doing and what proficient speakers typically do.

In my view, in order to facilitate the gradual process of acquisition, it is important for materials to recycle instruction and to provide frequent and ample exposure to the instructed language features in communicative use. This is particularly true of vocabulary acquisition, which requires frequent, spaced and varied recycling in order to be successful (Nation 2003, 2005; Nation and Wang 1999). It is equally important that the learners are not forced into premature production of the instructed features (they will get them wrong) and that tests of proficiency are not conducted immediately after instruction (they will indicate failure or an illusion of success).

Ellis (1990) reports on research revealing the delayed effect of instruction and in Chapter 9 of this book he argues the need for post-use evaluation of materials to find out what learners have eventually learned as a result of using them.

1.4.11 Materials should take into account that learners differ in learning styles

Different learners have different preferred learning styles. So, for example, those learners with a preference for studial learning are much more likely to gain from explicit grammar teaching than those who prefer experiential learning. And those who prefer experiential learning are more likely to gain from reading a story with a predominant grammatical feature (e.g. reported speech) than they are from being taught that feature explicitly. This means that activities should be variable and should ideally cater for all learning styles. An analysis of most current coursebooks will reveal a tendency to favour learners with a preference for studial learning and an apparent assumption that all learners are equally capable of benefiting from this style of learning. Likewise an analysis of the teaching and testing of foreign languages in formal education systems throughout the world will reveal that studial learners (who are actually in the minority) are at an advantage.

Styles of learning which need to be catered for in language-learning materials include:

- visual (e.g. learners prefer to see the language written down);
- auditory (e.g. learners prefer to hear the language);
- kinaesthetic (e.g. learners prefer to do something physical, such as following instructions for a game);
- studial (e.g. learners like to pay conscious attention to the linguistic features of the language and want to be correct);
- experiential (e.g. learners like to use the language and are more concerned with communication than with correctness);
- analytic (e.g. learners prefer to focus on discrete bits of the language and to learn them one by one);
- global (e.g. learners are happy to respond to whole chunks of language at a time and to pick up from them whatever language they can);
- dependent (e.g. learners prefer to learn from a teacher and from a book);
- independent (e.g. learners are happy to learn from their own experience of the language and to use autonomous learning strategies).

I think a learner's preference for a particular learning style is variable and depends, for example, on what is being learned, where it is being learned, whom it is being learned with and what it is being learned for. For example, I am happy to be experiential, global and kinaesthetic when learning Japanese out of interest with a group of relaxed adult learners and with a teacher who does not keep correcting me. But I am more likely to be analytic and visual when learning French for examination purposes in a class of competitive students and with a teacher who keeps on correcting me. And, of course, learners can be helped to gain from learning styles other than their preferred style. The important point for materials developers is that they are aware of and cater for differences of preferred learning styles in their materials and that they do not assume that all learners can benefit from the same approaches as the 'good language learner' (see Ellis 1994: 546–50).

See Oxford and Anderson (1995) for an overview of research into learning styles. See also Anderson (2005) and Oxford (2002).

1.4.12 Materials should take into account that learners differ in affective attitudes

> the learner's motives, emotions, and attitudes screen what is presented in the language classroom ... This affective screening is highly individual and results in different learning rates and results. (Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982)

Ideally language learners should have strong and consistent motivation and they should also have positive feelings towards the target language, their teachers, their fellow learners and the materials they are using. But, of course, ideal learners do not exist and even if they did exist one day, they would no longer be ideal learners the next day. Each class of learners using the same materials will differ from each other in terms of long- and short-term motivation and of feelings and attitudes about the language, their teachers, their fellow learners and their learning materials, and of attitudes towards the language, the teacher and the materials. Obviously no materials developer can cater for all these affective variables, but it is important for anybody who is writing learning materials to be aware of the inevitable attitudinal differences of the users of the materials.

One obvious implication for the materials developer is 'to diversify language instruction as much as possible based upon the variety of cognitive styles' (Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991) and the variety of affective attitudes likely to be found amongst a typical class of learners. Ways of doing this include:

- providing choices of different types of text;
- providing choices of different types of activities;
- providing optional extras for the more positive and motivated learners;
- providing variety;
- including units in which the value of learning English is a topic for discussion;

- including activities which involve the learners in discussing their attitudes and feelings about the course and the materials;
- researching and catering for the diverse interests of the identified target learners;
- being aware of the cultural sensitivities of the target learners;
- giving general and specific advice in the teacher's book on how to respond to negative learners (e.g. not forcing reluctant individuals to take part in group work).

For reports on research into affective differences see Arnold and Brown (1999), Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009), Ellis (1984: 471–83) and Wenden and Rubin (1987).

For specific suggestions on how materials can cater for learner differences see Tomlinson (1996, 2003b, 2006) and Chapter 15 by Alan Maley in this book.

1.4.13 Materials should permit a silent period at the beginning of instruction

It has been shown that it can be extremely valuable to delay L2 speaking for beginners of a language until they have gained sufficient exposure to the target language and sufficient confidence in understanding it. This silent period can facilitate the development of an effective internalised grammar which can help learners to achieve proficiency when they eventually start to speak in the L2. There is some controversy about the actual value of the silent period and some learners seem to use the silence to avoid learning the language. However, I think most researchers would agree that forcing immediate production in the new language can damage the reluctant speaker affectively and linguistically and many would agree with Dulay, Burt and Krashen that:

> communication situations in which students are permitted to remain silent or respond in their first language may be the most effective approach for the early phases of language instruction. This approach approximates what language learners of all ages have been observed to do naturally, and it appears to be more effective than forcing full two-way communication from the very beginning of L2 acquisition. (1982: 25–6)

The important point is that the materials should not force premature speaking in the target language and they should not force silence either. Ways of giving learners the possibility of not speaking until they are ready include:

- starting the course with a Total Physical Response (TPR) approach in which the learners respond physically to oral instructions from a

teacher or CD (see Asher 1977; Tomlinson 1994b, Tomlinson and Masuhara in press);
- starting with a listening comprehension approach in which the learners listen to stories in the target language, which are made accessible through the use of sound effects, visual aids and dramatic movement by the teacher;
- permitting the learners to respond to target language questions by using their first language or through drawings and gestures.

A possible extension of the principle of permitting silence is to introduce most new language points (regardless of the learners' level) through activities which initially require comprehension but not production. This is an approach which I call TPR Plus and which we used on the PKG Project in Indonesian secondary schools. It usually involved introducing new vocabulary or structures through stories which the learners responded to by drawing and/or using their first language, and through activities in which the whole class mimed stories by following oral instructions from the teacher (see Barnard 2007; Tomlinson 1990, 1994b).

For discussion of research into the silent period see Ellis (2008); Krashen (1982); Saville-Troike (1988).

1.4.14 Materials should maximise learning potential by encouraging intellectual, aesthetic and emotional involvement which stimulates both right- and left-brain activities

A narrowly focused series of activities which require very little cognitive processing (e.g. mechanical drills; rule learning; simple transformation activities) usually leads to shallow and ephemeral learning unless linked to other activities which stimulate mental and affective processing. However, a varied series of activities making, for example, analytic, creative, evaluative and rehearsal demands on processing capacity can lead to deeper and more durable learning. In order for this deeper learning to be facilitated, it is very important that the content of the materials is not trivial or banal and that it stimulates thoughts and feelings in the learners. It is also important that the activities are not too simple and that they cannot be too easily achieved without the learners making use of their previous experience and their brains.

The maximisation of the brain's learning potential is a fundamental principle of Lozanov's Suggestopedia, in which 'he enables the learner to receive the information through different cerebral processes and in different states of consciousness so that it is stored in many different parts of the brain, maximising recall' (Hooper Hansen 1992). Suggestopedia does this through engaging the learners in a variety of left- and right-brain activities in the same lesson (e.g. reciting a dialogue, dancing to instructions, singing a song, doing a substitution drill, writing a story). Whilst not everybody would accept the procedures of Suggestopedia, most researchers seem to agree on the value of maximising the brain's capacity during language learning and the best textbooks already do contain within each unit a variety of different left- and right-brain activities.

For an account of the principles of Suggestopedia see Lozanov (1978) and Chapter 16 in this volume by Grethe Hooper Hansen. See also Tomlinson (2003b) for a discussion of the need to humanise materials, Tomlinson and Avila (2007a, 2007b) for a discussion of the value of developing materials which help the learners to make full use of their mental resources whilst learning and using an L2, and Tomlinson (in press) for suggestions for ways of engaging L2 learners cognitively, affectively, aesthetically and kinaesthetically.

1.4.15 Materials should not rely too much on controlled practice

It is interesting that there seems to be very little research which indicates that controlled practice activities are valuable. Sharwood-Smith (1981) does say that 'it is clear and uncontroversial to say that most spontaneous performance is attained by dint of practice', but he provides no evidence to support this very strong claim. Also Bialystok (1988) says that automaticity is achieved through practice but provides no evidence to support her claim. In the absence of any compelling evidence most researchers seem to agree with Ellis, who says that 'controlled practice appears to have little long term effect on the accuracy with which new structures are performed' (Ellis 1990: 192) and 'has little effect on fluency' (Ellis and Rathbone 1987). See De Keyser (2007) on language practice and also Ellis (2008).

Yet controlled grammar practice activities still feature significantly in popular coursebooks and are considered to be useful by many teachers and by many learners. This is especially true of dialogue practice, which has been popular in many methodologies for the last 30 years without there being any substantial research evidence to support it (see Tomlinson 1995). In a recent analysis of new low-level coursebooks I found that nine out of ten of them contained many more opportunities for controlled practice than they did for language use. It is possible that right now all over the world learners are wasting their time doing drills and listening to and repeating dialogues. See Tomlinson *et al.* (2001) and Masuhara *et al.* (2008) for coursebook reviews which also report a continuing dominance of practice activities.

1.4.16 Materials should provide opportunities for outcome feedback

Feedback which is focused first on the effectiveness of the outcome rather than just on the accuracy of the output can lead to output becoming a profitable source of input. Or in other words, if the language that the learner produces is evaluated in relation to the purpose for which it is used, that language can become a powerful and informative source of information about language use. Thus a learner who fails to achieve a particular communicative purpose (e.g. borrowing something, instructing someone how to play a game, persuading someone to do something) is more likely to gain from feedback on the effectiveness of their use of language than a learner whose language is corrected without reference to any non-linguistic outcome. It is very important, therefore, for materials developers to make sure that language production activities have intended outcomes other than just practising language.

The value of outcome feedback is focused on by such writers on task-based approaches as Willis and Willis (2007) and Rod Ellis in Chapter 9 in this volume. It is also stressed by Brian Tomlinson in Chapter 17 of this volume.

To find out more about some of the principles of language learning outlined above, you could make use of the index of one of the following books:

Cook, V. 2008. *Second Language Learning and Second Language Teaching*, 4th edn. London: Edward Arnold.

Ellis, R. 2008. *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Larsen-Freeman, D. and M. Long. 1991. *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research*. London: Longman.

1.5 What teachers and learners believe and want

I have argued above that materials developers should take account of what researchers have told us about language acquisition. I would also argue that they should pay more attention to what teachers and learners believe about the best ways to learn a language and also to what they want from the materials they use (even though this would often contradict the findings of SLA researchers).

Teachers spend far more time observing and influencing the language-learning process than do researchers or materials developers. Yet little research has been done into what teachers believe is valuable for language learning and little account is taken of what teachers really want. In this book Hitomi Masuhara argues in Chapter 10 for the need to find out what teachers really want from coursebooks and she puts forward suggestions for how this information could be gained and made use of. Also Frances Amrani in Chapter 11 describes how attempts have been made to find out exactly what teachers think and feel about trial versions of coursebooks so that their views can influence the published versions. David Jolly and Rod Bolitho in Chapter 5 propose a framework which could help teachers to adapt materials and to write materials themselves; and Rod Ellis in Chapter 9 outlines a way in which teachers can improve materials as a result of whilst-use and post-use evaluation of them. Also Saraceni (2003) focuses on learner involvement in adapting materials.

There have been attempts to involve learners in the evaluation of courses and materials (see Alderson 1985 for an interesting account of post-course evaluations which involved contacting the learners after their courses had finished) and a number of researchers have kept diaries recording their own experiences as learners of a foreign language (e.g. Schmidt and Frota 1986). But little systematic research has been published on what learners actually want their learning materials to do (see Johnson 1995 for an account of what one adult learner wants from her learning materials).

One exceptional example of trying to make use of both learner and teacher beliefs and wants was the Namibia Textbook Project. Prior to the writing of the Grade 10 English textbook, *On Target* (1995), teachers and students all over the country were consulted via questionnaires. Their responses were then made use of when 30 teachers met together to design and write the book. The first draft of the book was completed by these teachers at an eight-day workshop and it was then trialled all over the country before being revised for publication by an editorial panel. Such consultation and collaboration is rare in materials development and could act as a model for textbook writing. See Tomlinson (1995) for a description of this and other similar projects.

1.6 Collaboration

The Namibian Textbook Project mentioned above is a classic example of the value of pooling resources. On page iv of *On Target* (1995) 40 contributors are acknowledged. Some of these were teachers, some were curriculum developers, some were publishers, some were administrators, some were university lecturers and researchers, some were examiners, one was a published novelist and all of them made a significant contribution to the development of the book. This bringing together of expertise in a collaborative endeavour is extremely rare and, as one of the contributors to the Project, I can definitely say it was productive. Too often in my experience researchers have made theoretical claims without developing applications of them, writers have ignored theory and have followed procedural rather than principled instincts, teachers have complained without making efforts to exert an influence, learners have been ignored and publishers have been driven by considerations of what they know they can sell. We all have constraints on our time and our actions, but it must be possible and potentially valuable for us to get together to pool our resources and share our expertise in a joint endeavour to develop materials which offer language learners maximum opportunities for successful learning. This bringing together of different areas of knowledge and expertise is the main aim of MATSDA and it is one of the objectives of this book. The contributors to *Materials Development in Language Teaching* include classroom teachers, researchers, university lecturers, teacher trainers, textbook writers and publishers, and we hope that our pooling of knowledge and ideas will help you to use, adapt and develop materials in effective ways.

1.7 New directions in materials development

Since *Materials Development in Language Teaching* was first published in 1998, there have been some new directions in materials development. The most obvious one is the increase in quantity and quality of language-learning materials delivered through new technologies. Whilst some new technology programmes and courses have been rightly criticised for simply reproducing activity and task types from paper sources, others have been praised for exploiting the interactive possibilities of new technologies such as video conferencing, emails, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, blogs and mobile phones. See Chapter 12 by Gary Motteram, Chapter 13 by Lisa Kervin and Beverly Derewianka, Chapter 15 by Alan Maley and Chapter 17 by Brian Tomlinson in this volume for discussion of the possibilities offered to materials developers by new technologies. See also Reinders and White (2010).

Other new directions in materials development include materials for text-driven approaches, for task-based approaches and for Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approaches. Brian Tomlinson in Chapters 14 and 17 of this volume refers to approaches in which a potentially engaging text drives a unit of materials instead of a predetermined teaching point, and Tomlinson (2003c) details a flexible framework for developing text-driven materials which has been used on materials development projects in, for example, Bulgaria, Ethiopia, Morocco, Namibia, Singapore and Turkey. Task-based approaches (in which an outcome-focused task drives the lesson) have received a lot of attention recently, but much of it has focused on the principles and procedures of task-based teaching. However, Rod Ellis in Chapter 9 of this volume gives attention to task-based materials, as do Ellis (2003), Van den Branden (2006), Nunan (2004), Samuda and Bygate (2008) and Willis and Willis (2007). CLIL has been commanding a lot of attention recently and it has been used as a means of teaching English and a content subject at the same time in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Europe (Eurydice 2006), as well as an approach in which a content area which engages the learner is used to help them improve their English (Tomlinson and Masuhara 2009). Most of the literature on CLIL so far has focused on the theory of CLIL and on its integration into curricula in educational institutions. However, there is a chapter on materials for CLIL in Coyle *et al.* (2010).

I hope that the chapters in this book will provide a theoretical and practical stimulus to help materials developers and teachers to produce quality materials for learners using the 'new' approaches referred to above, as well as to continue to develop innovative and effective materials for the more established approaches.

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