UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

A Study of Some Factors Influencing the Choice of a Course for Adults in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) with particular reference to the role of Publishers' Catalogues

by

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For my children, Malcolm and Catriona,

who have given marvellous support and encouragement.

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Abbreviations

A/V	Audio-visual
CLL	Community Language Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Special/Specific Purposes
EST	English for Science and Technology
FLA	Foreign Language Association
MLP	Modern Language Association
RSA	Royal Society of Arts
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TENOR	Teaching English for no Obvious Reason
TG	Transformational Grammar

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

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A STUDY OF SOME FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE OF A COURSE FOR ADULTS IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF PUBLISHERS' CATALOGUES

by Isobel Grant Drummond

The study aims to discover how useful EFL catalogues are, or could be, in helping EFL teachers, particularly overseas, to evaluate courses -- possibly in the absence of other reference-sources common in the UK and Europe.

Section 1 concentrates on 3 major areas of concern to teachers evaluating materials: firstly, deciding between using a published course or producing their own materials; deciding how to conduct an evaluation; and then choosing a method from all the available options appropriate for the given circumstances. Section 2 provides a detailed analysis of, firstly, the catalogue-information on adult courses, ranging from topics like age-groups, levels and markets to subject-matter (fact or fiction), methodology and activities and secondly, the presentation of this catalogue information, including such features as paper quality and type styles, the allocation of text, space and illustration on the page, as well as the use of colour and photographs. Publishers' interviews furnished a third source of information on the catalogues' possible role in the evaluation process.

However, while publishers themselves see their catalogue mainly as a reference-aid, the study points up the obvious tension between producing a bland, global catalogue suiting every kind of market and the need for course-entries to be clear and specific about age-groups, levels, markets and content. The study therefore, throughout, makes recommendations for standardising these entries, in both content and presentation, to strengthen this role of the catalogue as a reference-aid, especially in order to optimise its use with overseas teachers.

SECTION 1

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The aim in conducting this investigation, and writing this thesis, has been, first of all, to try to establish what role, if any, book catalogues for English as a foreign language play in the evaluative process, especially for the overseas EFL teacher. This has also included efforts to discover through comparing and contrasting the different catalogues, checklists and reviews, if there are definite reasons to preclude the catalogues' ever being recommended for a respectable role in the evaluating process, while indicating areas in which the various catalogue entries can be improved upon.

My interest in catalogues, and the role they could play, was first aroused in November 1984, at the International English Language Fair, held in London. Here, all the major Colleges for the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language were represented, as were the major English publishing houses, each one with a stand displaying sheafs of catalogues, leaflets and other handouts.

It struck me then as curious that while there was this vast array of glossy, expensively packaged material, distributed freely, to EFL teachers and students visiting the Fair, the usefulness of the catalogues, as a source of evaluative information, had never been, to my knowledge, endorsed in any EFL writings. Not one single speaker at any conference I had attended, nor one article in any UK or American academic journal I had come across, had ever suggested, let alone advocated, that EFL teachers weighing up the choices for a new course, should first consult the various EFL catalogues put out by the major publishing houses. In the various articles and books on evaluating text materials, there is unlikely to be any mention at all of these catalogues, far less recommendations to study them.

This is a curious thing. When one considers, for example, that there are dozens of references in EFL writings, for and against the use of reviews in this evaluation process, despite the relative scarcity of reviews for EFL textbooks and courses, it is, therefore, all the more remarkable that there is, on the other hand, an absolute dearth of reference to the role that the EFL catalogue could play, especially in view of the fact that publishing houses are sending out hundreds of thousands of such catalogues annually, all over the world.

The role that the EFL catalogue plays can be compared - or, rather contrasted - with that played by other brochures and catalogues, promoting cameras or holidays, health farms or educational courses, all of them offering the services of a guide. When prospective customers browse through a holiday brochure, for example, there is no question but that they expect to find just enough pertinent information, to give them a fair idea of the resort, hotel and services they could hope to enjoy for their money. And that is all that the average holiday brochure does provide. The customers do not expect to be given a preview of the resort. Simply on the basis of a brief entry, often no more than one paragraph or two, listing a sample of the resort and hotel services (no customer expects a total list of every resort and hotel facility -- number of hotel staff, size of every room, garden-acreage, sample menus and so on --), holiday brochure readers are prepared to pay for holidays costing hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of pounds.

The browser through a car-brochure or camera-catalogue probably does expect more detail, and the more detail the better. Brochures of this sort generally offer very detailed lists of specific weights, sizes, speeds and performances under different circumstances, special extras and so on, together with prices.

EFL book catalogues, unlike holiday brochures, car-catalogues and catalogues of a similar sort, rarely offer prices (only 2 out of 8 did).

But EFL catalogues, in other respects, appear to be unlike either holiday-brochures which though offering only brief descriptions and lists of their wares, are nevertheless avidly read, digested and acted upon to the tune of millions of pounds annually; or like the car and camera-type brochure, offering, on the other hand, descriptions and lists of a much more detailed and specific sort, and considered a respectable and reliable source of information on that particular product.

While the average holiday-brochure entry is short, and short too on detail, in the vast majority of cases it is considered absolutely adequate for its purpose, selling the resort and the hotel to the public. It is rarely dismissed as trivial or "mere advertising". But that is how similar-sized entries in EFL-catalogues, offering a similar sampling of detail, have been dismissed by EFL critics, such as Van Els et al. (1):

> The information provided by authors and publishers of textbooks usually leaves much to be desired. Boot (1976) defines giving information as "the provision of pertinent and verifiable details about a textbook", and concludes that authors and publishers can hardly be said to give such information..... commercial considerations are involved in the information provided by publishers. Leaflets from publishers are hardly useful in textbook selection, because they are intended as advertisements. They are not independent or unbiased, and for that reason do not meet the standards to be set for textbook descriptions.

It is not made clear why it is that publishers' catalogues and leaflets are not thought useful, simply "because they are intended as advertisements", when other catalogues and leaflets describing/ advertising cars or holidays <u>are</u> considered useful, and, in the case of holiday-brochures at least, even essential. It cannot be claimed either that because the holiday-brochures or BMW leaflets are not independent or unbiased, they are therefore suspect, untrustworthy and unreliable as sources of information.

It is also not made clear what is meant by "the standards to be set for textbook descriptions". Where are these to be found? And who sets them? And are book-publishers less likely to meet advertising

requirements for truthful descriptions and "standards" than, say operators of holiday-firms or manufacturers of cars or cameras?

Even though many EFL catalogue-entries (such as Longman's) are more detailed than any entry for the average holiday-hotel, and at least as detailed as any describing a camera or BMW, they certainly do not have their respectability. If they had, these entries would figure in checklists and articles on the evaluation of EFL materials, as a useful resource or reference tool. And they do not.

The aim of this thesis, then, has been to investigate the entries in EFL catalogues and discover what cause exists to preclude their being recommended for a respectable, if not a starring, role in EFL textbook evaluation.

It must not be forgotten that probably more than 90% of EFL teachers teach overseas (working from publishers' sales estimates) and that the majority have little or no access at all to such major sources of evaluative information as are generally accessible to UK-resident, EFL teachers; sources such as English Language Conferences, area meetings, book exhibitions and fairs; libraries and well-equipped bookstores; newspaper and academic journal reviews; as well as trained and informative EFL colleagues, all of which are generally unavailable outside of Europe, as I myself have experienced in over twenty years in the Middle East.

To overseas teachers, like us, the one constant source of information on what is, and will become, available in the EFL market, is the publishers' catalogues. And, that being the case, it is perhaps surprising that these have not attracted more interest and attention. One reason for this could be, of course, that since all these other sources <u>are</u> available to the EFL writers based in the UK, the importance of the catalogues to <u>them</u>, as a source of information, is very limited. And if at the same time, one considers that the exposure of EFL writers

to overseas teachers and overseas teaching conditions, is probably nowadays limited to flying visits of 2-3 weeks' duration only, or to times when no textbook-evaluation is being carried out, then it becomes more understandable why those writers, churning out checklists and evaluation procedures, or lecturers designing and teaching evaluative courses in EFL college departments, have simply failed to recognise the role these catalogues may have to play in overseas departments, especially in the non-European countries.

Method of Approach

To satisfy my curiosity about these EFL catalogues, to answer such questions as -

> Why are these catalogues ignored in EFL writings? What information do catalogues supply? Is it reliable? Is it what teachers want to know? Is anything missing?

- I conducted a two-part investigation. One part was a search through the EFL literature on methods and materials, for the views of the EFL establishment and of the EFL teacher, preferably, if possible, the EFL teacher overseas. I wanted to find out from studying the topics that occupied them what was of concern to the average EFL teacher, with his doubts, problems, difficulties in facing the choice of a new EFL course, with a view to then discovering from the catalogues how well they supplied the kind of information that could prove useful in resolving dilemmas and in helping in the decision-making. This first part of the study has formed the basis for the chapters in Section I, as many of the concerns and questions centred on three key areas:

a) whether to use published textbooks at all, or produce one's own;

b) how to go about making a wise choice from the alternatives;

c) how to assess the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods (and the materials embodying them).

Because I have been prevented, by time and circumstances, from conducting a rigorous investigation into the views of individual EFL teachers, I have depended to a large extent on my own experiences and also those of many different writers, whose views I have therefore quoted from, rather liberally. This has, at least, the advantage of showing the diversity of writers holding these views and also revealing the fair degree of agreement between them.

The second part of the study, the main section, has been directed at the catalogues themselves. This has produced an analysis of their content and of their presentation.

In the analysis of content chapter, I wanted to investigate exactly what sort of data -- what "pertinent and verifiable details" -- the catalogues provided, on, for example, their authors, pre-publication trials, age-groups and levels, up-to-date-ness and revisions, choice of subject-matter and methodology, and so on. Surprisingly enough, in view of the usual criticism that authors and publishers "can hardly be said to give such (pertinent and verifiable) information", EFL book-catalogues are not as sparing of such information as we might have supposed. A great deal of ground can be covered by a 2-page catalogue-entry and several Longman's course-entries offered at least that and often more, up to 5 pages in the case of their Strategies series.

But in addition to examining what sort of data each catalogue provided, I was interested also to see how its quality and quantity matched up to the requirements of a prospective course-buyer, someone in fact, who would be in exactly the same position as those EFL readers and customers on the look-out for articles and checklists on evaluating EFL methods and materials.

Checklists for EFL teachers and articles purporting to guide them through the difficulties of selection vary greatly, some offering only a few criteria, others covering dozens of different guidelines. The kind

of information these EFL checklists and articles have suggested the EFL customer should take account of, is incorporated, where it is available, into my analysis so that it can be discovered whether the catalogues taken individually, or overall as a group, are actually producing the right sort of material both in terms of quantity - (Are there enough details, for example, about the course-components) and quality. Is this information, for example, not so much accurate (hopefully we should be able to assume that when they say a textbook has 224 pages, the book has 224 pages, and that units providing 4 x 45 minute-lessons do just that) as adequate, on that topic? We might know, for example, that a certain textbook has so many pages and so many units, but there might be no precise information on how many teaching hours these represent. There is, with this particular topic, a great deal of variety, in the different catalogues, regarding the average teaching-hour, so it can not simply be assumed in the case of those catalogue-entries which do not specify this, how long or short their lesson would be.

Through juxtaposing information from the catalogues with information from EFL checklists and articles, a picture then began to emerge of how useful the catalogues, with as little or as much information as they had, actually were, as well as how useful, with some amendments, they, potentially, could become.

And it also became clear, in the light of the information that began to emerge from the study, that I also obtain the views of the publishers themselves, not only on the content and presentation of the particular courses and textbooks, but also on their reasons for commissioning and publishing the kind of courses they did, for retaining and revising older courses, as well as their justification for choosing that particular style of catalogue and for spending such large sums producing and despatching their catalogues in vast numbers. This in fact became virtually the third part of the investigation.

What the catalogues offer, by way of information on their courses, pertinent and verifiable or not, and how their publishers justify this on the basis of markets and costs, is very much affected, in my opinion, by the way it is actually presented. A great deal of research is at preent going on, assessing the attractiveness and readability of printed materials, and on the problems to the reader of badly organised and unattractively-presented material. It takes only a cursory glance at the 8 different catalogues in this study to see how differently they each present their chosen selection of course-data, and how readable or unacceptable the different entries are. In Section 2, the second chapter has been given over to a detailed analysis of presentation in the catalogues, as a whole, including, for example, the size of print used, proportion of printed text to illustration and space, page-size, number of pages, type of index and contents pages, as well as detailed analyses of individual course-presentations.

It should go without saying that very interesting content can be left unread, simply because its presentation has been so cramped, unattractive and unreadable, that it has discouraged the browsing EFL customer. On the other hand, a lively and colourful presentation in a catalogue, can predispose the browsing public to cover it from end to end, even in the absence of solid information.

The broad aim of the thesis, then, is an investigation of the usefulness of these EFL catalogues in helping teachers, particularly teachers overseas, to carry out evaluations, in the absence of other sources of relevance. The role they play is considered from two standpoints: that of the catalogue-reader, the EFL teacher choosing a course, and, briefly, that of the publishing-house which has commissioned the courses and has decided what information goes in to the catalogue. And all the information is considered in the light of its presentation in the catalogue: how readable the text actually is, to the reader.

Materials

The catalogues that prompted the investigation were all acquired at the International English Language Fair, held in London, in November 1984, so all references are to the catalogues of that date.

The catalogues themselves are all from UK publishing houses, though a few American catalogues were available, and those in the study represent 8 major companies in the EFL field:

1. Cambridge University Press
2. Cassell
3. Collins
4. Heinemann
5. Longman
6. Macmillan
7. Nelson
8. Oxford University Press

The titles of the 8 catalogues are listed below, together with the abbreviations to be used for them, and their firms, in this study:

1.	Cambridge ELT. English Language Teaching	Catalogue 1984	(CUP)
2.	Cassell ELT. English Language Teaching	1985	(CAS)
3.	Collins. English Language Teaching	ELT 1985	(COL)
4.	Heinemann. English Language Teaching	ELT 1984	(HEIN)
5.	Longman. Ways to English Catalogue	ELT 1984-1985	(LON)
6.	Macmillan. English Language Teaching	1984	(MAC)
7.	Nelson. English Language Teaching	1984	(NEL)
8.	Oxford English	1984	(OUP)

As this has been a study involving the evaluation of general courses for adults, I have naturally eliminated from consideration, all pages and references in the catalogues to non-course materials such as dictionaries, simplified readers and so on, as well as those courses which were described as being specifically for children, primary or secondary. I have, then, concentrated on those pages of the catalogues which from their own index/contents pages describe the courses in which I as an EFL teacher of adults living overseas, am interested.

This has also meant eliminating from the study all those courses which would not suit a general course for adults, such courses as are variously described as short or intensive; advanced or specialised, hence there are no ESP (English for Special/Specific Purposes) courses included in this study.

The 23 course-entries examined in the study are therefore those that are presented, by their catalogues, as being for general courses, intended to span at least a year, and, more usually, several years, depending on the number of levels in the course or series, and aimed at adult-groups. These courses, and the abbreviations by which they will be known in the thesis, are listed below:

CUP's	Cambridge English Course	(Cambeng)
	Meanings into Words	(Meanword)
CAS:	On the Way	(Ontheway)
	Foundation English Series	(Foundeng)
COL:	Express	(Express)
HEIN:	Main Course English	(Mainco)
	Contact English	(Contact)
LON:	Journeys	(Journ.)
	Strategies	(Strat.s)
	Kernel	(Kernel)
	Mainline	(Mainline)
	Follow Me	(Follme)
	Challenges	(Chall.s)
	Essential English for Foreign Students	(Esseng.)
MAC:	Active Context English/Intermediate Context/Broader Context English	(ACE)
	Contemporary English	(Conteng)
NEL:	New Incentive	(Newincen)
	Functional English	(Function)

OUP	Access	(Access)
	Streamline	(Stream.)
	Quartet	(Quartet)
	Network	(Network)
	English for Adults	(Engforad)

The analysis of these 23 courses in the catalogues is dealt with in terms of their content and presentation, because, owing to circumstances and limited time, it has not proved possible to also include an analysis or survey of how EFL teachers actually do make use of these catalogues, either in the UK or overseas.

Because of this, I can compare the analysis here, concentrating as it does, on catalogue-content and presentation, with the intrinsic evaluation of Scriven's axe:

> ... If you want to evaluate a tool, say an axe, study the design of the bit, the weight distribution, the steel alloy used, the grade of hickory in the handle etc, or you might just study the kind and speed of the cuts it makes in the hands of a good axeman....
> (This) first approach involves an appraisal of the instrument itself..
> ..intrinsic evaluation....
> ..The second approach proceeds via an examination of the effects of the teaching instrument on the pupil...and it usually specifies these rather operationally (tests on a number of criterial parameters). We call this pay-off evaluation. (2)

As I have described, this study does not take in Scriven's "second approach".

Summary

This study has concentrated on finding out how useful EFL catalogues are, or could be, in helping EFL teachers, especially those overseas, without the benefit of other major sources of EFL information, to evaluate course materials for adult-groups.

The chapters in Section I deal with areas of concern to those teachers faced with a choice in EFL materials: whether to adopt a published course or use self-produced materials; how to set about

evaluating courses; and how to assess the different methods available to the teacher.

The chapters in Section 2 provide a detailed analysis of the catalogues, firstly in terms of the information given about the various courses: levels, age-groups, markets, authors, trialling, subject-matter and so on, and, secondly, in terms of the presentation of that information: how it is printed and laid out on the page, what size of page has been chosen, how space and illustration have been used and so on. The publishing houses, themselves, furnished a third source of information on the usefulness-or potential usefulness-of their catalogues.

Unfortunately, as I have explained, because of circumstances, it has not been possible to include a survey of how EFL teachers, both in the UK and overseas, regard, and use, these catalogues; this study is, as a result, to be regarded rather as an intrinsic evaluation. Obviously, it would be of great interest, not least to publishers, to see how useful, or irrelevant, the teachers themselves consider the information in catalogues, when they are evaluating materials for new courses, and to have their recommendations for improvements to the catalogues. This could form the basis for further research and investigation.

However, from the information that has been gathered in the course of this study, it has been possible to form some tentative conclusions about the role of catalogues in influencing the choice of an EFL course and to produce some recommendations for improving and strengthening this.

References

1. Van Els. Theo. Bongaerts. Theo. et al: Applied Linguistics and the Learning of Foreign Languages. Edward Arnold. 1984.

2. Scriven, Michael: The Methodology of Evaluation. Perspectives of Curriculum Evaluation, from R. Tyler, R. Gagne and M. Scriven. AERA Monograph Series on Curriculum Evaluation, Number 1. Chicago. 1967.

CHAPTER 2

TEXTBOOKS: TO HAVE OR HAVE NOT?

Introduction

To have or have not? Not all teachers feel that it is necessary or even desirable to use a textbook and some in the EFL field feel that textbooks have more disadvantages than advantages to offer.

> Why use textbooks? (1)
>
> Textbooks were created to take some of the teaching load off the teacher's shoulders and let the student learn for himself. In this sense, any textbook is a self-teaching instrument. To what extent can and should textbooks do the teaching job? (2)
>
> Without textbooks most of our educational programmes would probably collapse within a few weeks. (3)
>
> The modern textbook is an invaluable servant but an intolerable master for a competent teacher. (4)
>
> Good textbooks have undoubtedly saved many intelligent children from the consequences of bad teaching. (3)
>
> The higher the general standard of the teachers, the less important are the course-books and other teaching materials. (5)
>
> ESP textbooks have been in many respects an educational failure. (6)

Before we examine these arguments and counter-arguments, let us first decide what qualifies a book to be called a textbook.

1 What is a Textbook?

Here at least there seems to be no disagreement.

> Typically (the textbook) is organised as a course of study so that the chapters are to be studied in sequence. Later chapters pre-suppose an acquaintance with earlier chapters. (7)
>
> The textbook provides a structured, sequential arrangement of subject matter. In content and organisation it anticipates and provides for definite instructional needs, and brings unity and significance.. Proper organisation of content is vital to any program of meaningful learning. The textbook provides or suggests a planning scheme which may be adopted or adapted, depending on the experience and versatility of the teacher. (8)

1.1 Vis-a-vis "Materials"

Published courses, such as are the subject matter of this study, are based on one or more textbooks and these courses, and their textbooks are often compared and contrasted, to their disadvantage, with what is usually, loosely, described as "teaching materials", generally tailor-made for a particular class or course.

> It is important to realise that materials writers and their products -- teaching materials -- are not the same as textbooks.
> Materials writers have the luxury of producing for a special group. Their focus can be extremely narrow.
> They know from first-hand experience the needs and goals of the students they are writing for. It has been said that the best classroom materials are those which are prepared for the most specific audience. But textbook writers can never expect to interest a commercial publisher in their work if the intended audience is highly limited. (9)

The textbook writer does not enjoy "the luxury of producing for a special group." He has to cater for many different groups, in teaching situations all over the globe. He will also be limited by publishers, to a certain number of pages, lessons or chapters and limited too to a certain format if the book is to be part of a course or series.

ESP teachers favour the use of materials, generally, because of "their special groups" and "local needs" but John Swales, in his article, ESP: The Textbook Problem, writes that textbooks do have certain virtues vis-a-vis locally-produced materials.

> One such virtue is that they have a clearly discernible shape: a beginning, a middle and an end.....Any sense of direction can be..obscured by the typical showers of single-page handouts to which the customers do not know how to respond: Do I keep these sheets or have I finished with them? Do I bring them next time?...
> A further virtue is that textbooks tend to have a greater degree of internal coherence than duplicated courses....(6)

1.2 Change of Attitude to Textbooks

However, while it has been the case that textbooks have been virtually an indispensible classroom tool in the West, for over 500 years, increasingly there has grown an impression --

shared alike by traditionalists and progressives, that reliance on a textbook is incompatible with modern educational doctrine. (7)

And this points up a rather curious paradox. While the EFL publishers' lists swell each year with new textbooks and new courses, and many, many thousands of these are sold each year, throughout the world, there is, nevertheless, the steadily growing impression that for a teacher to be seen using a textbook (instead of, say, locally or self-produced tailor-made materials) is a sign of failure, or certainly inadequacy.

> it seems to be widely believed by candidates taking the RSA Certificate for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language that they dare not teach from a textbook in the practical lessons they are required to give before an examiner. If they do, they will almost automatically be failed. Textbooks are "out", home-produced materials are "in". (1)

What has brought about this feeling of unease, even outright opposition (according to several writers like O'Neill (1), Swales (6) et al) to the use of a textbook?

2. Arguments Against use of Textbooks

Some of the main arguments include the following points:

(a) The best teachers do not need books.

> As teachers develop an experience background for classroom instruction they tend to become less dependent on the text and rely more often on their own judgement..(8)

(b) Textbooks are finite; knowledge/language is not.

> A native speaker of English, for example, could easily read the whole of a year's course for foreigners in an hour or two -- they contain hardly any language. (10)

(c) Language (especially "communicative language") should not be taught through a textbook but in unrehearsed, spontaneous communicative activities.

> A more fundamental problem of Communicative approaches thus far lies perhaps in the concept of a communicative syllabus. A syllabus is by definition pre-determined as to content and sequence whereas communication is in essence open-ended and unpredictable. (11)

(d) Only individually tailored, locally-produced materials can be valid for any learning group, with its own special requirements. A commercially produced textbook is too general to be useful.

> It has been said that the best classroom materials are those which are prepared for the most specific audience. (9)

> Many current materials seem to give the impression of ideal usefulness and applicability for any learner -- at some assumed level of proficiency -- in any place in the world. ..they do not take account of the situation. Unless they are adapted to specific situations in some significant way, they cease to be of any direct value to anyone anywhere. (12)

Discontent with the EFL textbook, in particular, has been directed to two main areas:

i) the influence of the textbook upon the teacher;

and ii) its influence upon the learning process.

Let us examine these arguments.

2.1 Textbook Vis-a-vis Teacher

In the classroom the two learning agencies are the teacher and, in the vast majority of cases, the textbook, too. It is supposed the two combine in the teaching/learning process, the teacher through the spoken medium, the book in the written medium, rather like a team, according to Dobbyn and Hill:

> the average teacher, like the average actor, does best when he is part of a team -- in his case, the expert textbook writers being his partners. (13)

However, the two, teacher and book, do not, it seems, always combine in perfect harmony for maximum effectiveness. Richards and Rodgers describe how different teaching-situations and different views of the teacher's role in the classroom can affect the teacher-book relationship:

> Some instructional systems are totally dependent on the teacher as the source of knowledge and direction; others see the teacher's role as catalyst, consultant, diagnostician, guide, and model for learning; still others try to teacher-proof the instructional system by limiting teacher initiative and building instructional content and direction into texts or lesson plans....

> Only the teacher who is thoroughly sure of (his) role, and of the concomitant learner's role, will risk departure from the security of traditional textbook-oriented learning. (14)

The textbook is in fact blamed for two different crimes: on the one hand, it props up, provides a refuge for, the inefficient and the inadequately-trained teacher, and, on the other, it hampers and restricts the creativity of a good teachers.

2.1.1 Textbook as Master and Teacher as Slave

Both crimes originate from the practice, almost as old as "book-learning" itself, of "following the text". In fact, in mediaeval times, if the teacher did not follow the text, he could be punished for heresy and deviation.

Up to the present, the untrained, the inexperienced and those lacking in confidence consider the textbook "master" and are more than content to follow it slavishly. This is not surpising when one considers that, in the USA --

> during the school-year 1976-77, out of an estimated 102,000 teachers actively engaged in teaching English as a second language, only THREE out of TEN had taken even one course -- one course -- in teaching English as a second language. (15)

In other words with over 70,000 teachers totally untrained in EFL, the textbook would indeed be cast in the role of master, teaching 70,000 teachers as well as 70,000 classrooms of students.

> In too many classes use of the textbook is a learning experience for the teacher as well as for the pupil. (8)

2.1.2 Teacher-proof Textbooks

A similar situation obtained during World War II when the Armed Forces required thousands of instructors. They developed "teacher-proof" textbooks on the basis that the instructor who stuck to the master-plan religiously would not go wrong. Instructors were dissuaded from departing from -- or supplementing -- the text, on the grounds that deviations from the plan weakened rather than benefitted the programme.

This is a view shared by publishers, as a spokesman for the publishers makes clear here:

> .. You don't really try a book out unless you use it in the way the author intended it to be used.... When you buy a new washing-machine, the first thing you do before using it is to read carefully the manual of directions that comes with it...Furthermore, you wouldn't think of complaining to the company about the way it works if you hadn't operated it strictly in accordance with those directions....Yet that is almost precisely the way many a teacher has treated the textbook. She's used it as a reference book, as a source of problem material, she's skipped around from one place to another, she's even told her children not to read the explanations of the text ("I don't teach it that way"), and then she's complained that the book is not satisfactory...
>
> Chances are good that she has been impressed with the idea that one way to demonstrate her originality, her progressiveness, her general teaching ability, is to disregard the textbook and certainly under no circumstances to be caught following it. (16)

However, while publishers may contend that teachers do not follow their authors' master-plans closely enough, other investigators have found that teachers, on the contrary, faithfully follow the book and the teaching suffers, as Brumfit describes:

> Even the best textbooks take away initiative from teachers by implying that there is somewhere an expert who can solve problems for your students and your class. We need resource packs, sets of materials with advice to teachers on how to adapt and modify the contents. (17)

And Andreen also comments on teachers becoming so dependent on their textbooks-

> to the extent that their own personality is almost entirely removed from the teaching-learning situation. (18)

Because teachers are perceived in some quarters to be likely to follow a textbook too slavishly, and because "following the textbook" seems to imply the teacher being cast into the role of follower, rather than leader, in his own classroom, many colleges and training departments have swung, it would appear, to the other extreme of banning the textbook altogether, actively discouraging teachers (or trainee-teachers) from using a textbook in any way whatsoever, in the classroom, as O'Neill has described.

And of course, with the published textbook itself held in such low esteem in the very institutes where future EFL teachers are being trained, with only the devising and using of locally-produced materials being allowed, it is no wonder that publishers' catalogues fail to appear in EFL writers' evaluation checklists of materials.

The situation is complicated because of the variety of teachers (native or non-native, trained or not, experienced or inexperienced) together with the variety in teaching styles. Strevens, among others, believes:

> The higher the general standard of the teachers, the less important are the course-books and other teaching materials. (5)

2.1.3 Deficiency View of Teachers

This illustrates what Allwright (19) would call the "Deficiency View" of teachers. According to this view, textbooks are needed --

> to save learners from our deficiencies as teachers, to make sure as far as possible, that the syllabus is properly covered and that exercises are well thought out.

This view leads to two conclusions: that, at one extreme,

> the best teachers would neither want nor need published teaching materials -
>
> (and at the other extreme) -
>
> we would have "teacher-proof" materials that no teacher, however deficient, would be able to teach badly with. (19)

But there is doubt whether there are, in fact, such materials as "teacher-proof" ones:

> There is no play that is director-proof. Equally there is no innovation that is teacher-proof or "student-proof". (20)

Indeed, even as they were being developed during World War II, experience was already showing that a competent teacher who did depart

from the masterplan as he went along had better results than by remaining faithful to his text. Unfortunately, it also showed the reverse; that results were disastrous when the less competent deviated from the plan.

2.1.4 Ideal Teachers

Can teachers afford to dispense with textbooks? If, according to the NCES survey in 1978 (15), over 70,000 EFL teachers in the USA during the period 1976-7, had not had a single course of training in EFL, what would the figure world-wide from China to Africa to South America show? How would they, could they, cope without a textbook?

The ideal teacher, no doubt, could afford to do without a textbook. He would have had appropriate training and been given both adequate resources and low classes. He would have the time, motivation and energy to study the individual needs of his pupils and the long-term goals of his institution, to devise culturally and academically appropriate materials, and revise plans and goals periodically in the light of progress.

2.1.4 Teachers' Actual Situation

The reality is different. Even were there enough money to pay for enough teachers and for all EFL teachers to be trained in EFL -- and that is far from being the case in the affluent West -- it is doubtful whether teachers themselves, given the choice, would throw out the textbook.

> Although there is lively interest in teacher-created materials, for reasons of economy of time and energy, the backbone of most language courses is tied to a textbook. (9)

2.1.6 Textbook-authors v Teachers

Publishers and authors of such textbooks (1, 16) we know already favour the argument that "we have our job -- they have theirs."

This is the argument that Allwright (19) labels the "Difference View" where it is claimed that a different sort of expertise is required

to prepare good classroom material, from that required to manage the classroom:

> For some this conception may seem to "reduce" the teacher to the role of mere classroom manager. For others, it "frees" the teacher to develop the expertise need for dealing with practical and fundamental issues in the fostering of language learning in the classroom setting. (19)

To abandon the published textbook and prepare one's own material does not hold a great deal of appeal for the majority of teachers. (1, 9, 21).

> When these teachers..have too many preparations, too many pupils per day, and too many extracurricular responsibilities, then the only chance for over-all success of a subject field program lies in providing adopted texbooks, the best available. (21)

> Some may argue for teacher-prepared materials exclusively but anyone who has slugged his/her way through a semester of relying on self-prepared handouts (will eventually) declare: I've had enough...given the array of commercial products available, there must be something on the market to keep my class going. (9)

2.1.7 Pressure on Teachers

Unfortunately, for these teachers, as I have described, there is considerable pressure nowadays, in both training colleges and on job-interview boards, to eschew the use of published textbooks. Their careers may depend on it.

> One of the more brutal aspects of ESP career structures has been that the more senior posts tend to be filled by those with advanced degrees in linguistics or those who have established a good track record in materials production. If one certain way up has been to get materials published, what does using a textbook profit a man, if by using it he loses the prospect of advancement? Materials writing has tended to become the crucial section in interviews for ESP jobs...Employing institutions increasingly require their English departments to write all their own courses...
> ...the purchase of textbooks for class use is seen to signal an academic retreat and one tinged with institutional dishonour...(6)

And as O'Neill pointed out, there is pressure, too, on the trainee teachers:

> It seems to be widely believed by candidates taking the RSA Certificate for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language that they dare not teach from a textbook..(or) they will automatically be failed. (1)

The EFL teacher then is under considerable pressure. On the one hand, he is made to feel guilty if he uses commercially produced textbooks, not devised specifically for the local situation, nor catering for the needs of his own particular class. On the other, the average teacher just has not got the time or resources to consider and analyse the needs of each individual class AND go on to devise tailormade materials for every lesson of every course.

So for most teachers (1,9) the answer must still be to choose from among the large variety of published textbooks.

2.2 Influence of Textbook on Learner

What of the other main area of discontent, the influence of the textbook on the learner and on the learning process?

If the textbook makes things easier for the teacher, is the same true for his students? As far back as 1730, Thomas Dilworth sought to overcome the prejudice of his time against the use of textbooks by making this very point in the Preface to his textbook - The Schoolmaster's Assistant :

> To the Reverent and Worthy Schoolmasters in Great Britain and Ireland, Gentlemen...permit me to lay before you the following pages which are intended as an help towards a more speedy improvement of your Scholars in Numbers and at the same time, to take off that heavy burden of writing out of rules and questions, which you have so long laboured under.
> It may also be further objected "that to teach by a printed book" is an argument of ignorance and incapacity...He indeed (if any such there be) who is afraid his scholars will improve too fast, will undoubtedly decry this method. (22)

2.2.1 Arguments Against Learners' Using Textbooks

Those arguing against having students learn from textbooks paint a dismal picture of what happens when they do.

> At worst textbooks can become the basis for blind regimentation, forcing teachers and children to drill on memorisation of facts. They can be used to ignore individual differences of pupils, with slow learners lost in confusion and rapid learners slumped in boredom. (23)

Another argument is that the traditional style textbook maps out, very specifically, the student's path and does not encourage him to enquire and experiment. In EFL work, specifically, he is confined, so it is argued, to boring drills and not actively encouraged to put the language to use, in communicative activities.

Again, because the textbook is written for the mass market, it cannot be specific as "the best classroom materials". And with today's focus on the learner -- and on the individual needs of the learner -- the commercial textbook has repeatedly come under fire, with increasing calls for home-made, tailor-made materials.

But those of us who have produced reams of these do not feel they have been an unqualified success. O'Neill lists several reasons of his own why he prefers a textbook to home-made materials:

> (One) reason for using the textbooks we had selected.. was their appearance and the quality of their presentation. This is still one of the least discussed reasons for using textbooks...Home-made materials tend to get shabby very quickly and even in these days of high-quality photocopiers and word-processors, cause enormous production and storage problems... (There was also) the simple problem of expense. It costs far more to photocopy 100 pages of your own material than it does to buy 200 pages bound together in a book...
> Books are good value for money simply in terms of paper alone. The fact that they are bound means they are easy to carry and to look at where and when the learner wants to..No other medium is as easy to use as a book...
> Sheets of papers, particularly A4 paper, issued in batches to learners throughout a course have a terrible habit of getting lost and confused, and are difficult to carry about. (1)

The students themselves, inundated with "showers of single-page hand-outs" (6) do not appear (as EFL teachers like Swales (6) and Dubin (9) bear out) to have the same confidence in these as in a solid, bound textbook, embodying a whole course.

> For many ESL students the book spells knowledge. Somehow the teacher's smudged handouts do not carry the same air of authenticity, despite the hours of best intentions that were poured into them. (9)

My experience, shared with other EFL teachers and writers like Swales and Dubin, is that students do not have much respect for these

home-made "smudged handouts", rarely keeping them handy for reference or study. Instead, they are more often discarded like theatre programmes once the show is over.

2.2.3 Textbook Advantages for Students

With a textbook, the course the student is following is laid out before him. he can see precisely where he is, where he is going and what he has to do to get there. There is therefore a certain security and comfort for him in having this sense of direction and purpose.

Another great advantage that a textbook has, over home-made materials, lies in its greater power to motivate the students.

> The function of motivation is always recognised in printed materials....Attractiveness, such that will entice the reader to pick up the book or pamphlet, is almost universal. (24)

To motivate, the textbook does not need to be a glossy, full-colour production. Those working on the English Language Textbook Project in Somalia had to work with inferior paper, line drawings rather than photographs and in monochrome for reasons of cost. However, the care taken over page format, type selection and the hand drawn illustrations was such that the book not merely fulfilled the function of an ELT carrier but was transformed --

> -- into a vehicle for the education of the student in a far more general sense...in Somalia a student's contact with his textbooks may be his <u>only</u> contact with books. In this situation of a book-hunger almost as intense as that for food, every subject-author is obliged to remember that he or she is an educator first..(25)

It must surely be true that most textbooks nowadays are more carefully planned than the ad hoc materials put together by the average teacher and it is the textbook that is preferred by both teachers and students.

> Although there is lively interest in teacher-created materials, for reasons of economy of time and energy, the backbone of most language courses is tied to a textbook. The teacher may modify and augment, but the textbook is still a basic ingredient. (9)

2.2.4 Textbooks in the Learning Process.

But even where students, generally, seem to prefer a textbook to an assortment of teacher-made handouts, is it the case that the learning process suffers, from the use of textbooks?

In fact, no one appears to know for sure.

> Experimental research into the effect of textbooks is high on the list of desiderata of many authors (Heuer and Müller, 1973; Bung, 1977; Heindrichs et al 1980; Hatfield, 1968) but it is only rarely carried out, especially where entire textbooks are concerned. The research which has been carried out is almost exclusively directed towards certain aspects of textbooks, often in a comparative framework...(26)

In his Encyclopaedic entry on Textbooks (27), Buckingham describes an experiment during the first half of this century, when an enormous number of educationalists experimented with a bookless - or nearly bookless - school. It was found that books were an essential part of the school system, with the result -

> that the experiment came to an end; and the thinkers who had organised it turned their attention to other matters, one of which was the making of better books.

This is a point of view shared by Cronbach:

> The issue of whether or not texts should be used is probably a false issue...educational leaders have failed to grip the real problem, namely to find specific ways of improving printed materials of instruction. (7)

2.3 Textbook Faults

What specific faults are there in textbooks that critics suggest need improvement?

(1) One criticism frequently directed at textbooks is that they are so rigidly constructed, so pre-organised, that the teacher and class are obliged to follow a specified programme with little room for creative or spontaneous learning.

(ii) Another criticism, especially of EFL textbooks and courses, is that such books are not based on the needs of individuals or groups of

students, but are aimed at the commercially huge and heterogeneous mass market.

(iii) A third criticism of the traditional textbook-and-teacher style of teaching is that it fosters learner underinvolvement and teacher overload. Tied to the book, the students are not engaged in "free" communicative activities.

(iv) Again, the traditional-type textbook is accused of spoonfeeding the student, determining what there is to know and do, with the result that they "pre-empt many of the decisions that learners might be trained to make for themselves." (19)

(v) And where schools and colleges operate conservative policies (as in many M.E. and Third World countries) or suffer from a lack of resources, their old-fashioned, out-of-date, dull and didactic textbooks can retard students and get in the way of developing better materials.

2.3.1 Counter Arguments

Most of the faults outlined above are those found in books that are now being phased out.

(i) While textbooks can still vary tremendously among themselves, today's EFL textbook, specifically, is far more flexible and adaptable than its predecessor and can be used by both teacher and class in a wide variety of ways.

> Textbooks can be the most flexible and therefore the most useful of the various media of communication for learning when they are sensibly used. (3)

> No other medium is quite as easily handled..as is a book...Certainly whatever the other advantages of more modern ways of presenting material, such a video, it is impossible to carry them around in your pocket, look at them as you go home or to work in a bus or train, and difficult to leaf backwards and forwards in them to see what has been or will be done. This is not an argument against such modern aids as video or audio recordings. It is an argument for the textbook which may be supplemented by these modern aids but not supplanted by them. (1)

It is surprising how little attention is actually paid to the textbook as a medium of instruction. In articles and books about teaching media, there are rarely, if any, references to the use of textbooks. For example, in a recent volume Selecting Media for Instruction (28) published in 1983, there is no entry for (text) book in either the index or the list of contents, and in another reference work, Instructional Technology (29) there is only one reference (in a book of 300 pages) and that reference is a single paragraph:

> School principles have listed textbooks as the resource most useful and influential in the teaching program. This fact has often been decried by curriculum reformers. But significant reality must be faced: students need something other than the spoken word to which to respond and textbooks provide a very manageable stimulus. Modern curriculum reformers wisely, I think, have faced up to the need for convenient tangible stimuli and so have not eschewed the textbook, but have sought to enhance it by providing a more comprehensive materials package with a textbook at the core...(29)

(ii) To criticisms that textbooks cater for the masses and not particular groups with their own particular needs, especially in this EFL field, educationalists do have answers:

> When used properly, the textbook places within reach of the teacher ways and means of instruction with a common core of learning-teaching material. (8)

O'Neill, the author of many best-selling EFL textbooks, agrees that there is almost always a textbook to be found which will provide that "common core" language, necessary and useful for any group whose needs may, at first, seem unique.

> The assumption that each group is so unique that its needs cannot possibly be met by material developed to meet the needs of another group..is a false assumption for two reasons.
> First, the differences tend to obscure the similarities which are great..
> The second reason is that, particularly today, with the great and growing variety of materials devised all over the world to teach English to different groups, there is usually something we can find to provide the core teaching material for the group we regard as unique and utterly different from any other. (1)

Even in ESP contexts, where before only tailor-made, locally-produced materials have been thought suitable, John Swales (6) feels that a

textbook has a role, providing an "organisational frame" through its grammatical/lexical/functional input, and working in conjuction with other, "local inputs".

(iii) In meeting the criticism of "teacher overload" and "learner underinvolvement", Allwright (19) speaks for many other writers on education:

> The obvious answer would be to offer more training to produce more efficient classroom teachers...If, however, we entertain the possibility that teachers are not just doing "too much", but doing work that the learners could more profitably be doing for themselves, the immediate implication for teacher-training must be that teachers must be trained NOT to do so much work, and trained instead to get the learner to do more.

As long ago as 1938, lecturing to the Japanese Society in London, two years after he had left Japan, Harold Palmer said:

> You cannot teach a language, but you can cause people to learn it.

But the shift from emphasising teaching to paying attention to the learning process, with the learner participating in and taking more control of the classroom activities has, only in recent years, been noticeable in classrooms and textbooks.

> Disappointment in the search for a single right teaching methodology has been accompanied by a stronger focus on the other main element in the situation: learning. The teacher's changed responsibility...can be seen from this viewpoint: it is now not so much to implement a <u>methodology</u> as to find an approach and a repertoire of techniques to suit specific <u>learners</u>. (30)

> The content of the language lesson is the student (31)

> It is generally agreed that teaching should be "learner-centred", comprising the notions of needs analysis or needs survey, of the autonomy of the learner, and of emphasis on the process of learning. (32)

> ..the teacher must subordinate his teaching behaviour to the learning needs of his students, sometimes even to the extent of withdrawing completely from an activity once it is in progress.....
> ....The teacher's role in the learning process is recognised as less dominant. More emphasis is placed on the learner's contributions through independent learning.
> The emphasis on communicative interaction provides more opportunities for co-operative relationships to emerge, both among learners and between teacher and learners....

> ....In short, communicative teaching methods leave the learner scope to contribute his own personality to the learning process. They also provide the teacher with scope to step out of his didactic role in order to be a "human among humans". (33)

There is now, therefore, less likelihood either, that the student will be drilled and spoonfed, as before, when he can now take part in freer, un-prescribed activities. Either in pairs or in small groups, students now often work independently of the teacher, and at their own pace. And as teaching methods have improved, with teachers learning more about the learner-centred classroom, and the need for more student-participation, so textbooks also have improved, reflecting the shift in emphasis from the teacher to the learner.

Dissatisfaction with textbooks, then, would appear to arise not because the textbook, per se, is a poor learning instrument. On the contrary, it is regarded in many quarters as a very important one:

> School principals have listed textbooks as the resource most useful and influential in the teaching program. (29)

What dissatisfaction there remains with the textbook is more likely because <u>some</u> textbooks are of poor quality or because we teachers are still not using them to their fullest advantage.

> Most of the opposition to the textbook has been critical of particular methods of textbook education and therefore offers no final judgement that the textbook should be eliminated. Each of the criticisms, no matter what its origin, points towards modifications of the text and its use, not to its abolition. (7)

3. <u>Inappropriate Choice of Textbooks</u>

It could be said that a book is <u>bad</u> in a certain teaching situation, because it is <u>inappropriate</u> there. This is the "one man's meat = another man's poison" argument. Put another way, there is no ideal book for all seasons.

> No textbook can expect to appeal to all teachers and learners at a particular level. There is a basic need for choice and variety... in the style and approach of materials available....

> A textbook (is not) necessarily unsuccessful, if its style and content do not please some learners at the level at which it is aimed. (1)

It would seem that very often the textbook is blamed for being unsuccessful when the fault more probably lay in its being the wrong choice in the first place. More than one writer (24, 25, 26) point to the lack of research on textbook selection and use, with the result that -

> we simply do not know whether the greatest improvement remains to be made in teacher preparation, in teacher supervision, or text preparation or where else. (24)

4. Inadequate Teacher-Training with Textbooks

It is widely felt (1, 6, 24, 34, 35 etc) however, that teachers are not being adequately prepared at Training college or in Applied Linguistics courses, in how to make the choice from among textbooks.

> Some are inclined to think that training courses ignore the problem of constructive use of text materials. Some suspect that courses present an ideal which cannot be implemented...if facts were known, teacher-trainers might indeed be able to prepare teachers to use text materials better than they do. (24)

> Few institutions which prepare teachers attempt to teach their students how to choose and use a good book....So books continue to be used unskilfully by untrained teachers, because they are not taught how to select and use them skilfully. (34)

> The current availability of a very wide range of EFL teaching material, much of it of high quality, cannot but increase the efficiency of almost any TEFL operation if the material is appropriately selected. A newcomer to the field would find the choice of material somewhat overwhelming...Consequently, trainees on EFL teacher training courses need to be shown what to look for when evaluating course materials. (35)

4.1 Bias in EFL Training

Unfortunately, this is not what is taking place in a great many teacher-training colleges and Applied Linguistics courses.

Far from showing trainees how to evaluate and select from among "high-quality" EFL textbooks on the market, as many writers in the EFL field (1, 6, 7, 9, 34, 35 etc) recommend teachers to do, and,

subsequently, how to modify and adapt for use in individual classrooms the chosen textbook, these colleges and courses show considerable bias against commercial textbooks. Consequently, EFL book catalogues (or the role these might play in the evaluation process) are totally ignored.

Swales describing the typical course in textbook analysis and evaluation found on post-graduate and post-experience Diploma and MA courses in Applied Linguistics, explains how dependent they are on a list of requirements against which a textbook can be evaluated

> - and as this list grows and develops into a comprehensive questionnaire, it becomes more and more certain that the subject of the questionnaire will falter and fail. (6)

From the kind of questions that Candlin and Breen (36, 12) would ask of both published and unpublished teaching materials:

(a) Are the materials sensitive to the teacher-learner situation?

(b) Does the view of language implicit within the materials conflict with or complement that of the teacher?

(c) Is the language of the materials derived from a socio-linguistic analysis of the target language repertoire?

(d) Are the learners' own specific interests and motivations accommodated?

-- it would appear that it is unlikely, in the extreme, for any materials, individually prepared or not, to score highly against such an inventory.

So what chance has the EFL textbook? None, in Swales' opinion, and he doubts whether using the same evaluative criteria for both published and unpublished materials is a valid approach.

4.2 Faults of Checklist Approach

And whether such a use of checklists or score-cards is at all a valid method of evaluating textbooks is strongly criticised by other writers on EFL (34, 37):

> The traditional checklist approach to Textbook Analysis and Evaluation (TAE) is characterised by a pre-determined list of questions (usually allowing only YES or NO answers), against

> which any ESP textbook can be judged. The result is usually a depressingly long list of the book's faults with little scope for further comment...(37)

And, according to Spalding, (34) there cannot be any "relatively exact criteria" on such checklists or score-cards, while there is as yet no tested theory about what constitutes a "good" textbook. And without a theory, and without criteria, there can not be any so-called "experts" to apply procedures of selection or train other people to select textbooks.

> Among departments or colleges operating Textbook Analysis and Evaluation type courses, there is no uniformity or consistency in the methods or criteria used. For there is generally vagueness about "what constitutes a good textbook" and about which values operate when selecting one. No doubt people are misled into thinking a book is good if it has been selected according to a process (such as, for example, against a comprehensive checklist, or being chosen by a majority vote among the staff members concerned) - which seems authoritative. (38)

4.3 Bias Against Textbooks

What is more disturbing is that such courses work with checklists which are not only based on inexact criteria but are also of doubtful validity when applied to both published and unpublished materials, producing undeniable bias.

There is further evidence of bias against published textbooks, when candidates taking the RSA Certificates for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language --

> dare not teach from a textbook in the practical lessons they are required to give before an examiner (1)

- for they believe that if they did, they would be automatically failed, textbooks being "taboo", but self-made materials being very much "in".

This emphasis, on materials design and development in colleges, is carried over into the classroom, where a teacher is made to feel guilty at being caught with a textbook -- (My God, you haven't been using a textbook, have you?) (1) -- And it is being found on interviewing boards

for the job itself, or for further promotion, where

> materials writing has tended to become the crucial section in interviews for ESP jobs - (6)

and the successful candidate has had to demonstrate his ability to write his own materials.

4.4 Teachers' Reaction

But the great majority of teachers (1, 9, 21, 26, 35 etc) have neither the time nor the inclination to write these.

> Most teachers are not in the position to collect, order, and edit in a form which is suitable for teaching, the necessary materials, to construct their own textbooks. (26)

On the contrary, teachers are crying out for textbooks to get themselves off the treadmill of grinding out these home-made materials, very much aware of -

> the current availability of a very wide range of EFL teaching material, much of it of high quality. (35)

Even when teachers may be observed churning out reams of home-made materials, we cannot apparently take this as evidence that they prefer "making their own" to depending on published textbooks.

> Our review leads us to believe that, whereas countless numbers of teachers "make" materials, much of that produced is derived from published materials..a form of benevolent plagiarisation. There is evidence that teachers are making more; there is little evidence that teachers are creating more. (39)

And this is confirmed in Swales' findings after his investigation into the failure of ESP textbooks.

> ... the locally produced materials which traditionally fill the gap left by the abandonment of the ESP textbook usually show a striking resembalnce to the published materials that have been rejected....it is by no means impossible to find examples of the "borrowing" of published materials and of locally produced courses that are more edited anthologies of what is already available...(6)

The dilemma of the teacher trying to find the right materials is often presented as a straightforward choice between outright rejection of the commercial textbook on the one hand, and time-consuming hours of

drudgery producing self-made materials, on the other. But, for many EFL teachers working abroad, especially for the non-native teacher of English, neither of these is a realistic option. It is unrealistic, for example, to expect non-native teachers of English to teach without resorting to a book; and, equally, it is unrealistic to expect non-native speakers to compose all the materials for all their courses.

There is, however, a third option: adaptation.

5. Adaptation

It is not always possible, or desirable, or economically justifiable, for teachers in charge of courses to throw all existing textbooks away, and, by all accounts, they are unlikely to have either the time or energy (even if they have the creativity) to devise all their own. As Hill and Dobbyn describe:

> After the various sets of materials have been evaluated, and after a choice has been made, the result will usually still not be exactly right for the teacher's purposes. Rewriting the book completely is impossible for most teachers: they have neither the time nor the ability. On the other hand, to go on mindlessly teaching the book exactly as it is, however unsuitable it may be, is inexcusable. Some compromise must usually be made. (13)

In cases like that, there has to be a compromise - "adopt and adapt". The teacher, for whatever reasons, is obliged to adopt the textbook that is available but he adapts it to the individual situation.

Even in those cases where there is the luxury of choosing a brand-new textbook, notwithstanding the enormous variety and range of new textbooks on the market, there will still be a need to adapt, as no teacher can expect a textbook obviously produced for the mass-market to be ideally suited to each and every class. And it is not always thought a wise decision anyway, to opt for a new textbook even when funds permit. Morley (40) quotes J.P.B. Allen (1976) when he writes:

> there is perhaps something wrong with the idea that the only way to "apply" results of research is to write a whole new textbook...

and the same applies, surely, to buying a brand new textbook --

> We behave as though we believe that one book is the cause and another the solution to the problems and dissatisfactions we experience with our respective foreign courses. And if we could only find the right set of materials everything would be wonderful! (41)

In fact, better results could probably be achieved with less expense and upheaval, by adapting what was already available, as Van Els et al write:

> Textbook adaptation and supplementation are preferable to introducing a new textbook, if the general structure of the textbook is still adequate. (26)

They feel that such shortcomings as the teacher frequently confronts in practice are amenable to adaptation and do not warrant buying a new textbook.

5.1 Textbook Adaptability

It could be argued that adaptation is possible only if the original textbook is not so inflexibly pre-organised as to make the teacher's task virtually impossible. There are, after all, as we have seen, authors and publishers, who have so prepared their material as to render them virtually "teacher-proof" and they would claim that --

> allowing adaptability is likely to introduce more error than wisdom. (21)

However, when examples can be found in all fields, including such highly organised ones as mathematics and logic, of textbooks which have been successfully modified and adapted, it could equally be argued that though textbooks which appear inflexible will offer teachers problems with adapting, nevertheless, these are not insoluble.

Where it might appear that adapting a textbook is going to be so extensive that it virtually amounts to major surgery -- or mutilation depending on one's viewpoint, it will probably be easier, in this case, to choose from the vast majority of good commercial textbooks, bearing in mind that one is not going to find the "perfect fit", the ideal textbook.

There is no more chance of finding the ideal textbook than there is of finding the "ideal teacher". What one hopes for, in each case, is a good, dependable one, that can adapt.

5.2 Skilful Evaluation as Pre-Requisite

Of course, it goes without saying that the more skilled the teacher is in evaluating textbooks, the less likely it will be that an unsuitable book (one that will prove ineffective with the students, without a great deal of time and adaptation being allocated to it) will ever be selected in the first place.

Simply because there is, now, such a wealth of high-quality material on the market, unless one is experienced, or trained, in the evaluation of EFL materials, the EFL teacher-consumer may very well feel confused and overwhelmed by the choice. „Wer die Wahl hat, hat die Qual". And, understandably, this is why there has been, among various influential EFL authors and teachers (1, 24, 26, 27, 35, 40) the call for far more emphasis, in the training of EFL teachers, on evaluation and adaptation techniques.

5.2.1 Training in Evaluation

Unfortunately, where there has been any training in evaluation, along the lines described in the writings of Candlin and Breen, for example, (12, 36) the checklist procedure has tended to produce, as both American and British critics (7, 24, 37) point out, adverse criticism of textbooks, without any compensating recognition of their strengths.

What is required is that trainees should acquire a set of values or standards by which they can judge the effectiveness of any textbook. And by being exposed to, and having to compare and contrast, the best known and most widely used EFL textbooks, they will not only be developing their critical faculties but also growing more aware of how important it is to relate the choice of textbook to their aims for the course.

Many writers (6, 19, 37, 42) stress how important it is that only when teachers know what they want their textbook for, what they want it to do for their students, what role they want it to play in the course, as core-material only, a basic framework or whatever, are they in a position to make their choice.

And the adaptability of a textbook should therefore be a key factor in this selection process. Only that book which lends itself to improvisation and development by both teacher and class, should be chosen (24, 26, 43, 44 et al.).

> In adapting materials, one was often controlled by practical considerations rather than pursuit of the ideal.... Given the range of attitudes and abilities which a course designer might bring to bear -- he might be idealist or pragmatist, experienced or new to the job, aware or unaware of local contexts of use -- no published material could provide the perfect answer. Adaptability might therefore be a major criterion in selecting published materials. (44)

5.3 Reasons for Adaptation

Carefully chosen as it may have been, the textbook will need adapting for any one of a number of reasons which come under the heading -- "tailoring the course to fit the students' interests and the local circumstances".

For example, with a specific group of students, the teacher may need to provide more exercises or more frequent revisions, than the book does, in order to cover a point which they are finding difficult; or, it may be, additional practice in one skill, say oral, because of the nature of the course they are taking. Again, if the textbook is a general EFL one, and the students' main interst is "English for Bankers", in addition to the supplementary banking and commerce materials they will of course also be using, the teacher will probably be adapting various of the textbook activities and exercises to make these more appropriate. And, similarly, if the textbook seems more attuned to the "teenage" or secondary school market than its "adult" label implied, some modification, for example in

topics for discussion, will be required to ensure the adults remain motivated and stimulated.

At all times the teacher should be aware that he is complementing and supplementing the textbook, from a positive standpoint. It robs students of confidence in their textbook, if the teacher's adaptations and modifications are seen as criticisms. Part of the teacher's skill lies in presenting his adaptation of the textbook as his contribution to the author-teacher partnership. And skill or judgement is required here, for it is not always easy to say when a teacher should deviate from an author's plan and when it is best to leave well alone. As Stevick says -

> (The teacher) must satisfy the demands of the textbook, but in ways that will be satisfying to those who learn from it. he works around two foci, and not just one. (43)

5.4 How to Adapt

The ways in which a textbook can be adapted by the teacher for his class are various. In fact, he may be adapting for them even when he is unaware of it. Whenever a teacher rephrases a rubric, adds a more detailed explanation or selects only some examples for the students to work on, he is adapting his textbook to the class.

> Every teacher is an adaptor of the text he uses. The more experienced and sensitive the teacher, normally the greater the adaptation. (45)

Because the adaptation is so inevitable, writers like Stevick feel, it ought to receive more attention and prestige.

To personalise his raw material, the textbook, tailor it to suit the pace and interests of his students or to eliminate what is unnecessary or inappropriate, there is a variety of techniques the teacher can use.

> We can supplement, edit, expand, individualise, simplify, modernise, localise or modify the cultural-situational content. (45)

5.5 Teacher's Role

The teacher, not the author, is the only one who knows how his students can handle the material. The general aim is always that the course accommodate the students, not for the students to be moulded into the patterns set by the textbook/course. And the teacher, by adapting the mass-produced textbook, supplementing or shortening, simplifying or expanding, is trying to produce the "perfect fit" for his class.

This is where, it is suggested (1, 6, 24 et al.) the teacher's creativity can best be put to use. Not in devising entire courses and duplicating, unnecessarily, work already done satisfactorily elsewhere, but in fleshing out the grammatical/lexical/functional framework of the textbook course, and in suggesting opportunities and activities for learners to make use of the language forms and skills they have just been acquiring. The teacher, thereby, has the best of both worlds: teaching with a (well-chosen) textbook, but not being a slave to it and devising some of his own materials, but not becoming a drudge at it.

In the recipe for success in the EFL classroom, the two main ingredients would seem to be not just teacher plus textbook; but the teacher who has been trained to evaluate the strengths as well as the weaknesses of EFL textbooks, to recognise when to adapt and when to leave well alone and to devise and develop the supplementary/complementary materials required by individual classes, as well as the textbook which is potentially adaptable, so designed as to allow for a variety of teaching styles and the variety of interests and goals of different learners.

5.6 The Ideal

Sadly, we do not yet know enough about the way a textbook is put together, on the one hand, and how teachers teach from it, on the other, to be absolutely sure of producing this ideal type of adaptable textbook.

> Curiously enough, despite the prominence of the textbook in most language classrooms, little attention has been paid to its

> construction by the people who write journal articles and give papers at conferences. One could conjecture that the dearth of writings dealing specifically with textbooks is a sign that the topic is somehow taboo. Perhaps it is too commercially tainted to be acceptable. (9)

As mentioned earlier, little attention is paid to the textbook too, vis-a-vis other teaching media. Klare and Macdonal-Ross have also found there has been little experimental research on the textbook:

> Reinforced as they are by the behaviour of funding agencies, there is little incentive for researchers to revise their ideas. Actually, it seems the situation gets worse as time goes on. The second handbook on teaching appears to contain less than one paragraph out of 1,400 pages directly concerned with textbooks. Does this accurately reflect the work being done by researchers? (46)

6. Conclusion

I could suggest that EFL publishers themselves should make more of an impact, directly, on the training colleges, either by challenging these institutes to match, in self-produced materials, the courses they offer for heterogeneous adult groups, or, alternatively, offering to show how adaptable and versatile their course-books were, in a number of different teaching situations around the globe.

And until we have more specific information on teachers' experiences in using different textbooks which will show us how and where they adapt them, the problems they meet and the remedies they devise, we shall still be trapped in the "either-or" situation of whether or not to use the textbook. But if ever research were carried out on teachers and their experiences with textbooks, noting which features they thought made one book easier to use than another, or one more difficult to adapt, which remedies had been tried out and which ones had worked, then the more EFL authors and publishers on the one hand, and teachers and their classes on the other, would profit too.

Without the benefit of such research, however, evaluating, selecting and adapting textbooks will perhaps be more difficult than it need be. And until teachers, especially non-native teachers of English, gain

experience in the classroom of what works there and how to improve on it, it will be the responsibility of colleges and courses training EFL teachers, both native and non-native English speakers, to eliminate the present bias against published textbooks and spend less time showing students how to devise and develop their own materials, and more on how to choose from the "very wide range of EFL teaching material, much of it of high quality" (32) -- and use and adapt these constructively in lessons.

Many writers on EFL (1, 6, 24, 34, 35 et al.) consider this is the area on which colleges should concentrate. And it is this sort of training that would benefit most not only the non-native teacher of English but also the EFL teacher working abroad, without access to the variety of influences available to colleagues working in the UK. With training like this, he would be much better prepared for the EFL classroom than training concentrated on devising materials, for it is evident from many articles, colleagues and my own experience, that teachers rarely have enough time, energy and creativity, even if they have the wish to, to produce their own original material for every class and course. And now with the enormous variety of textbooks available, they should not have to.

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CHAPTER 3

WHICH EVALUATION? WER DIE WAHL HAT - HAT DIE QUAL

Introduction

Whoever has to make a choice, says the old German proverb, suffers torment. And teachers and education officials faced with making textbook selections are no exception.

> A newcomer to the (EFL) field would find the choice of material somewhat overwhelming and with the range increasing constantly as publishers bring out new titles, the problem of evaluating course materials and choosing the most suitable becomes ever more pressing. (1)

> There is no Which for textbooks, and masses of rubbish is skilfully marketed. (2)

> There is a bewildering array of theory which bears upon foreign language teaching...teachers feel in some way inadequate when faced by this plethora of theoretical speculation which they feel obscurely that they ought to know about. (3)

1.The Problem of Choice

It could be said that it is obvious why we EFL teachers need to evaluate, for nowadays there is not only this plethora of teaching theories: there is also a plethora of methods and a whole host of new materials. Without help, however, or even simple awareness of what is at stake, a bad choice can be made.

> If we have to choose between two books, we have a 50% chance of choosing well. If we have a choice of 100 books, our chances of choosing well are correspondingly reduced. (3)

> A major role in the determination of applicable materials is played by the teacher(s). It is a responsibility for which the professional educator should be trained; it requires experience and patience.... Perhaps no other teacher-task is as unrewarding as the reviewing of textbooks seems to be...It's work, fatigue-producing work. (4)

> I can remember one or two regrettable occasions when colleagues have bought a set of textbooks on no more detailed inspection than breaktime allows. Textbooks that may shape the learning activities of hundreds or even thousands of pupils deserve more careful analysis and choice..(5)

2. What is Evaluation?

People cannot agree on a single definition for evaluation and consequently, evaluation means different things to different people. To some, for instance, evaluation is simply providing information for those empowered to make the educational decisions; for others, it involves making judgements too, as Cooper explains.

> This distinction, between provision of information and the making of judgements, may sound very unrealistic to the classroom teacher who has the task of collecting his own information before he maies his own decision.. Nevertheless, (Cooper goes on,) it may help the teacher to consider his task as though it were two separate activities. When he is collecting information, the teacher should be aware of the need to be as objective as possible. (6)

2.1 "Pure Reporting"?

However, to be "as objective as possible" in evaluation, is much easier said than done. It may appear that the simple "laying out of facts", "portraying things as they are", "pure reporting", is value-neutral, unbiased, objective. But as the authors of the Open University course on Accountability and Evaluation (7) point out, even a painting or a photograph of a person cannot be wholly free from the subjective approach of the painter or photographer. The values of the evaluator are bound to be reflected not only in what he sees as salient points but also in what he omits.

The Open University course cites the case of a teacher arriving in a department, inheriting two sets of textbooks and having to choose between them. What the items cost would not therefore be a factor, obviously, in the choice. But, to a new Head of Department wishing to adopt an entirely new scheme, cost would be an additional factor and he/she could well choose what gives best value for money.

Because they cannot foresee all such possible contexts of choice, some evaluators feel they should, accordingly, simply portray, not judge, the

programme or textbook. Stake himself, whilst accepting that standards and judgements enter into evaluation--

> BOTH description and judgement are essential -- in fact they are the two basic acts of evaluation (8)

-- preferred, nevertheless, to see the main task of the evaluator as portrayal. In 1967 he was writing that an evaluation "tells what happened", as close as one can get to "neutral information". Later on, though, he wrote: I have lost the sense that there is any "the way it is". What is only seems to be.

In her article Evaluation in Education (9), Wynne Harlen reinforces this, pointing out that because of their experience and education, people are constantly filtering their observations and there is no way of avoiding this filter.

> ...we choose to find out about certain things, both because we feel they are significant and because what leads us to consider them significant will be the basis on which we make judgements.

It would appear, therefore, that "pure reporting" is impossible and that an element of selecting, judging, valuing is bound to be present in the evaluation of any new product or programme. This should not be surprising as the word, evaluation, includes "value". But, where there is continued difference of opinion over what evaluation should involve is in how this element of value is to be arrived at. How do we recognise the value or worth of, say, a new textbook? How is this to be assessed or measured? To which the answer most often given is by the criteria or standards one brings along to the evaluation process.

2.2 Criteria

What exactly are criteria, and how do we find them?

> The meaning of criteria emerges as something combining certain aspects of both values and standards. If we take values to be the underlying principles which are considered to be desirable and of utility at a particular time, then these provide the

framework for selecting the kinds and variety of information which will be gathered...

...Values thus determine the kinds of transactions or achievements which are noticed and which become the information on which an evaluation is baded. Standards "refer to levels of achievement or expectation against which eople or objects can be assessed". Whilst values determine the qualitative nature of criteria, standards determine the quantitative aspects..

..Thus, the expectations or standards affect how the information is sought and not only how the information obtained is judged. (9)

Klare and Macdonald-Ross express the relationship between standards and judging somewhat differently.

> In principle there are two ways to operate a selection system. One way stresses preset rules, and is summarised by the word standards. The second way stresses individual situations and the need to compare one alternative with another. This is the way of human judgement.. any system for selecting textbooks will need both well- defined standards and sensitive judgement. ... Usually, however, the standards are relative to particular situations. A practical choice must be made, based on the alternatives available. A book will have these advantages but these disadvantages; seldom does a book score on all counts.
>
> .....If most standards are relative, it follows that teachers and administrators must continue to use their judgement. In other words, you cannot replace judgement by hard-and-fast rules, except in a few extreme cases. This is a blow to those who hope to eliminate the frailties of human judgement..(10)

2.1.1. Subjective Elements

These people who "hope to eliminate the frailties of human judgement", who feel that evaluation of this kind must be unsound, biased, subjective and unscientific get short shrift from Scriven. He has no sympathy with their

> - uneasy feeling that evaluation necessitates making value judgements and that the value judgements are essentially subjective and not scientific. This is about as intelligent a view as the view that statements about oneself are essentially subjective and hence incapable of rational substantiation. Some value judgements are essentially assertions about fundamental personal preferences ("matters of taste") and as such are factual claims which can be established or refuted...
>
> ....Another kind of value judgement is the assessment of the merit or comparative merit of some entity in a clearly defined context where this amounts to a claim that its performance is as good as or better than another's on clearly identifiable and clearly weighted criterion variables....

> ..it is in this sense that we can correctly assert that the Bulova Accutron is the best wrist chronometer currently available or that a particular desk dictionary is the best one for somebody with extensive scientific interests. (11)

Scriven's own definition of evaluation is a methodological activity consisting of the gathering and combining of performance data, to yield ratings, and in justifying the data collection procedures, the weighting of data and the goals themselves. But, as House (12) points out, such "scientific" procedures do not guarantee that the findings are "true" but they do promise that biases originating from the "context of valuation" will be greatly reduced.

House goes on:

> Many leading scientists tell us that even our scientific approaches are ultimately biased..
> ..In fact, there can be no value-free social research. All research must proceed from initial valuations of some kind. So if being objective means being totally free from bias, there can be no objective research.(12)

Gunnar Myrdal (13), the Swedish social scientist, argues that social research need not meet the impossible condition of being value-free in order to be useful. What is important is the scientist's revealing the values on which the research is based.

It is important therefore, that the values or criteria on which the evaluation is based are known if only to indicate where bias or possible subjectivity may lie.

But the problem for those faced with evaluating textbooks is that there is no tested theory about what constitutes the good text. What most people are guided by is a vague idea of the kind of textbook they are seeking and this is what they use as a criterion for selecting their new textbook.

> The vagueness of ideas about what constitutes a good text and the use of values which inhere in the democratic ideology, rather than those which might enable teachers to discriminate between texts, lead some to believe, upon occasion, that a book is good if it has been chosen by a process which seems good. They seem to have no other verbalized standard by which to tell

> one book from another, or to justify their use of one book rather than another. (14)

This would appear to be borne out in the 1929 survey conducted by Gertrude Whipple (15), of the procedures used in selecting schoolbooks. All the schools in 135 large cities (populations over 30,000) were asked how they selected textbooks (and other school books). 6 types of procedure were distinguished:

i) Selection based on the consensus of opinion of all the staff members concerned with the book;

ii) unguided selection by the principal and teachers;

iii) guided selection by the principal and teachers;

iv) selection by central book committees;

v) selection by central curriculum committees;

vi) selection by central-staff members.

64% of cities used method (iv) and only 4% used method (ii). The apparently democratic process of having committees make the decision on textbook selection masks -

> fundamental differences in the professional training, attitudes and insights of the personnel delegated with the responsibility of selecting books (15)

3. <u>How do we practise evaluation?</u>

In committees or on our own, and whether bothered by the lack of a tested theory of what constitutes a good text, or not, how in fact <u>do</u> we justify choosing and using one book rather than another? Without a theory and description of the "good textbook", where do we draw our criteria and values from?

Buckingham (16) describes how, not long after the turn of the century, the selection of textbooks began to be recognised as a professional service and the analysis of textbooks started, at first on an informal basis, and later on a more systematic and objective one, under the influence of the "scientific movement in education"

3.1. Scales and Checklists.

One result of all this was the construction of scales for measuring or appraising books.

> Problems involved in selecting textbooks were considered and scales were proposed by Maxwell in 1921, by Spaulding in 1922, by Franzen and Knight in 1922, by Fuller in 1928, by Whipple in 1936, by Underwood in 1941, and by Clement in 1942. During the last 15 years these reports and their accompanying scales have been widely used, and other instruments of appraisal have been constructed as part of the process of choosing textbooks (16)

Apart from these scales devised by experienced professionals, other efforts have been made to devise a process of textbook evaluation that could be of help to the teacher, using teachers' own past experiences.

In 1961, for example, the Modern Language Association engaged 184 language teachers to evaluate nearly 2,400 items in at least 11 languages (French, German, Italian etc). The results were printed by the MLA (17) with a very detailed Appendix containing Criteria for the Evaluation of Materials. These criteria established 13 different categories and, in keeping with the times, were oriented along strictly audio-lingual lines.

Other well-known checklists, considered more flexible, include that drawn up by Wilga Rivers (18), a Checklist of Textbook Evaluation, consisting of 25 groups of questions, and that recommended by Kenneth Chastain, "a general subjective evaluation", (19) whose criteria for the selection of textbooks fall into 5 basic categories:

i) The vocabulary should be the kind with which the teacher feels comfortable, and which lends itself to the discussion of life by the student;

ii) The three learning steps, understanding, practising, expressing oneself, should be emphasised throughout the book;

iii) All four language skills should be practised in proper balance with each other;

iv) The book should develop the language skills in a progressively difficult manner;

v) The text should incorporate homework. (19)

The disparity between checklists, some over a dozen detailed pages long and those listing only a handful of categories, is increasingly apparent as checklists are in fact commonplace now in nearly every article on the evaluation of textbooks (e.g. Cunningsworth (1), Bruder (20), Tucker (21), Pfister and Rada (22), Ben-Peretz and Tamir (23), Williams (24) etc) while a full-length guide, Evaluating and Selecting EFL Teaching Materials (25) appeared in 1984.

3.2 Difficulties in Evaluating.

Just as teachers face an overwhelming plethora of EFL theories, methods and materials so now they seem also in danger of being overwhelmed with an ever-increasing flow of articles and checklists in the Teaching and Linguistic journals, purporting to bring order out of chaos. But a great deal of the advice can be considered both unhelpful and unworkable, as John Swales describes:

> (Evaluation) courses proceed by establishing a list of requirements that a textbook can be evaluated against and as this list grows and develops into a comprehensive questionnaire it becomes more and more certain that the subject of the questionnaire will falter and fail....
> ..If I am right in thinking that external materials -- typically textbooks -- will perform very badly under such an interrogation, then there must be doubt about the validity of using the same evaluative criteria for both published and unpublished materials, thus suggesting a need to explore a division of role for the two classes of product. (26)

Just as we are accused of ordering new textbooks whenever we grow dissatisfied with our present ones, behaving -

> as though we believe that one book is the cause and another the solution to the problems and dissatisfactions we experience with our respective foreign language courses (27)

- so we are now in danger of believing the same about a new checklist or set of evaluation procedures.

There are two main difficulties that are complained of, which complicate the teacher's task in evaluating new textbooks:

a) it is difficult for teachers to keep up with or be aware of all the material currently on the market, in their subject, even just at the levels they themselves are teaching;

b) there is no single source classifying and evaluating these textbooks, or collating every single piece of evaluation, such as users' opinions, book reviews, post-graduate research etc on either individual books or classes of books (ESP, or Beginning Textbooks etc), with the result that a great deal of information never reaches the teaching public, those who choose, buy or teach from those books.

4. How Should We Evaluate?

From what we read in language journals, it would appear that we are as far from knowing the answer to this question, in the 1980s as Gertrude Whipple 50 years ago.

> ..book selection is in a stage of trial and error. The practices reported vary from the briefest consideration of books to elaborate analysis, from questionable to apparently sound practices, and from altogether subjective to scientific steps in selection. (28)

36 years later, Noblitt is writing:

> Until applied linguistics provides a systematic means for discussing the theoretical adequacy of pedagogical materials, it is likely that textbook evaluation will remain a trial-and-error process...(29)

Like Noblitt, Willard Spalding lays the blame on the absence of any tested theory, leading to diversity in procedures for selection.

> The result is that it is generally believed that anyone can pick out the right book if he follows the correct procedure. The search is for a right method by which to apply ignorance and get a wise choice. This inevitably leads to a multiplication of methods of selection, since any system will fail to produce wisdom when there is no theory on which to base it. (14)

The question is, therefore, not so much How should we evaluate? - there being no shortage of ways of conducting an evaluation -- so much as, How should we best conduct an evaluation?

4.1. How best to evaluate?

Anyone setting out to evaluate textbooks does want to go about it the "best way" but in actually finding the "right way" to conduct a particular evaluation, for a particular project, would-be evaluators have to make a number of choices at different stages of the evaluation.

4.2. Diversity of approach

First, from the "multiplication of methods of selection" how does the would-be evaluator know which one is best?
In her survey of 135 school systems choosing textbooks, Gertrude Whipple (28) discovered 149 different methods. Even after analysis, these 149 "specific methods" could not be catalogued under less than 11 different categories:

i) Trying out books in the classroom;

ii) Comparing and discussing personal judgements;

iii) Making a personal examination;

iv) Consulting book reviews and other printed materials;

v) Making a score-card evaluation;

vi) Securing the judgements of specialists;

vii) Making preliminary eliminations;

viii) Analysing materials with respect to the topics treated;

ix) Applying statistical procedures to content;

x) Analysing materials with respect to duplication of selections;

xi) Formulating guiding principles.

The methods, she discovered, that were most widely used were "trying out books in the classroom", "comparing and discussing personal judgements", and "making a personal examination". And while the various

score-card evaluation methods were more frequently applied to textbooks than to supplementary or recreational reading books, the reverse was true of the various other methods under "consulting book reviews and other printed materials".

Surprisingly, perhaps, in view of the 149 different "specific methods" thrown up by the survey, the problem most often cited as a cause of difficulty encountered in book selection was "lack of adequate methods of selecting books".

This only goes to show that having available a "multiplication of methods", nearly 150 of them, is not in itself the answer, if they are not considered adequate. As Stake tells us (30):

> There are different ways to evaluate arts programs and no one is the right way.

That being the case still, let us consider the most widely used methods in the Whipple survey.

4.3. Outcomes or pay-off approach

a) Trying out the books in the classroom:

> If possible, try it out first (3)
> the language classroom is the crucible of our profession, the place where new ideas are born, tried and tested (31).

It may seem self-evident that before purchasing a new course or a new textbook, the teacher should "try it out" first. So doing would have the obvious advantages of opening up the book's strengths and weaknesses to the teacher who would be teaching from it, as well as the difficulties and delights encountered by the students.

In their chapter on Textbook Evaluation Van Els et al. (32) devote a whole section to Users' judgements and the need to incorporate these in any evaluation process. But of course they see there are problems too in incorporating what the teachers and students say about their textbook into experimental research into the effects of textbooks.

> ..we cannot say that the literature on users' judgements is very extensive. Apart from one or two projects which were set

> up to develop an evaluation procedure, only reports of individual teachers and schools or institutes on current textbooks are available (e.g. Cole, 1968). Sometimes these reports are necessarily global and impressionistic ("I find it impossible to work with this textbook") and as such will be of little practical use to prospective users when it comes to weighing the pros and cons of a new textbook. (32)

The argument for trying out a new textbook in the classroom is that this will verify any claims its supporters (author, publisher etc) may have made as to its benefits for both teacher and students.

> There are two ways to verify such claims: we can either look for evidence of the absolute effectiveness of the method (textbook) or we can seek evidence for its relative effectiveness (Long 1983). The first of these is concerned with whether students taught by the method (or program) make gains relative to their proficiency in the language at the start of the course of instruction. As Long points out, to demonstrate this it is necessary not only to compare pre-test and post-test results but also to show that the results obtained were achieved as a result of the method or program rather than despite it. This involves using a true experimental design. To demonstrate the relative effectiveness of a method on the other hand, we would have to demonstrate that the method produced better results than an alternative method or program. (33)

4.3. Problems in carrying out approach.

Unfortunately, a teacher, or teachers working together, very rarely is in the position to carry out such an experimental design. In her extensive study on how schools conducted selection procedures, Whipple found (28) -

> that much unsystematic experimentation is in progress and that there is need for more carefully controlled procedures.. For example, only one characteristic should be tested at a time, and identical procedure should be followed in making comparative trials of different titles (28)

4.3.2. Arguments against approach.

But even under the most stringent experimental conditions, is this "trying it out in the classroom" method of evaluation, (recommended, as it is, by many writers on evaluation), the "best way" to evaluate a new textbook?

> There is a widespread belief among instructional psychologists that the only way to get valid information about the quality of

> curriculum materials is to try the materials out, in some more or less organised way, on the students they were meant for. This proposition has seemed so self-evident that it has almost never been questioned. (34)

In an excerpt cited by Macdonald-Ross from the Joint Committee on Programmed Instruction and Teaching Machines (Lumsdaine, 1966), we read:

> Prospective users should evaluate each program on its own merits according to its demonstrated effectiveness in producing specified outcomes

-- which Macdonald-Ross queries.

> Here quality was redefined as "effectiveness" and effectiveness was reduced to "achieving preset objectives"....
>
> ....Of course, it is necessary for curriculum developers to find out how their materials work in practice. Nothing I say here is meant to deny this truism. But when it is posed in its strong form -- that is, student outcomes are <u>both necessary and sufficient</u> to show the merits and defects of instructional materials -- this proposition I believe to be completely false, seriously damaging to the production of good material and to the possibility of building sound practices of curriculum development. (34)

Cronbach also disputes the benefit of experiments and field trials in evaluating a new course or textbook.

> ..formally designed experiments, pitting one course against another, are rarely definitive enough to justify their cost. Differences between average test scores resulting from different courses are usually small relative to the wide difference among and within classes taking the same course... ..More analytic experiments are much more useful than field trials applying markedly dissimilar treatments to different groups. Small-scale, well controlled studies can profitably be used to compare alternative versions of the same course: in such a study the differences between treatments are few enough and well enough defined that the results have explanatory value (35).

4.4. <u>Illuminative approach.</u>

The "outcomes approach", trying it out first and assessing test results, is in contrast to the "illuminative approach", such as the analytic studies recommended by Cronbach.

> The first which emphasises measurement and prediction is committed to pre-specification of effects (or <u>behaviours</u>) and has been termed the <u>classical</u>, <u>traditional</u>, <u>objectives</u>, <u>industrial</u>, <u>engineering</u> or <u>agricultural-botany</u> model by its detractors and the <u>experimental</u>, <u>scientific</u> or <u>operational</u>

> model by its advocates. The second model emphasises meaningful description in interpretation and is concerned to note emergent effects as evaluation proceeds. It has been called the illuminative, responsive, consensual, participant observer, analytic-judgemental or socio-anthropological model by its advocates but has not yet been suitably stereotyped by its detractors (36)

The two other "most widely used methods" in the Whipple study-b) Comparing and discussing personal judgements and c) Making a personal examination- could be said to fall into this category.

One analogy that encapsulates these two basically different approaches - outcomes or illuminative -- to evaluating a new educational programme or new texbook comes from Scriven (11)

> If you want to evaluate a tool say an axe, you might study the design of the bit, the weight distribution, the steel alloy used, the grade of hickory in the handle etc, or you might just study the kind and speed of the cuts it makes in the hands of a good axeman...
>
> ...The first approach involves an appraisal of the instrument itself...intrinsic evaluation .. The second approach proceeds via an examination of the effects of the teaching instrument on the pupil... and it usually specifies these rather operationally - (tests on a number of criterial parameters). We can call this pay-off evaluation (11)

It is not always possible or practicable for teachers to try out everything that is suggested. In fact, it is no more possible to try out all the possible textbooks on a given subject at a given level, than it would be possible for the average consumer to try out for himself all the toasters, flysprays or lawn-mowers on the market. What teachers can, and do do, however, is make close, detailed studies and compare and discuss their findings with any colleagues. Teachers are always making informal evaluations of this sort, winnowing wheat from chaff, sifting out what can be used from what can not. The teacher faced with a textbook choice and bombarded with publishers' catalogues, extolling new titles, courses, textbooks, is in the position of other consumers: the browser at the railway-station bookstall, the pensioner at the local library or the child out shopping with a birthday book-token. They are all prospecting for the "best choice", in the circumstances.

This "prospective evaluation" or "armchair evaluation" is described by Digby Anderson as -

> a necessary and useful part of the total evaluative process though it has received less attention from evaluation commentators than trial methods. (37)

Stake (30), too, feels there is a place in the evaluation repertoire for a more direct, personal approach. He calls it the responsive approach which attempts -

> to respond to the natural ways in which people assimilate information and reach understanding...
> ...Responsive evaluation is...based on what people do naturally to evaluate things: they observe and react...
> ...Direct personal experience is an efficient, comprehensive and satisfying way of creating understanding, but is not usually available to our audiences..(30)

According to writers like Macdonald-Ross, Cronbach and Stake, the individual teacher, then, prospecting from his armchair, in the book catalogues, taking a "direct, personal approach" and making an analytic small-scale study of the options available is just as likely to arrive at an accurate picture of what is "the best choice" and far more quickly and at far less cost in time and effort than experimenters involved in formally designed, long-term classroom trials.

4.5. Teacher as expert

Where the teacher is experienced, an expert in the EFL field, judgement will have been reached on the basis of a close analysis of the texts together with the experience of what is required and what is workable in the given circumstances.

But, generally, in evaluation studies, the classroom teacher's experience is not given enough consideration or weight, with classroom trials -- student outcomes -- still being considered more scientific, less biased and therefore the way to proceed with textbook evaluation. The result must be that the teacher feels inhibited about putting forward a "reasoned choice" if the experience and judgement behind it are counted

as of no consequence beside the "hard evidence" of experiments and test scores.

Macdonald-Ross, in disputing, like Cronbach, the benefits of experiments and field-trials, argues that this is not only on the grounds that these are expensive and time-consuming; that they rarely simulate realistic learning situations; and that they are often carried out perfunctorily and unsystematically. He argues:

> When formative evaluation is done, it rarely gives any insights that a skilled analyst could not have predicted; actually most practical developers use the field data as a rhetorical device to gain acceptance for proposals they would have made in any case... there should be expert criticism of the text itself.... The systematic and intelligent analysis of texts ought to be one of the central procedures of curriculum development: it is fast and relatively cheap, and if done by an expert analyst it has a creative potential that formative testing lacks. (34)

If only the insight and "sensitive judgement" of the expert, the experienced classroom teacher, could be awarded the weight that field trials however perfunctory and unsystematic automatically seem to be given.

To ensure that the personal approach is not too personal and subjective, or open to accusations of bias, there are two things that teachers making their own small-scale study or analysis could do:

a) Make clear the criteria used in the study;

and b) especially if they are inexperienced or lacking in confidence, bring in corroborative material from colleagues or from the <u>experts</u> writing in the EFL journals.

As Stake suggests (30):

> The best substitute for direct experience is probably <u>vicarious</u> experience.

5. <u>Which criteria? and Where to find them?</u>

In any evaluation it is obviously of paramount importance to show the steps taken and the criteria used and this is perhaps more essential in the case of the armchair evaluator.

In the absence of a tested theory of "the good textbook" and without

guidance from some Textbook Which?, it is not at all an easy task to identify, initially, all the criteria that matter in making "the right choice".

> They will not be found neatly listed and agreed by all concerned; they will instead have to be inferred from people's writings, action and speech. There will not be consistency between different people involved nor between criteria which can be inferred from what people do and what people say. Inevitably the evaluation will take more account of some criteria than others, perhaps because they are more attractive or understandable to the evaluator, perhaps because some are less visible though not necessarily less important; for whatever reason the evaluator will select as well as identify criteria and the resulting evaluation will be affected by this choice. (9).

This is a point also made by Stake, when he writes:

> Deciding which variables to study and deciding which standards to employ are two essentially subjective commitments in evaluation. Other acts are capable of objective treatment: only these two are beyond the reach of social science methodology. (8)

5.1. Objective v. Subjective?

This raises the problem that many writers on evaluation face: how to eliminate the subjective from the evaluating process? In her survey of schools evaluating textbooks, Gertrude Whipple complained:

> The standards of evaluation reported vary widely. They include highly objective items as well as items that are entirely subjective. The score-cards range from brief lists of general items to elaborate scales containing carefully weighted standards. These findings show the need for developing additional objective standards for evaluating books. (28)

There is, here, perhaps, some begging of the question: what exactly is meant by objective criteria? When Harlen writes (9):

> the meaning of "criteria" emerges as something combining certain aspects of both values and standards

- and when writers like Stake (8), Harlen (9) Klare and Macdonald-Ross (10) quoted above have said that subjectivity in the shape of values and standards and judgements cannot be replaced, how feasible is it then, in practice, to have only objective criteria?

In their article, Writing Reading Courses: The Interrelationship of Theory and Practice (37), Brown and Hirst discovered these problems when they wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of the course they had devised. They had chosen through pre- and post-tests to evaluate the materials by studying student outcomes, but, according to them:

> in the absence of acceptable objective criteria for study-skills-promoted improvement in a specific discipline, we have three alternative sources of validation:

a) The first is our own judgement of the effectiveness of a course. Training and experience enable us to make judgements which at least deserve to be seriously considered.

b) The second source of validation is the opinion of the students..

c) The third source of validation is those departmental members of staff responsible for teaching first-year students... (38)

In effect, in the absence of acceptable objective criteria, Brown and Hirst opted for what they considered acceptable subjective sources of validation.

> We are least happy about the area of evaluation, so plainly essential in theory, so clear in conception, and yet, in our particular context, so unsatisfactory, so unclear and so unrigorous in practice...
> We can offer no algorithms, no charts to guide other writers, for we have found each writing and teaching situation unique, and defined by a unique set of variables such as existing theory, the level of departmental co-operation, subject characteristics and student attitudes. (38)

Objective studies can be made of quantifiable material (number of lessons, word-lists etc) but at the same time -

> reveal little or nothing regarding the quality of the material..further study of a more subjective nature will be necessary in judging the quality of this material (39)

By making it clear how quality is assessed, how their values and standards are selected and how these operate in the study, evaluators can hope to avoid the accusation of bias.

But there is no escaping the fact that evaluators' personal expertise and experience must be counted as part of the evaluation and

their judgement does play a key role. And it therefore follows that an essential component of evaluation courses such as are offered for EFL degrees should be some training of people's ability to select (see Swales (26), Cunningsworth (1), Van Els (32) among others) rather than concentrating on a search for some ideal or objective standards or criteria.

As Klare and Macdonald-Ross put it:

> teachers and administrators must continue to use their judgement. In other words you cannot replace judgement by hard-and-fast rules, except in a few extreme cases. This is a blow to those who hope to eliminate the frailties of human judgement; but we feel our opinion does justice to the real complexities of educational situation. We offer this consolation: it is possible to improve one's judgement...
>
> ...Since the process of judgement can't be avoided we suggest that it be built into a more organised practice. By using critics' and teachers' accounts a picture can be built for the decision making stage. (10)

If instead of playing down -- even trying to eliminate -- teachers' judgements, based as they are on expertise and experience, evaluators were encouraged to incorporate these, the question remains, how best could this be done? Brown and Hirst chose to adopt three alternative subjective sources of validation "in the absence of acceptable objective criteria". But there is a case for using what objective criteria that do exist together with elements of a more subjective nature.

5.2. What to include on Score-cards/check-lists.

One way would be to combine the objective and the subjective on a score-card or checklist; the evidence on quantity being the objective element and the evidence on quality being the subjective.

As I indicated earlier (on pages 51 and 52) there is already a bewildering variety of score-cards or checklists on offer and not all of these can be considered helpful. This is sometimes because certain checklists are seen to be dated, with some of their criteria derived from outmoded theories or approaches, like the audio-visual or programmed-

learning ones. In other cases, writers like Gertrude Whipple and Van Els et al. feel that the checklists should not include any subjective elements or "invite value judgements".

> Checklists should.. be descriptive; i.e. its components, and especially the way in which they are phrased, should not invite value judgements, especially not if the frame of reference is not given together with the description. In general, one can say that these two points are the main areas in which existing checklists are inadequate. (32)

For a checklist to be effective, in the opinion of Van Els et al., its components should meet 5 requirements:

i) they should be unequivocal;
ii) they should allow differentiation;
iii) they should yield only descriptions;
iv) they should be directed at clearly delimited and identifiable parts of the textbook;
v) they should be immediately usable.

> The main requirements are that the items in a checklist should be descriptive in character and immediately usable. By the latter requirement we mean that the items in a checklist should enable the teacher to collect the data he is looking for himself. (32)

Stufflebeam (40) lists different requirements for his criteria:

i) Relevance;
ii) Importance;
iii) Scope;
iv) Credibility;
v) Timeliness;
iv) Pervasiveness;
vii) Efficiency.

> Too often...evaluation data have not been relevant to the questions being asked --(there is no point collecting cost information, for example, if cost is not to be considered) -- or information of significance has been suppressed (sometimes on so flimsy an excuse as that the variables involved were "intangibles"), or information related to the full spectrum of concerns has not been forthcoming. (40).

Two of the main criticisms Stufflebeam levels at traditional evaluations are that they are, on the one hand, noncredible (either producing scepticism and misadvice or perceived as a cover-up or a whitewash) and on the other, too late to be of use --

> the criterion of timeliness is violated in traditional evaluation probably more often than any other. The phenomenon of relevant evaluation data becoming

available at some time after a decision is made is too common to require further documentation (40).

Pervasiveness will depend on the evaluator's meeting the concerns and interests of the group he is representing and the evaluation exercise as a whole will be judged efficient only if the return is seen to be worth the investment in time and cost.

6. Considerations for textbook-evaluation.

But the debate about score-cards and checklists is not simply confined to considerations of basic requirements or the choice of criteria, objective, subjective or both. It relates to the underlying theory of what we really expect of a textbook, which underpins, as it were, our whole approach in the checklist.

6.1. The theory?

In the absence of a tested theory on what constitutes a good textbook, we still subconsciously or unconsciously make use of one theory or another. And Spalding (14) criticises what he considers the two main theories we fall back on. The first he calls the Score-card formula which holds

> - that a good text is made up of discrete items which can be examined and rated independently of each other. The sum of the ratings of individual items is believed to be a measure of the quality of the text.. (a theory) developed in order to introduce greater objectivity. In general, however, it is overmechanized and substitutes analysis of parts for understanding of the whole. The score-card theory assumes that a good text can be chosen by examining texts. It gives little more than lip service to the ultimate criterion, the extent to which the text contributes to the education of the student.(14)

Examining typical questions found on score-cards of this sort, Spalding deduces that the author of such a score-card believes that a good textbook must have the following characteristics:

a) A clear statement of the author's theory, point of view, and purpose.
b) An author with appropriate training and experience.
c) A manuscript based on one of three alternatives:
   i) experimentation in classrooms
   ii) teaching experience

iii) well-thought-out theory
d) Recognition of desirable aims of education.
e) Freedom from undue influence by committees or individuals.
f) Organisation in a modern manner.
g) Significant instructional aids.
h) Adequate length.
i) Good typography.
j) Accurate graphic representations.
k) An appropriate name.
l) Clear indication of nature of revisions.
m) Publication by a well-known and efficiently organized company. (14)

To Spalding the major defect of a textbook analysis based on such items is that it takes into consideration "the book by itself" not how it affects the education of students.

> It does not look to the effect of the text upon learning. In fact, some of the items listed have no necessary bearing on the effectiveness of the text. (14)

Writing this in 1955, long before the arrival in the early '70 s of the illuminative school, introduced by the seminal paper, Evaluation as Illumination (41), Spalding obviously belongs whole-heartedly to the "pay-off" school of thought. If he were to evaluate Scriven's axe, he would not be examining "the design of the bit"; rather "the kind and speed of the cuts it makes.."

So the checklist that is based on the analytic-judgemental approach, an appraisal of the textbook itself, an intrinsic evaluation, like the one described here by Spalding, is not the one to suit those that see evaluation in behavioural, pay-off terms.

Underlying some questionnaires and checklists is the second theory that Spalding criticises which implies a master-slave relationship between the textbook and the teacher. He illustrates this in quotes from Textbooks in Eduction published by the American Textbook Publishers Institute (42)

> ...Better have a book that really does well the job it claims to do even if it doesn't entirely fit your program, than one which promises to go right down the line for you and actually succeeds in accomplishing little of what it sets out to do...
> ...A rating scale won't tell (how well the book is likely to do what it sets out to do), nor will a careful examination of index, illustrations, number of pages, emphasis and proportion.

> You've simply got to see how well the book operates as the teaching implement it's supposed to be... Try the book out on yourself. How good is the author's teaching program? How accurately does he visualise the classroom scene? How skilfully has he analyzed what children can do and like to do?.. Does he suggest class activities which are workable? ...How good is his sense of time and timing?... Is each item, each step, each page, section, or unit really driving toward the accomplishment of the purposes that you and the author have for yourselves? (42)

This is the theory that considers the textbook to be the teacher in print, with the teacher reduced to the role of handmaid.

> Even the aims of education are to be left in the hands of authors and publishers, for it is claimed that it is better to have a book which achieves its aims well than to have one which attempts, however poorly, to achieve (local) ends, if these two sets of goals are different. (14).

The particular theoretical approach to evaluation that is held by the evaluator would appear, then, to dictate in practice which sort of checklist he will use and which questions will be asked.

Ray Williams (43) in advocating his Procedure for ESP Textbook Analysis and Evaluation criticises "the inflexible, predetermined checklist approach" while John Swales feels that no single checklist (like those, for example, offered by Candlin and Breen (44)) can offer criteria which can be valid for both published and unpublished teaching materials. And both writers feel that checklists tend to result in "a depressingly long list of the book's faults" (43). Any teacher wishing to make use of any of the umpteen ready-made checklists appended to articles on evaluation should therefore be fully aware of the implications behind the questions.

6.2 Aims and Objectives

One type of question which appears on nearly every checklist lies at the centre of a great deal of debate:

a) Have the author's intentions as stated in the preface generally been carried out? (22)

b) What are the objectives of the material?
To what extent is it successful in achieving these objectives? (1)

c) List, summarise or describe any statements of purpose, aim or objectives in the pupil's material. (45)

6.3 Needs Analysis

But even before intentions, aims, objectives, purpose or goals can be defined, there is nowadays the preliminary step of undertaking a needs analysis.

> Whereas traditionally the starting point in language curriculum development was language analysis, beginning with specification of what was teachable and learnable based on such criteria as frequency, difficulty, availability and teachability, current approaches to language curriculum development begin with needs analysis or needs assessment. (46)

In Taba's model of curriculum processes (47) Diagnosis of Needs is the first of her seven stages, immediately preceding Formulation of Objectives. Similarly, in Munby's Processing Model for Communicative Syllabus Design (48), step one involves drawing up a Communication Needs Profile.

Needs analysis focusses on teacher and learner expectations, learners' goals and level of proficiency, as well as available resources in time, money and so on. By identifying both the wider language requirements of the community and the individual's own needs, objectives can be specified, courses devised and material chosen.

Although needs analysis in the EFL field has been most associated with English for Specific Purposes (ESP) - (English for Science and Technology or English for Bankers etc) - it has also been considered (e.g. Richards (46), Cunningsworth (25), Trim (49), Yalden (49) among others) as "fundamental to the planning of general language courses". (46)

Since, the argument goes, no-one can possibly learn the whole of a language -- even native speakers use only a fraction of the total -- by concentrating (much as Linguaphone and P.I.L.L. do in their D-I.Y language-cassette courses?) on what the learners need to know when they later put it to use, we could develop courses that would have the

advantage of both motivating the students and providing attainable objectives.

But there is a certain unease among EFL writers just how "perceived needs" are being used to evaluate textbooks and devise courses. Among objections raised are the following:

(i) Determining needs is not an exact science.. since it involves both quantitative and qualitative data, requires the use of a variety of formal and informal data gathering procedures, and seeks to clarify needs that may by nature be changing or imprecise. (46)

(ii) It is very difficult to predict the needs of a group composed of individuals with possibly conflicting needs. (3)

(iii) The question of identification of students' needs can pose vast problems when one is teaching a global or comprehensive course; even in ESP, it means that each new group must be treated anew. (51)

(iv) Identifying the learner's needs is a tricky business and we must beware of foisting on him needs which we think he should have but of which he is unaware. (52)

(v) It is very unlikely that many learners will ever be aware of their needs in the terms of Dr. J.A. van Ek's Threshold Level ...And I think it is both fruitless and unnecessary to try to specify everything we do in such terms. (53)

(vi) We do not always distinguish between what a student needs - (say, in respect of his present or proposed occupation) and what he actually wants. (3)

(vii) Since learning and using a language is a creative activity, to base a syllabus on closely defined needs is to put a straight-jacket on real language use. Criticising pure notional/functional syllabuses for this, O'Neill (53) argues that it is not possible to predict everything that the learner will want to say and learners should be equipped with the generative power to say what is outside the syllabus. Brumfit agrees (55):
..(in language learning) as soon as the language becomes sufficiently complex for a generative system to be operating the user's personal needs will determine its use, and these needs will never be purely technical...The point is that, however the teachers may choose to define the syllabus, the student receives a system with semantic potential. How he decides to use it will depend on his character and his opportunities, but the teacher cannot avoid offering something with a potential which goes beyond the specifics of a particular needs analysis. Not to allow the learner some freedom to use the newly developed skills in unpredictable directions will be to frustrate the very abilities which will be necessary for the most effective response to the predicted needs. (55)

(vii) Needs are not static: what was true before a course might have changed and those needs that were not known or were imprecise before, might have become clear. Although Candlin et al "set out to obtain as much information as we could", nevertheless, because it was virtually impossible to acquire adequate information, "we are perhaps in danger of producing a course for an audience which does not exist". (56)

Although objections like these are valid, needs analysis should not be ignored in the evaluation process. Handled with care, it could eliminate unnecessary material and pinpoint what is of use.

6.4. Types of Objective.

Once it is known, through a needs analysis of this kind, what line should be pursued, it could be thought that objectives could very easily be set. At the very least, both the author in devising a textbook or course, and the evaluator in evaluating this, would have at the outset to know what they were "aiming at".

But what concerns many educationalists is not only what these objectives should be and how they should be defined, but also whether or not attaining certain objectives should be the criterion of success. Macdonald-Ross reacts very strongly against the argument that -

> the quality of learning material is decided entirely by whether or not the target population achieve preset behavioural objectives (34).

To Macdonald-Ross

> the equation of quality with attainment of objectives is unsound in two ways: it is unsound conceptually and it is unworkable in practice... Furthermore, the equation rests absolutely on a strong version of the case for behavioural objectives which has now been substantially demolished - (Apple, 1972; Macdonald-Ross, 1973; Peters, 1973) (34)

Although "the case for behavioural objectives.. has.. been substantially demolished", language studies today reflect what Richards (46) describes as

> functional, behaviour-based (though not behaviourist) and proficiency oriented views of language and language use...accompanied by the related shift towards communicative competence theory in linguistics, and towards the development

> of criterion referenced testing in the field of eductional evaluation...(46)

However, while nobody disputes that the long-term goal in EFL is to produce language competence or proficiency, a major stumbling-block to any agreement, among those working in the EFL field, whether on choosing a method of approach or devising a language curriculum is in defining this competence or proficiency and the defining of stages/goals along the way to it. In practice, different approaches use behavioural, process, content and proficiency based objectives.

For example, the Council of Europe's Threshold Level (57) (which provides the guidelines for many of the adult courses in this survey) include behavioural objectives for specifying competence in functional communication, while Van Ek and Alexander (58) specify content-related objectives, as well, with their 14 topic areas in Threshold Level English (eg "Learners should be able to discuss where and under what conditions they and others live, specifically").

6.5 Language Objectives Questioned

However, there is unease among some EFL teachers and writers about the use of objectives in defining language proficiency and about how these objectives are built into textbooks and courses.

One assumption they question is that foreign language competence can be achieved

> - by mastering pre-specified, hierarchically arranged, discrete items (be they grammatical or communicative). (59)

But this is precisely how many who interpret the functional/notional approach (based on the guidelines of Threshold Level) do see the road to fluency.

Another assumption is that learning a language is a matter of mastering a linguistic skill, implying the objective of transferring a

fixed body of knowledge from teacher to learner. But with language being creative and unpredictable (55) (59) (60) we can hardly predict all the forms and functions our students will ever meet or need to use. We still do not know what it is to know a language.

But perhaps the most basic assumption that EFL writers challenge, about the use of objectives, is that we can test that these objectives have, in fact, been reached. Language fluency and competence so far defy any testing by objective standards. No one can decide for example the criteria for either spoken fluency or for what is acceptable or not in essay-writing.

To Macdonald-Ross -

> there appear to be no reliable and explicit principles for generating relevant objectives: the various suggestions made fall short in one respect or another. There are no clear rules even for deciding on the specificity of objectives. And once objectives have been specified they do not prescribe the choice of instructional means, nor ensure the content validity of test items. (61).

Among those evaluators who believe that the best way to evaluate an arts programme is not in terms of outcomes and "pay-off", but through a study of the intrinsic merit of the work, its qualities and its shortcomings, is Stake (30):

> The task of evaluating an arts program might be said to be impossible if it were necessary to express verbally its purposes or accomplishments. Fortunately, it is not necessary to be explicit about aim, scope or probable cause in order to indicate worth.

7. Who should Evaluate?

One question outstanding in this discussion on how to proceed on a textbook evaluation remains: Who should do it? Ideally? And, in practice? Who should decide on such matters as which criteria are appropriate, relevant and reliable; whether or not to make use of a score-card or checklist approach; how-or whether- to incorporate objectives, explicit or implicit, into the evaluation?

7.1. Committees

One suggestion is to leave such evaluation to committees.

> Textbook evaluation should be performed by a committee or commission, rather than by a single individual or by an entire teaching force... Committees for textbook evaluation should consist of teachers, supervisors, principals, and members of the Superintendant's staff. (39).

In her survey of procedures used for textbook selections in schools in 135 cities (15) Gertrude Whipple found 6 types, involving committees of one kind or another:

(i) selection based on the consensus of all staff members concerned with the book, (used by 5% of the cities);

(ii) unguided selection by the principal and teachers, (1%)

(iii) guided selection by the principal and teachers (where guidance generally comes from central office members, or school librarians etc) reported by 4%;

(iv) selection by central book committees, (used by 64%)

(v) selection by central curriculum committees, (used by 12%)

(vi) selection by central-staff members, (used by 14%)

But there are various problems and difficulties when committees are the selectors.

(i) Membership of committees can run to unwieldy proportions; Whipple reports committees of over 35 members. And the competence and qualifications of members can also vary considerably. Even where there are teachers on the committee, they may not be trained to evaluate books or may not have experience of that subject or level; and the problem is, of course, greater where the members are non-teachers, such as librarians, principals, administrators etc.

(ii) Not all books available in the subject or level will have been read and evaluated by each individual member of the committee, and there is the possibility of some books never being read by any member.

(iii) Committees tend to cater for "general needs", ignoring the special, individual needs of one school or one class.

(iv) Committees can give varying amounts of time to the evaluation: according to Whipple's survey, these can vary from a few hours only, to two years, with several taking months; meetings can be held rarely or frequently; and meetings might last for a bare hour or last the whole school session.

(v) Committees also choose to use a variety of methods -- individuals of a particular committee can sometimes each be using a different way of assessing the textbooks -- and these can vary from the very simple to the very complex, using combinations of score-cards, classroom trials, consultations with experts etc. And many committees fail to make clear their criteria or procedures.

(vi) Committees also vary considerably in how they reach that final result. In some the decision is the result of a vote; in others a consensus arrived at by following some score-card or checklist scheme; and in others by an informal agreement after discussion.

But perhaps the major drawback in using committees -- especially those that will use a properly qualified panel and take adequate time to prepare their evaluation -- is the enormous cost in terms both of members' individual time (presumably stolen from their teaching commitments?) as well as the overall time taken to reach a proper decision and implement it by getting the book into the classrooms.

If these major drawbacks in the committee system of evaluating textbooks outweigh any advantages they have -- like the elimination of individual bias -- what alternatives are there?

7.2. Critics/Reviewers

One possible alternative is to make use of expert advice from critics or reviewers. This is a possibility that Stake recommends:

(criticism and evaluation) are potentially harmful when the critic-evaluator presumes to be a surrogate decision-maker, recommending to another what course to take without revealing the values to which he is responding. The critic-evaluator can play a different role, a helpmate role (even of course, with negative findings), enabling another to make his decision on the grounds of additional experience, vicarious experience. (30).

Klare and Macdonald-Ross put the case for critics even more strongly:

> If you think about the role of the critics in the humanities you will surely agree that the art of judgement is thoroughly respectable and of longstanding.... Scientists made extensive use of expert judges to referee papers and grant proposals. All in all, there is no reason to be defensive just because the process ofjudgement cannot be reduced to a precise formula. We have the start we need: the widespread habit of journals using critics to provide reviews for textbooks and other academic works. The critic does not make the decision for you; he illuminates the scene, provides insights, and judges the work according to various ill-defined but, nevertheless, valuable intellectual standards. This puts you in a better position to see the strengths and weaknesses of the book, and to see whether it suits your circumstance. (10).

According to Van Els et al (32)"reviews could be called the most general and widely used type of textbook description" and they cite as their most important contribution the fact "that they provide prompt information, if, course, the editors of journals publish quickly enough."

However, it appears that editors do <u>not</u>, as a rule, publish these quickly enough and several writers cite this as a major drawback to depending on reviews for evaluation purposes:

> reviews appeared in the MLA Conference Newsletter at least one year after book publication (22)
>
> Reviews of new materials often appear six to twelve months after the materials are released on the market. (27).

And there are other criticisms of reviews and their reviewers. Pfister and Rada who made a study of textbook reviews claim that reading reviews left them

> - bewildered and with no clear-cut conclusions as to the relative worth of each book. At least one of the books had merited diametrically opposed value judgements....
> ... Most reviews were biased... in several instances, reviewers were more concerned with correcting the author's interpretation of a particular teaching method and with finding minor errors in typography or usage of German than with a systematic

> evaluation of the text.... All reviews were signed but gave no indication as to the qualifications of the reviewer. (22).

In the USA the picture appears the same as Bartel of the University of Colorado makes plain:

> The reviews are often too brief and subjective. Written and edited by different people, they are not subject to and do not conform to a single unit of requirements and standards. (27)

Although there have been attempts to make reviews more objective -- standardising criteria and co-ordinating frames of reference -- there has been no success so far. And until critics provide more detailed information, showing their criteria and making clear their frame of reference, their role in the evaluation and selection of textbooks will probably remain limited.

Klare and Macdonald-Ross suggest one way forward:

> We suggest that critics should be used in a more organised manner to provide the basis for decision making....Between two to six experts are chosen to provide detailed criticisms of the book in question. Experts should be paid enough to show that their effort is valued and deserves serious attention on their part.. They should be chosen to counterbalance each others' weaknesses, but all should be experts in a relevant area... But, above all, one should look for critics of outstanding intellectual calibre. Criticism is not an exercise in democracy; one man's criticism is not as good as another's. (10)

However, at the present time, in the absence of any central file of books reviewed, teachers complain that they have no time to go searching all the different professional journals for relevant reviews (27,32) and, in any case, what reviews there are, are often so delayed in being published that they are too late to form any part of the evaluation process.

7.3. Teacher as Evaluator

In many cases, and especially abroad, it is the teacher who is left to make the recommendations, with or without benefit of advice from reviews or colleagues.

This is a pity, obviously, in those cases where, as Barnes described, teachers -

> have bought a set of textbooks on no more detailed inspection than breaktime allows. (5)

Inadequate evaluation can result where teachers are inexperienced and lacking in confidence. According to David Williams (24) those very teachers -

> who rely most heavily on the textbook are the ones least qualified to interpret its intentions or evaluate its content and method.

Cronbach puts an almost contradictory point of view. His feeling is that poor evaluation comes not necessarily from incompetent teachers, but from our over-idealistic expectation that teachers are experts:

> We do not expect the teacher who assembles material for the class to be himself an expert on all subjects, but our idealism does expect the teacher to judge among materials published by professional authors and responsible publishers. To criticise these professionals surely requires that the teacher have competent professional judgement and time for concentration (61)

What holds the teacher back from becoming an expert in evaluating textbooks, is not simply lack of time ---

> (The teacher requires) time for concentration (61)
>
> The difficulty is partly due to the limited time...(15)
>
> (Teachers should) carry out a detailed analysis..more detailed than most teachers would think practicable in the rush of school life (5)

--but mainly, according to many writers - (Cunningsworth (1), Jenks (4), Spalding (14), Swales (26), Van Els et al (32), Ray Williams (43), O'Neill (54), Cronbach (62), Morley (63), - lack of adequate and relevant training in evaluation and selection procedures.

> trainees on EFL teacher training courses need to be shown what to look for when evaluating course materials, and should be helped to develop criteria against which they can make a professional judgement when confronted with new or unfamiliar material. (1)

> few institution which prepare teachers attempt to teach their students how to choose and use a good book. It is obvious that such a course could not easily be devised and carried out unless there were some generally recognised theory about the good book. So books continue to be used unskilfully by untrained teachers, because they are not taught how to select and use them skilfully. (14)

In short, with the proper training in evaluation and selection, the teacher will then be in a position to cope with all the incoming information on methods, approaches, teaching emphases and new textbooks, checklists, reviews, needs analyses and teaching objectives -- and reconcile them to his own teaching habits and personal preferences.

> The point is that local situations will differ, and if there is a genuine choice between good alternatives, the teacher will be best able to see what suits his situation. (10).

8. Conclusion.

To the individual teacher faced with a textbook selection either in the UK or abroad, there are various practical problems in choosing how to make the evaluation. Time is one of the main ones.

In those circumstances, it makes sense to dispense with time - consuming trialling or committee sessions, when an "expert analysis" can be arrived at, more simply and more speedily by the "classroom expert".

> We have some reservations on the use of objectives in education and really do not feel that they will prove more than minor aids in the decision making system. The truth is that human expertise and critical judgement are always necessary: if these skills are not used formally then they get used surreptitiously. By accepting critical skills as a formal part of the process, we allow teachers and administrators to improve the quality of their decisions in a practical manner. (10)

And it is the teacher with training and classroom experience who has this "expertise" and "critical judgement", rather than panels of librarians, administrators or other education officials.

Nor will the trained teacher be under any illusion that he is seeking the "ideal textbook", the panacea for all ills.

> ..standards are relative to particular situations. A practical choice must be made, based on the alternatives available. A book will have these advantages but those disadvantages; seldom does a book score on all counts. Moreover, a book may be best

> does a book score on all counts. Moreover, a book may be best for some purposes but not for others. (10).
>
> No textbook can expect to appeal to all teachers or learners at a particular level. There is a basic need for choice and variety ...Teachers have not "failed" because they get on well with one group of learners but not another. Neither is a textbook necessarily unsuccessful if its style and content do not please some learners at the level at which it is aimed. (54)

So, through intelligent analysis of the available alternatives, together with his critical assessment of all other relevant factors in his particular situation, the individual teacher himself is the one in the best position-until computers are refined to the point when they can take over -- to decide what will give the best results in the classroom.

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CHAPTER 4

EFL METHODOLOGY: A METHOD FOR ALL SEASONS

Introduction

In the search for success in the EFL classroom, teachers and educators, applied linguists and psychologists have not only explored the role and purpose of textbooks but also experimented with a variety of different methods, procedures, techniques and approaches to language teaching in the hopes of finding the most effective ways of encouraging learners to learn a foreign language.

But it might be felt that it is publishers, perhaps more than anyone else in the EFL field, who have a vested interest in new methods of teaching EFL. For one thing they invest a great deal in producing materials based on a particular, chosen method of approach, be it audiovisual, notional/functional or communicative, and it could be said they, similarly, have a vested interest in keeping that particular course in place at least until they have re-couped their initial investment. Once a new method or approach appears, they must make an educated guess on whether it will survive at least for a few years, and so prove more worth their while in backing, than keeping the courses with older methods in place.

Publishers can hedge their bets by keeping several courses on their lists. But the teacher has to make a choice: he has to choose a course based on one approach rather than another, and the problem these days is that there is a great deal of choice. Publishers' catalogues offer traditional (grammar-based) courses, audio-visual courses, functional-structural, communicative or task-based courses.

And the problem of choice for the overseas EFL teacher is perhaps more acute, as he is isolated from centres of EFL research and debate, unable to attend EFL conferences or book fayres, and get some feel for the changes that are taking place, from the inside, rather than as an outsider looking through the windows of publishers' catalogues at the display and variety on offer inside.

1. The Problem.

All EFL teachers, UK-based or those teaching overseas, have to face the problem of choice and the more information and help that is made accessible to them about methods and materials beforehand, the better. The main problem, perhaps, that all share, is our attitude to methods: it is often said that EFL teachers believe that there is one, most effective way of encouraging learners to learn a foreign language: one method for all seasons. But it would appear that we never do find it and meet with the classroom success that we all hope for.

In just the same way as Bartel describes our search for "the ideal textbook" where we have behaved --

> as though we believe that one book is the cause and another the solution to the problems and dissatisfactions we experience with our respective foreign language courses. And if we could only find the right set of materials everything would be wonderful (1).

-- so do we behave in experimenting with methods.

1.1 The search for the best method.

In The Changing Role of the Teacher in the Foreign Language Classroom William Littlewood describes this:

> An important feature during the last few decades of language teaching has been the search for a single, "right" method. In the 1950s and 1960s, many teachers and methodologists believed that the search was at last complete. The audio-lingual method ...was enthusiastically adopted... it seemed teachers were in possession of a coherent and definitive methodology which would produce consistent success, provided they could implement it adequately. (2)

But they were wrong. There was no "consistent success" with this, or any other method tried out. And finally, the teachers, according to Littlewood and others, are now in the position of trusting no single method to bring them success.

> One outcome of these experiences is widespread disbelief of any claims that a particular methodology is valid for all teachers in all circumstances. It is clear that language learning and teaching are too complex to allow easy, universal solutions . It is equally clear that nobody has access to God's truth in these matters. (2)

Widdowson who in the early years of the communicative approach supported it with great enthusiasm, did not, by 1973, see it as the one way forward:

> I think we ought to be careful of assuming too readily that syllabuses of this kind are universally appropriate...
>
> English teaching has suffered badly in the past by the imposition of pedagogic dogma: all too often an approach to teaching applicable to one set of circumstances has been given the status of a universal creed. The usual consequence of this has been that teachers have been led to renounce their faith in their own methods in order to embrace principles they cannot practise. (3)

Peter Strevens makes the same point.

> ..any lingering nostalgia for a single "best" method is completely misplaced. No single method can conceivably be equally suitable for all values of all the variables- for all learners, of any age, regardless of aims, of attitudes, of level of proficiency, and so forth. (4)

And L.G. Alexander, author of audio-lingual courses and nowadays author of several notional-functional courses, while agreeing, makes a further point.

> While we must accept without question that there is no single "best method", we must also allow that not all methods are of equal value. There are many roads to Rome, but some are more direct than others and quite a number never arrive at all.

1.2. Promotion of one best method.

However, while these writers say there is "no single best method", a writer like Alexander, at the height of the audio-lingual heyday, was promoting the method in articles and his coursebooks and, with equal

fervour, has recently been promoting another "best way", the notional-functional approach to syllabus design. Despite what writers are saying, in practice, it is still the case that certain trends get promoted while others are cast aside.

Kelly, in his monumental work Twenty-five centuries of language teaching (6) criticises language teachers for being reluctant to learn from the past. Far from building on and improving past expertise, we ruthlessly cast it off, taking up with every new bandwagon.

In his article, On Bandwagons, Tyranny, and Commonsense (7) Mark Clarke describes how it is when certain trends get promoted and then rejected once a new trend hoves into view:

> One generation's heresy becomes the orthodoxy of the next generation, and an individual's position in the profession as saint or sinner depends largely on accident of birth..(7)

with all of which Michael Swan would agree:

> As the theoretical pendulum swings from one extreme to another, each exaggeration is followed by its opposite. We realise that we have been translating too much, so translation is banned completely. Grammar explanations are seen to have been over-valued, so grammar explanations are swept away. Generation A spends half its time doing structure drills; for generation B, structure drills are anathema. Contrastive studies promise the moon and stars; when the moon and stars are slow to arrive, contrastive studies disappear from syllabus design as if they had never been. (8)

1.3. Intolerance

Again, while we are being told there is no single way, no one, best "road to Rome", that different ways have different advantages to offer, there is no doubt that in practice, there is still a great deal of intolerance, in the profession, evident in articles and at EFL conferences, of anyone who is not enraptured of the latest bandwagon, notional-functional, communicative or whatever.

> Filtering of scientific data is accompanied by the remorseless torpedoing of men in the field who are out of step.... Every age, in fact, has its rebels whose teaching techniques, though scientifically justifiable, failed to gain acceptance because they did not fit into the atmosphere of the time.(6)

These "men in the field who are out of step", who follow other, older ways that preceded the current bandwagon, far from being welcomed or even respected for deliberately not being "one of the crowd", following the latest linguistic trend, instead deliberately choosing a different "road to Rome", are much more liable to come in for some smug criticism from the converted.

Alexander, a writer of audio-lingual courses, in the audio-lingual days, has obviously now totally recanted and forsworn all he previously held dear:

> For all their much-publicised (and often well-justified) virtues, audio-visual and audio-lingual course designs and methods have severe shortcomings. For example, grading in terms of presumed difficulty is arbitrary... The situations presented are, in turn, equally arbitrary....
>
> The compartmentalization of language into 'four skills', while convenient for the purposes of A/V presentation.... is highly misleading and has fossilised into a kind of dogma that makes a mockery of what we actually do with language. (9).

In the same article, after torpedoing the A/V approach, once his orthodoxy now to be regarded as heresy, he makes it quite plain he is now a disciple of another "best way" forward, this time using functional-notional syllabuses:

> By comparison, a functional/notional syllabus is much harder to understand, much harder to process, and less predictable in its application, therefore making far greater demands on course-designer teacher and learner. But because it defines communication objectives precisely and seeks to achieve them through the shortest possible route, it is highly effective in bringing the learner rapidly up to the limit of his individual potential. It is hardly surprising that the idea has found such a ready response among thinking teachers for the simple reason that it makes such immediate sense. (9)

According to Alexander, here, "thinking teachers" will be taking this shortest possible route along with him. The implication is, of course, that if you are not on it too, you cannot be one of the thinking fraternity; you are, in fact, found guilty of choosing "the wrong way".

1.4. The "wrong way".

Michael Swan, co-author of Cambridge University Press's new Cambridge English Course, has seen this happen too:

> Teachers usually feel guilty about something: translating, or explaining grammar, or standing up in front of the class and behaving like teachers, or engaging in some other activity that is temporarily out of favour. Currently teachers feel guilty about not being communicative. Mechanical structure practice is out: it would be a brave trainee teacher who used a substitution table in his or her RSA practical exam. (8)

The RSA (Royal Society of Arts, the body which awards Diplomas in TEFL), as described in an earlier chapter, also seemingly takes strong exception to their candidates using published textbooks and courses:

> it seems to be widely believed by candidates taking the RSA Certificate for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language that they dare not teach from a textbook in the practical lessons they are required to give before an examiner. If they do, they will almost automatically be failed. Textbooks are out, home-produced materials are in. (10).

It is this kind of intolerance which makes Mark Clarke feel uneasy about the EFL profession. He has the feeling

> that beneath the veneer of democratic free choice, there lurks a less appealing, but no less powerful, sentiment of authoritarianism.. (7).

Teachers must not be made to feel like pariahs of the profession because they want to make use of a textbook or practise substitution drills. Surely, while it is being argued on the one hand, that there is no such thing as a "right way" to teach EFL, it is intolerant of colleges, training-courses, promotions boards and the EFL establishment, on the other, to act as if there were, and they were the arbiters of what teachers, "thinking teachers" or not, should be using in the classrooms.

> Since people are diverse in their personalities, inherent learning strategies and rhythms, such a thing as a teacher-training programme must seek not to mould all teachers according to a preconceived notion of what teachers should be, but must try to build on the individual and differing strengths of each teacher so as to make the maximum effective use of that teacher's qualities. This clearly has implications for both textbook-design and teaching methodology. (9).

1.5 Professional Insecurity.

Some teachers have success with one method but not with others. This could be a case-not so much that "one generation's heresy becomes the orthodoxy of the next generation" as that of "one man's meat.." Failure to accept these arguments is at the heart of what Alan Maley in his article New Lamps for Old, (11), describes as our "professional insecurity". We are unable to answer the riddle posed by Stevick on this subject:

> In the field of language teaching, Method A is the logical contradiction of Method B: if the assumptions from which A claims to be derived are correct, then B cannot work, and vice versa. Yet one colleague is getting excellent results with A, and another is getting comparable results with B. How is this possible? (12).

Notwithstanding the logical assumptions, and "the simple reason that it makes such immediate sense" that can convince thinking teachers that a particular new approach holds the key, it is hard to explain what it is that makes a method successful with one person but not with another.

1.6 Bandwagon as Security.

And it would appear that for a great number of teachers, especially the young and inexperienced, their reason for climbing aboard the latest bandwagon, following the newest trend, is not their being convinced that it makes, for them, "immediate sense" to do it this way rather than any other; rather, it stems from their seeking a certain stability, which they, in their inexperience, can only have from belonging to the crowd, following the orthodoxy.

Until, by trial and error, they have found out what works for them, bandwagons, according to Stevick and Clarke, provide three different kinds of stability:

(1) They give us easy faith, and that faith gives us confidence, and that confidence comes through to our students and gives them faith in us and our methods, allowing them to learn more easily.

(2) They give us company.. that is, they allow us to believe that we are not alone, giving us the security of knowing that we are working side-by-side with others who see the world in the same light that we do.

(3) And last, although not least, they provide us with many good techniques, most of which provide the basis for all our later work.

1.7 Teachers vis a vis Choice.

Alan Maley (13), similarly, feels that teachers adopt a particular method for the relative security it offers them or, alternatively, because of "the blandishments of the fashionable, the well-advertised, the hot-sell". But unlike Clarke, who feels the notion of choice is a sham-("the veneer of democratic free choice")- and feels that "beneath the surface of the methodological sea" there is the "subtle undertow" of the currently fashionable method which exercises a tyrannical control over thinking and debate in the profession -- Maley, on the other hand, believes that the average EFL teacher is overwhelmed by sheer choice- "faced with superchoice in three major areas: theory, methodology, materials".

Maley's perception of EFL teachers has them confronted with the "bewildering array of theory which bears upon foreign language teaching" and

> teachers feel in some way inadequate when faced by this plethora of theoretical speculation which they feel obscurely that they ought to know about. Whether they really need to is another question. But they often feel they do...
> In much the same way, teachers find themselves exposed to the ever-growing range of journals debating such issues as Accuracy/Fluency, Authenticity versus Grading... and so on. And they worry that they may not be keeping abreast of events. They also, increasingly, come across references to mysterious innovative methodologies, such as the Silent Way, CLL, or Suggestopoedia, without being fully aware either of what they consist of, or what they imply....
> Even supposing he has understood the idea intellectually, how does he integrate them into his world-view?...
> How far is he able to make meaningful choices when he works within a hierarchical system, and when there are so many conflicting claims anyway?...(13).

In both cases the teachers face the dilemma of choice. For Clarke, it is an unequal choice: to be sucked in by the tyrannical pull of today's current orthodoxy or to try to stand up, against this, for a method that is not in favour with the crowd. Maley's teacher, on the other hand, does not see the choice so starkly, between the current favourite and his own way. His dilemma is that there are altogether too many choices, of theory, methods, practices and materials and he hardly knows how to comprehend, let alone assimilate all the information in all of them.

2. What is a method?.

Before we study what methods, other than the latest trend, are, on the face of it, available to the teacher, and what variety they offer, to complement "the individual and differing strengths of each teacher so as to make the maximum effective use of that teacher's qualities", let us first consider what the term teaching method covers.

2.1. Difficulty in defining.

Writers on EFL, like C.J. Brumfit, do not find defining method easy:

> (Teaching method) is one of the most difficult concepts to define, describe, analyse or change, but it is a concept of which all teachers are aware....
> ...The first major confusion in the definition of method is about the level of generality at which it functions. Are we dealing with a body of material: a textbook, a set of exercises or instructions or procedures, or are we trying to analyse a relationship, a series of general rules for establishing the most productive relationship between the three elements in the situation: the teacher, the pupils, and the demands of the subject matter?..... The successful method will be that one which enables this relationship to be achieved..(14).

2.2 Use of terms inconsistent.

There can be inconsistency, even confusion, when comparing the different EFL writers' use of terms like approach, method, movement, procedure syllabus(design), strategies, techniques and so on.

David Ross, in his review article on the Communicative Approach,

writes, for example:

> Widdowson has used the word movement to label this pedagogical trend (i.e. proclaiming the primacy of communication in language) and many observers would agree with that description. However, it isn't clear that the communicative movement and communicative approaches to language teaching are co-referential. (15).

And not all writers on EFL methods and methodology are as particular to define or describe what they mean by method, approach and procedure as Richards and Rogers. In their article, Method: Approach, Design and Procedure, (16) they prefer to use method as "an umbrella term for the specification and interrelation of theory and practice", reserving the terms approach, design and procedure "to label three interrelated elements of organisation upon which language teaching practices are founded".

At the first level, approach is used to define

> beliefs and theories about the nature of language and the nature of language learning (16)

Design, on the second level,

> specifies the relationship of theories of language and learning to both the form and function of instructional materials and activities in instructional settings - (and the third level, procedure) comprises the classroom techniques and practices which are consequences of particular approaches and designs. (16)

Edward Anthony's use of terms is not quite the same:

> I view an approach -- any approach as a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language and the nature of language teaching and learning... Method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach..Within one approach there can be many methods... Techniques depend on the teacher, his individual artistry and on the composition of the class. A technique is implementational-- that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, stratagem, or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective. Techniques must be consistent with a method, and therefore in harmony with an approach as well. (17)

3. The Methods.

One result of all these variables and their combinations is that

> the practitioner is thus confronted with a somewhat bewildering set of options at the levels of both theory and practice (16)

3.1. Differences in describing methods.

But Richards and Rogers go on to consider that -

> when faced with a plethora of new language teaching proposals, by focussing on the relationships between the levels of approach, design and procedure, we can better understand the ways in which one method resembles or differs from another and hence more readily describe and evaluate the claims of different methods. (16).

3.1.1. Compared by level.

For example, methods can be compared or contrasted according to which one of at least three different theories of language they are related to: the structural, the functional or the "interactional". Similarly, at the level of procedure, where "the focus is on the actual moment-to-moment techniques, practices and activities that operate in teaching and learning a language according to a particular method", methods as different as Silent Way, Suggestopedia and Communicative Language Learning are all characterised by their techniques and practices.

Richards points out that teaching practices or instructional procedures may appear to be bound to certain syllabus designs, as, for example,

> a notional-functional syllabus is often implemented via "communicative" procedures, and a structural syllabus via aural-oral/pattern practice techniques. (18)

but this is not inevitable.

While some methods seem almost variants of others, sharing, perhaps the same underlying theory and similar practices, in other cases, it almost appears as if there is a contrast at every level.

With the arrival of the "communicative approach", according to David Ross,

> To a newcomer to the field of language teaching, it appears that we are witnessing the birth of a scientific paradigm....with all the trappings: a solid theoretical base (e.g. sociolinguistics a la Hymes and Halliday), a set of pedagogical principles ("learner-centered" teaching, the "minimal language teaching strategy" and the critique of the "synthetic" approach to syllabus design) and a welter of methodological proposals...(and) the rise of the communicative approach has occurred at the expense of a previously dominant paradigm, the structural approach, which had <u>its</u> theory (behaviourism plus structural inguistics), <u>its</u> pedagogical canons (operant conditioning), and <u>its</u> methodological proposals (especially the audio-lingual teaching method). (15)

3.1.2. <u>Compared chronologically</u>.

Another way, perhaps, to present the different methods that language teachers have witnessed over the past three decades or so, would be to list these chronologically and examine how true it is, as Mark Clarke suggests, that one generation's heresy becomes the orthodoxy of the next generation, since unlike artists willing to learn from the past,

> teachers being cursed with the assumption that their discoveries are necessarily an improvement on what went on before, are reluctant to learn from history. (7)

From the methodological options on offer, over these years, we can draw up a list that can include approaches like:

The Direct Method

Grammar-Translation

Structural

Structural-Situational

Aural-oral

Audio-visual

Transformational-Grammar (TG)

Cognitive

Programmed Instruction

Notional-Functional

Communicative

Silent Way

Counselling-Learning.

Total Physical Response

Natural Approach

Suggestopedia

3.1.3. In groups.

But though there seems to be a proliferation of methods down through the years (the last seven on this list come from the 70s alone), these would appear, according to Mark Clarke and others to fall into one of four methodological groupings:

> reviewers seem to agree that we have at least four distinct methodological shifts in this century..
> First was the Grammar-Translation period which emphasised the literary value of foreign language education, and in which instruction relied heavily on explicit grammar explanation and translation exercises. The Structural/Audiolingual era followed, with a heavy reliance on contrastive analysis, pattern practice for habit formation and the strict sequencing of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. In reaction to the "dehumanising" nature of language drills, teachers began to search for more "student-oriented" activities, giving rise to the third methodological development of the century, the Interactional/Humanistic orientation... including Counselling-Learning, Silent Way, and Suggestopedia. Finally, the fourth professional movement is the recent emergence of Notional-Functional analyses of instruction, in which language is emphasised as a vehicle for the expression of functional needs..(7)

Ann Raimes citing H.D. Brown, a past president of TESOL, agrees that there have been

> no fewer than four revolutions this century, with a new paradigm emerging every twenty-five years. (19)

- but according to this classification, the shifts are seen differently from Clarke's. According to Brown's, the first shift was from the Direct Method to the Grammar-Translation Method, then to the Audiolingual Method, and now

> in the last quarter of the century we are still searching for the ultimate method, though we understand more clearly that there will be no such panacea in teaching a behaviour as complex as a second language. (20)

But yet others have seen fewer shifts, two only according to Kunz, cited in Raimes (19), -

> two major revolutions in methodology during this century

- one of which was the -

> post-World War II break from the traditional, or grammar - translation, method

while the other was -

> the proliferation of new affectively-based methods or approaches.

According to Richards and Rogers (16), there have been no revolutions at all:

> In the fifties and sixties language teaching represented a reasonably unified body of theory and practice.. (where) the methodology of language teaching was identified with the orthodoxy of audiolingualism, language teaching in the eighties, however, have a considerable array of theories and methods to choose from....
> One conclusion might be that the field of language teaching has moved away from a generally accepted body of principles as a basis for the organisation of language teaching. It is our belief, however, that current practices need not be seen as random or radical departures from the mainstream of applied linguistic thought and practice. Today's innovations in teaching practice represent variations on familiar themes, rather than radical departures or totally new practices. (16)

3.1.4. Compared in origins.

The methodological shift that some reviewers detect in the 70s, to methods of instruction rather than methods with linguistic origins

provides yet another route to classifying methods. For example, methods as diverse as Structural, Structural-Situational, Aural-Oral, Audiolingual, Notional-Functional and ESP all share beginnings that are linguistically oriented, emphasising one or another of language variables, whereas approaches like Silent Way, Counselling-Learning, TPR (Total Physical Response), Natural Approach and Communicative Language Learning all apply a particular theory of language learning and teaching.

4. What has been learned

Whichever way we look at methods, listed chronologically or classified by shifts or revolutions or origins, how true would it be to say, as Kelly does, that we have learnt nothing at all from what has gone on over the years?

> ..teachers, being cursed with the assumption that their discoveries are necessarily an improvement on what went on before are reluctant to learn from history.(6)

In this century alone, there have evolved dozens of different approaches to language teaching, though we are told by Richards and Rogers that there has not really been any fundamental change at all, let alone one, two or four revolutions, only variations on familiar themes. In fact, in 2000 years, according to Kelly, the total corpus of ideas accessible to language teachers has remained basically the same. Even our most up-to-date approach, the communicative, is not something new. Florence Stratton (21) claims such an approach, with notional and functional categories, exists in courses published over 20 years earlier, in the USA.

4.1 Claims and Promises.

So is it the case that all these new approaches with their claims and promises have nothing to offer after all? There being "nothing new under the sun"?

According to Swan, teachers are not always able to assess new approaches and judge them for what they really can offer, because they are unable to see through these promises.

> Teachers do not always appreciate how much new approaches owe to speculation and theory, and how little they are based on proven facts. (And) the lack of a solid empirical "anchor" of established knowledge about language learning makes us very vulnerable to shifts in intellectual fashion. (8).

Richards makes the same point:

> The largely anecdotal and poorly researched literature on methods in language teaching demonstrates the need for a more informed approach to methods issues in our profession. (18)

He goes on to make the point that as yet we do not test the claims all methods make -

> A claim that all methods make is that the adoption of a specific method will lead to higher levels of language achievement than the use of other methods (18).

and we continue to believe in "the unsubstantiated and often irrelevant claims of methods promoters".

4.2 Methods Promoters

When these "methods promoters" are highly respected academics and writers on EFL methodology, like Alexander, Allwright, Wilkins and Widdowson, it is no wonder that the average EFL teacher is persuaded into following in their footsteps. In fact it would seem irresponsible of the average EFL teacher (Alexander's "thinking teachers") not to trust the judgement of respectable academics and researchers in the field; their views are bound to carry weight.

Yet the case is now being put by writers like Littlewood (2) Swan (8) and Richards (18), that time and again, the EFL teacher has been promised the moon and time and again he has been grossly misled. According to Swan:

> Arguments for the current view are highly speculative, extremely plausible, and advanced with tenacious conviction; if one looks back fifteen years, one can see that the arguments

> for the previous approach (now totally discredited) were equally speculative, just as persuasive, and put forward with the same insistence that "this time we've got it right". Each time this happens, the poor language teacher is told to junk a large part of his or her repertoire of materials, activities, and methods (because these are no longer scientific) and to replace them by a gleaming new battery of up-to-date apparatus and techniques. (8).

4.3. Teachers' Reaction

This has led, inevitably, to teachers becoming less susceptible to plausible promises, as Littlewood describes:

> One outcome of these experiences is widespread disbelief of any claims that a particular methodology is valid for all teachers in all circumstances. (2).

The reaction of the EFL teacher -- or the "thinking teachers" -- to disbelieve claims made for new approaches is understandable; they will nowadays be much less likely to be taken in. What is curious, however, is the reaction of the academics who are in the business of examining, evaluating, describing and promoting - or rejecting - these new methods and approaches.

4.4 Promoters own doubts

The very writers that promoted one particular approach, presumably because, at the time, it had all the answers, held the key to success, are often the same ones who will urge us to abandon that method and adopt a newer approach. One example of this, already given, shows how Alexander who very strongly supported and promoted the Audio-Visual approach himself in his own A-V courses, later condemned the A-V way and abandonned it -- but that was only when it was on its way out, and he had taken up with a newer approach, (despite his writing "we must accept without question that there is no single best method" (5)) this time, the functional-notional syllabus way.

A more curious example of methods promoters is the case of David Wilkins, the architect of the functional-notional syllabus. In the 1972

paper that launched this-Grammatical, Situational and Notional Syllabuses (22), Wilkins promoted his notional syllabus approach:

> The value of the notional approach is that it forces one to consider the communicative value of everything that is taught. Items are not taught just because they are there.... Through this framework we can arrive at a set of learning priorities which is determined by the nature of the acts of communication in which the learner can be expected to participate. Information on the possible content of utterances will be of greater practical value than grammatical information and will be more complete than situational information. (22)

However, two years later saw a change and a considerable toning down of what one could expect from his notional syllabus, as he describes in his article Notional Syllabuses and the concept of a minimum adequate grammar. (23):

> How reasonable is it to suggest that... we should replace the grammatical syllabus by a notional/functional syllabus? In my view, such a suggestion is decidedly premature. We are quite simply woefully ignorant of the linguistic facts and will remain so for some time to come, so that we would risk causing a reaction against the communicative movement in language teaching by making greater claims for it than we can justify. I suspect that even when we are more knowledgeable about the pramatics of language, we may still decide that the facts of use are not sufficiently generalizable for them to be suitable as the sole basis for the organisation of the early stages of language learning..
> I would therefore be content if, for the present, notional and functional considerations were to be regarded as simply providing another dimension to the existing grammatical and situational parameters -- a way of ensuring the general courses do not lose sight of the fact that linguistic forms provide a means to an end and that the end is communication. (23)

Here is a case where the extravagant claims of "the method promoter", made in the earlier article, were considerably modified, within a short time, by Wilkins himself. What was originally claimed for the notional-functional syllabus approach was that we would, thereby, glean information "of greater practical value than grammatical information" and "more complete than situational information". Two years later, however, the notional-functional syllabus was to be regarded "as simply providing another dimension to the existing grammatical and situational parameters" because it looked as though "the facts of use (were) not

sufficiently generalizable for them to be the sole basis for the organization of the early stages of language learning".

And similarly, Widdowson, who initially had enthusiastically welcomed and supported the new approach --

> There seems no reason at all why we should not, for example, say "For this course we will select undertakings, promises, warnings, definitions, classifications" and so on rather than "For this course we will teach the simple present tense, present continuous, count and mass nouns" and so on. (23)

-- had become over the following two years much more cautious:

> I think we ought to be careful of assuming too readily that syllabuses of this kind are universally appropriate... (3)

4.5 Doubt and Certainty

Where does all this leave the average EFL teacher seeking stability or at any rate relative security?

If, as is claimed by writers like Littlewood (2), Strevens (4), Clarke (7) Alexander (5), Swan (8), Maley (11), Stevick (12) et al, we have discarded, discredited -- even torpedoing -- previous methods like the Direct, Grammar-Translation, Structural, Audiolingual and Audio-Visual, because they failed to come up to expectations and "produce consistent success", and if, now, the very latest approaches, the communicative or notional-functional, do not provide the answer which their own creators initially thought would be the case, what choice is left for the "thinking EFL teacher"?

Where before in the days of Structuralism and Audiolingualism, there was great certainty, there is, nowadays, doubt, or at least not the same certainty.

Mark Clarke admits beginning EFL life

> as an orthodox audiolingualer, a believer in Skinnerian psychology and structural linguistics, (who) then shifted during my professional adolescence toward cognitive psychology and transformational generative linguistics (7)

and now requires his own students to reject all orthodoxies.

Ann Raimes describes how nowadays -

> controversy and indecision abound in our literature and in our classrooms. And no one is immune, not even well-known and influential figures in the language teaching field. (19).

Earl Stevick, for instance, like Mark Clarke, admits to starting off as an audio-lingualer, who then decided to leave

> Audiolinguia for the new land of Cognitia when something caused me to change my mind and leave Cognitia, not to return to Audiolinguia but to explore Terra Incognita. (12)

As Ann Raimes points out, that land, Terra Incognita, is now a heavily populated land, thronging with ESL teachers --

> beset by questions that we never even used to ask because the answers were once so clear:
> Which grammar do we teach? Traditional, transformational, sector analysis, case grammar, none..?
> Which syllabus do we use? Structural, situational, notional, functional, student-initiated, none..?
> What part of the student do we address? The affective or the cognitive domain; the right or left hemisphere of the brain; the Parent, Child, or Adult (Stevick 1976) or the whole person..?
> What are we? Guide, model, counsellor, judge, carer and sharer, facilitator, or, dare we say it, teacher? (19)

5. Diversity and Variety

Possibly, because of the (seeming?) reluctance of experts to commit themselves to promoting one particular method for all levels and for all age-groups, there is this considerable uncertainty among EFL teachers on the one hand and considerable variety of approach, on the other, among the EFL courses for adults available on the market, and set forth in the catalogues.

Some of the main approaches (methods, syllabuses) to be found in these EFL courses are described in the following terms:

Audio-visual

Structural

Structural-Situational

Structural-Functional

Functional

Functional-Structural

Notional/Functional

Combination (Eclectic)

Task-based

Topic-based

Communicative

-- but it is not at all clear that these terms or labels are being used in the same sense by different publishers, to describe their coursees.

5.1 Confusing use of terms

Communicative in particular is a difficult term to pin down and it can be applied to a whole variety of courses with very different methodological bases.

e.g. Cassell's On the Way is described, in their catalogue, as

a colourful, new, communicative course

while the series, as a whole, has a notional/functional base.

In their catalogue Heinemann describe their course, Main Course English, as

-- a communicative course -

while the authors, John Milne and Tom Jupp, writing of the course in Teaching Adult Beginners (25) describe it as having -

a syllabus arranged on a functional/communicative basis

On the other hand, Nelson's New Incentives is described in their catalogue as being ---

a straightforward course which manages to combine structural and communicative approaches effectively

and

it follows a structural progression based closely on genuine communicative needs..

while OUP'S Network, in the catalogue,is --

a 3-part communicative course

which has -

a steady structural progression

And, in this context, it is interesting to study two reviews of the OUP course Streamline's Departures (Book 1) from the ELT Journal (Vol.35) and EFL Bulletin (No.6): from the first we learn the course --

is basically structural but with a strong communicative approach

while, in the second, it is described as --

a successful compromise between the communicative objectives of the functional approach and the grammatical restrictions of the structural.

In this case, the catalogue offers no clue at all.

What terms like communicative, notional/functional, functional/communicative, as used here, actually share --- or how they differ -- is not very clear.

Nor is it clear how a course with a communicative approach built on to a structural base or following a structural progression, differs from a course, like Nelson's New Incentives which "manages to combine structural and communicative approaches effectively".

5.2 Definitions

In considering the varieties of methods, approaches and syllabuses on offer in the EFL catalogues and the problems of labelling them, it might be useful to include definitions and descriptions of terms from EFL

teachers and writers many of whom have authored or contributed to these EFL courses themselves.

One fairly comprehensive list of some very common terms can be found in the article Differences in Teaching for Different Circumstances-or The Teacher as Chameleon (4), by Peter Strevens, co-author of OUP'S Network:

> the syllabus designer will bear in mind several different aspects of the content: linguistic, situational, notional, functional and communicative. Linguistic aspects- i.e. the language content to be learned, in terms of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, formulae and fixed expressions, idioms and so forth; situational aspects: how to make the language content more interesting, more easily learned and remembered and more like real life, by teaching it in relation to familiar or imaginative situations, like "at the Post Office", "Telling the Time", "Going to School", and so forth; notional aspects: ways in which various fundamental notions about the universe are expressed in English -- notions of time, of place, of case, even (i.e. "who does what, who to, and with what result"); functional aspects: how English expresses certain functions of language, such as negation, possibility and impossibility, description, questioning, judgements, and many others; deliberate, effective communication between human beings, including discoursal and rhetorical rules. (4).

Let us take the main course-types in turn seeing, first, how they are described by different writers and then, examining the various arguments for and against each.

6. Structural Courses

> A structural syllabus generally consists of two inventories, one of structures (often in a presumed order of difficulty) and one of vocabulary, both of which the course designer is required to bring together when writing a course. The main objective (for both course designer and learner) in such a course is to cover a grammatical syllabus and to build up a command of high-frequency vocabulary.... Communicative skills are often regarded as the by-product of this undertaking (Alexander, 5).

> In a typically grammatically ordered course the units centre around one or more syntactic or morphological structures. In such a course, the units are often named after the structures discussed, e.g. present tense or possessive singular.... In the course of years, a number of criteria have been developed that can help one find the most effective gradation of the grammatical content of a course. Although these criteria sometimes appear to clash with each other, there is a certain degree of consensus between course designers with respect to the most effective gradation; something which need not surprise us all that much, given the long history of grammatical gradation. (Van Els et al, 26)

Structurally-based courses are necessarily linguistically focussed. Methods typically differ in what they see as the relevant language and subject matter around which language instruction should be organised and in the principles they make use of in structuring and sequencing content units within a course....
Within a design built on a structural theory of language, linguistic matter is identified with lexis and grammar, and the syllabus is an arrangement of linguistic units determined by such criteria as learnability, frequency of use, linguistic complexity, etc. (J.Richards,T.Rogers 16)

One ...approach, taking account of the grammatical features taught, results in so-called structural syllabuses and a number of well-known, interesting, and (in good teachers' hands) very effective textbook courses of the last twenty-five years or so have been based, at least in part, on syllabuses of this kind. I say "in part" since the basis has never of course been syntax only, but phonology and lexis as well)....Structurally based syllabuses rest on a choice of syntactic features, such as the present perfect, the "going to" future... This is the very stuff of the language-syllabus as most of us know it, and central to it is the idea of choice: except over a very long period of time we cannot teach, and the learners cannot learn, the use of it all. What is chosen provides a kind of skeleton on which the living flesh of the language is moulded. (W.Lee,27)

6.1. Criticisms

Criticisms directed against this structural approach or syllabus include the following:

"Structural syllabuses do not allow you to see the practical applications of the language to real life." A second thing that might be implied here is that although structural syllabuses teach the right language items, they often introduce them in the wrong situations (using this word to refer to the entire matrix of contextual features) and being employed for the wrong function....
Apart from being "situationally dishonest", structural courses are also functionally dishonest. They often illustrate sentences functioning in unreal ways, while at the same time failing to illustrate the common functions which structures expound.

(K. Johnson, 28)

The main disadvantage of an exclusively structural approach is that the learners do not acquire enough social language..
(W. Lee, 27)

A number of objections have been raised over the years against a primarily grammatical gradation of course content...The objection which one encounters most frequently is that because of the emphasis on a command of the morpho-syntactic rule system, it is frequently forgotten that "linguistic forms provide a means to an end and that the end is communication".....

> A second frequently heard objection is that many grammatically ordered courses suffer from a poverty in lexical items. Palmer's recommendation (1922) to limit the presentation of lexical material in the very first stages of foreign language learning so as to be able to pay as much attention as possible to the basic structures was accepted also for later stages in many course. The result was that the learners had a fair command of the rule system, but did not know enough words to function adequately in communicative situations.
>
> (Van Els et al, 26)

6.2 Courses Available

Despite the barrage of such criticism, criticism that has been directed at the structural approach over many years, much of it justified, a structural syllabus or progression is, perhaps surprisingly, still the backbone of many courses in the catalogues today.

More than half the courses in this study (including Cassell's Foundation English series, Longman's Journeys and Kernel, Nelson's New Incentives, OUP's Access, Network and English for Adults among others) are either structurally-based or offer a clear structural approach or a well planned structural progression.

6.3 Advantages of Structural Syllabus

With many alternative approaches or frameworks to choose from, what advantages could authors and publishers perceive in using the structural approach, rather than opting for, say, the functional or notional -- bearing in mind that --

> During the last years, and here and there only, structural has become almost a four-letter word (in spite of containing ten letters), while notional is in good odour and, above all, up to date. (27)

Widdowson and Brumfit (29) believe that the structural syllabus has at least two advantages to offer:

> ...(while) there are problems about the way the content of a structural syllabus is conventionally defined and about the way this content is sequentially ordered.. there are, however, two advantages of the structural syllabus which are worth considering, one theoretical and the other practical.
> The theoretical advantage is that a structural syllabus is, to some extent at least, economical. That is, a limited set of rules can lead to a very large amount of operational skill..

> enabling learners to move a long way in a short time... The practical advantage is that linguists and teachers have many years of experience with grammatical syllabuses to call upon...The existence of a tradition to exploit is not a strong reason for rejecting change, but we need to be very sure of our grounds for dissatisfaction with the tradition before advocating revolution rather than evolution. (29)

This is a point that K. Johnson makes in several articles:

> ..if there are deficiencies with structural syllabuses, then surely what we should do is try to put them right, rather than abandon them for some other type of syllabus. I think that the structural syllabus has had rather a raw deal, and that many of the recent exciting insights into language teaching, connected with our efforts to teach "communicative competence" can be used to make our structural courses more exciting and at the same time, more efficient. (30).

7. Variations on structural syllabus.

Variations on the basic structural approach include, for example the Structural-situational, where a structural syllabus combines with a situational approach, in which items are practised and contextualised in set-piece situations. In the United States this developed into the aural-oral method (audio-lingual) associated primarily with the name of Charles Fries.

Though the audiolingual (and audio-visual) approach now looks very dated (and is heavily torpedo-ed by erstwhile devotees, like Alexander), it can still be found on the market, notably Heineman's Contact English, described in their catalogue as "a mainly oral course" and Macmillan's ACE which, in their catalogue, in described as "an audio-visual course".

7.1. Strucutural Situational

The structural-situational approach, however, does not seem to have suffered the same torpedo-ing and to questions like --

> Is the structural/situational syllabus obsolete? Is it being completely supplanted by the functional or communicative syllabus?

-the answer would have to be, with several structural-situational courses on the market --

> As is evident then, the structural/situational syllabus is not obsolete. It still has a very big role to play in the teaching of English as a second and foreign language. (21)

Alexander sees at least 4 different sub-divisions of this structural - situational classification (5):

Classroom situational

Centre of Interest situational

Structurally-controlled situational

Story-line situational

In the first, the classroom is the setting for identifying objects and classroom props are used in activities; in the second, the course-designer draws on the kind of situations the students might find themselves in, such as At the Post Office, In a Restaurant, Arriving at Customs etc; the third contextualises-situationalises- a structure or set of structures(e.g. to illustrate the present continuous he will write a situation around this structure) and unlike the second type, the main purpose is to illustrate the structural point not the setting; in the fourth type, a story-line provides the situation and both the second and third types may use a story-line framework.

7.2 Courses available

This fourth category is frequently found in today's courses where the story-line often takes the form of a set of adventures or incidents involving a character or family, sometimes in identifiable areas like Manchester or London.

Longman, in their catalogue, describing their Strategies course, justify the story-line material in Starting Strategies as highly motivating:

> A set of characters working for a documentary film company in Manchester, their business contacts, friends and families, give the possibility of introducing a wide range of accents, jobs and social background as a setting for the introduction of authentic language. Throughout Starting Strategies the emphasis is placed on authenticity...

Authentic language -- authenticity -- is what today's courses appear to offer, often through stories set in real places, as in another Longman course, Kernel:

> Kernel One has an exciting story line based on a kidnap plot. The characters come from a variety of backgrounds and the action is set mainly in a real area of London. As well as maintaining interest, the story and characters provide a background which will reinforce and illustrate the language of everyday use.

7.3 Advantages and Disadvantages

Though the story-line is put forward as being "highly motivating" and exciting, as well as "maintaining interest" and providing authentic language in real settings, it too has its critics.

While we read in OUP's catalogue description for Access to English -

> Arthur's entertaining adventures add enormously to its appeal to students

- there is a feeling that these adventures would not have the same appeal for Alexander, author of several courses for Longman, who has written --

> the story-line generally palls in the case of adult zero beginners' textbooks, the antics of the characters becoming increasingly irrelevant to the needs of the learner as the course progresses. The acute linguistic restrictions make it impossible to present anything but the most mundane situations; the development of the story-line is extremely slow and ponderous; few - if any - course designers have the necessary literary skills to create and sustain a story-line which will really appeal to the adult. While the presentation may be attractive in the first book, it merely becomes irritating when the student has got beyond the elementary level. (5)

And it would appear that CUP agree. In their catalogue, they describe their new adult course thus:

> The course contains topics, facts and ideas known to interest adults
> makes wide use of authentic material
> is not dominated by fictional characters and story-lines.

While CUP, however, may not favour this structural-situational kind of approach, other publishing companies, notably Longman and OUP still do, promoting several courses of this kind.

The strictly situational approach may have become obsolete but not yet the structural-situational.

Florence Stratton agrees and suggests:

> It still has a very big role to play in the teaching of English as a second and foreign language. (21)

7.4 Survival of the situation.

Possible reasons why it has not been completely supplanted by the functional or communicative syllabus are put forward by Alexander:

> The logico-grammatical progression, co-ordinated with "situationalised structure", has three things in its favour: it is easy to understand, easy to apply, and easy to teach. (9)

On the other hand, he goes on --

> because communication is generally left to chance, and objectives (other than purely grammatical ones) are ill-defined, it can be highly inefficient and frequently ineffective.
> By comparison, a functional/notional syllabus is much harder to understand, much harder to process, and less predictable in its application, therefore making far greater demands on course designer, teacher and learner.
> But because it defines communication objectives precisely and seeks to achieve them through the shortest possible route, it is highly effective in bringing the learner rapidly up to the limit of his individual potential. (19).

But there could be another reason for the survival of this type of situational course on the market. It could simply be that the new, notional/functional (communicative) approach did not look all that different to authors and publishers, from what was already on offer. As Stern describes:

> Communicative language teaching (CLT) is not interpreted uniformly. There is indeed a good deal of uncertainty, if not to say, confusion as to what it is all about. For some it is the Council of Europe's Threshold Level syllabus ..
> For others it is just an up-to-date way of talking about audiolingual teaching. (31).

Situational categories like Ordering a Meal, Asking for Directions and so on strongly resemble functional categories like Ask, Request etc.

According to Lee

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> ..one of the most unsatisfactory words in the TEFL lexicon (is) situation: unsatisfactory because it is used in more than one sense .. (27).

- while function too seems to be becoming another such unsatisfactory term, as Jenny Barnett explains:

> Function names are typically given as gerundive nouns (e.g., offering help, accepting), thereby emphasising their role as units of language-as-action. They have been grouped according to the nature of their purpose in a variety of ways (e.g. Austin 1962; Van Ek 1975; Wilkins 1976), but none of these are fully satisfactory. (32).

Linguistic textbook writers, among others, seem to use terms like situational and functional-notional interchangeably, like Van Els et al:

> proposals have been developed for reordering the language material on the basis of situational or functional-notional categories, on the assumption that gradation along such lines will provide a better guarantee that communicative competence is attained than grammatical gradation will. (26)

Indeed the raison d'etre for functional, communicative courses today sounds very like the view expressed quarter of a century ago, by Leslie Hill (33) when he argued for a compromise between courses based on purely structural syllabuses and those on purely contextually-graded ones.

> It saves a lot of time if, while we are teaching our pupils the mechanics of the language...we can simultaneously train them to communicate, i.e. to respond to language used in contexts which are natural or which resemble natural ones; and to respond with language used in such contexts. (33)

7.5 Different from the functional.

So what really is entailed in a functional approach that is not covered by a situationalised structural one? For there is confusion in how these terms are being interpreted, as Yalden also points out:

> Unless the creators of curriculum material based on this (functional) approach understand it extremely well, the production tends to be very much of the phrase book variety, however, and much of the material I have seen is just that, or tends to be situationalised grammar. I am not criticising the latter approach as such, merely noting that the term functional as Wilkins defined it is in danger of losing its original significance altogether. (34).

Wilkins describes the superiority of the functional-notional approach over the situationalised one as follows.

> The advantage of the notional syllabus is that it takes the communicative facts of the language into account from the beginning without losing sight of grammatical and situational factors. It is potentially superior to the grammatical syllabus because it will produce a communicative competence and because its evident concern with the use of language will sustain the motivation of the learners. It is superior to the situational syllabus because it can ensure that the most important grammatical forms are included and because it can cover all kinds of language functions, not only those that typically occur in certain situations. (35)

8. The Notional Approach:

8.1. Variety of terms.

There is not only confusion over the distinction between notional-functional and situationalised or situational-structural courses. There is confusion too with terms like notional, notional-functional and functional-notional (not to mention notional/functional and functional/notional), functional, functional-structural and structural-functional, which are now being used in descriptions of courses and materials, by different authors and publishers, often without explanation, so that it is not always easy to understand what distinguishes one from the other.

> The idea of the notional syllabus has attracted a great deal of attention; it is also referred to as functional, and in fact the latter term has become more widely known. Various writers use these two terms in different ways, and there is really no agreed usage. (36).
>
> various modifiers functional-notional, functional, notional and communicative are the ones most frequently seen. This use of many different terms for the same thing together with some confusion in defining function and notion, led EFL/ESL specialist Peter Strevens, at a 1977 Georgetown University lecture to speak of a certain "sloppiness" in current writings.(37).

8.2 Definitions.

It could be argued that one starting-place for the search for precise definitions for such terms should be Wilkins himself, in his Notional Syllabuses:

> Three different types of meaning have been distinguished and we have designated as a notional syllabus any strategy of language

> teaching that derives the content of learning from an initial analysis of the learner's need to express such meanings. We will find it convenient to refer to the categories of communicative function as expressing functions or functional meaning ... whereas the semantico-grammatical categories express concepts or conceptual meaning... it is correspondingly possible to think in terms of a functional syllabus and a conceptual syllabus, although only a syllabus that covered both functional (and modal) and conceptual categories would be a fully notional syllabus. (35).

8.3. Notional Syllabus?

However, in all the years since Wilkins first launched notional syllabuses in Grammatical, Situational and Notional Syllabuses (22) in 1972, it has been hotly debated whether you can in fact keep separate these different meanings and produce on the one hand a notional syllabus and, on the other a functional one.

> Much of the subsequent debate over the implementation of this theory has had to do with whether it is desirable or even possible to separate the categories of meaning, one from another for purposes of constructing a teaching program. Furthermore, if it is possible to separate or abstract any one, which should form the basis of a syllabus -- conceptual or functional meaning? Or should linguistic form remain as the organising principle? Many attempts have been made to deal with this problem ... (36).

In fact, it is, perhaps, because of problems like this, that it seems to have proved extremely difficult -- if not impossible -- to produce courses and teaching materials based on a notional syllabus, because, for all the attempts that have been made to deal with the problems it appears that no-one has yet come up with a notional syllabus.

> For all the attention (the advocates of the communicative approach) have received, however, one is justified in asking to what extent this "communicative school" has been productive. Nine years after the publication of Wilkin's first major article on notional syllabuses (Wilkins 1972), few language teachers have actually seen one. (15).

> (Syllabuses) have not, until recently been specified in terms of the acts to be performed in English, and I have still to see a syllabus which really seriously attempts to specify semantic units. (38)

> Now for the question that language teachers are particularly eager to have answered. What are some of the concrete, practical applications of the notional syllabus in the language classroom? Here we resemble hunters stalking the legendary

Abominable Snowman, whose giant footprints have reportedly been found in the Himalayas: notional syllabuses have left sizeable impressions in language teaching terrain, but no one has yet seen one of the controversial beasts! (37)

8.4. Variants of the Notional.

The trouble is that probably too much was expected, in the first place, of this new kind of syllabus, as Wilkins himself became aware. And he suggested (39) that different approaches to designing syllabuses for different sorts of courses would be required.

The notional approach to syllabus design would be the strongest, where all three categories of meaning-conceptual, modal and functional-would be brought together; while the weakest sort of approach would be functional, with structure being taught first, then function. He saw that global, general-purpose courses were not the best field of application for the notional syllabus, but specialised courses, such as EAP or ESP courses, were. However, it was "decidedly premature" to be thinking of replacing grammatical syllabuses with functional ones.
Widdowson and Brumfit would agree with this:

> Any justification for a functional or notional syllabus must rest on the claim that such an organisation will necessarily facilitate language use in students better than a structural syllabus can. (29).

8.5 Problems of the notional syllabus.

And the problem for proponents of a notional syllabus is that there is, at present, no systematic, no organised way of presenting notions, concepts, functions. As Widdowson wrote earlier:

> ..the notional syllabus presents language as an inventory of units, of items for accumulation and storage. They are notional rather than structural isolates, but they are isolates all the same. (40).

Brumfit has made the same point:

> .. it is difficult to see how such ill-defined categories can be fitted into a view of how language is learned. Until we are able to clarify what the exact status of either a notion or function is, beyond simply saying that one is an element of meaning and the other a Categorisation of what

> we do with language, we cannot see whether they are items in a system... we do know that there is a relatively coherent, economically describable, grammatical system. We have no such knowledge about functions, notions, problem-solving operations, discourse strategies, or any of the other possibilities. (38).

8.6 Case against notional syllabuses.

And these writers feel, therefore, that no matter how appropriate individual notional and functional categories seem, until it can be shown that they "do not have to be learnt one by one as separate and unsystematisable items" there is no possibility of their competing with syllabuses of the grammatical sort in terms of economy and ease of learning. But there are other, practical arguments put forward against the use of functional syllabuses especially for the adult beginner, at zero level. As Keith Johnson explains:

> There is one very persuasive argument against the use of functional syllabuses at the zero adult beginner level. It is that if we organize our teaching in a functional way, this automatically implies a structural disorganisation. (30).

This is a view shared by several other EFL writers, like Brumfit, Stratton, Van Els et al. Where students are to start learning a language, in order for them to communicate properly, the argument goes, they have to produce grammatically correct sentences. And for this to be achieved, it is best that at the earliest levels, they encounter language forms that are simply and clearly graded, through a structural syllabus. Because a functional syllabus cannot grade its notions and functions in terms of complexity, and because a lesson in a functional syllabus could introduce a whole variety of different structures, simple and complex, such a syllabus, as Florence Stratton points out, (21), would place heavy demands on any beginner.

Johnson feels that no argument put forward in defence of functional syllabuses for beginners could be at all convincing, not even if it were argued that structures introduced into all units would be carefully graded.

8.7 Case for notional framework

But this is just what Alexander, author of several Longman's courses does argue:

> The system of grading can still be implemented in a functional/notional framework. For instance, it might be possible to devise a cyclical approach which allows the learner to acquire simple utterances first and more complex ones at a later stage

and elsewhere, (25) writing with other textbook authors like Milne and Jupp, on Teaching Adult Beginners, he says:

> The biggest problem by far was to evolve a design at the zero level which would really teach students to do things through language, while at the same time enabling them to master the grammatical structure necessary to achieve this end. (25).

And he goes on to oppose Johnson's view that teaching in a functional way automatically implies a structural disorganisation:

> One of the silliest misconceptions about a functional/notional approach is that it is supposed to treat grammar in a cavalier fashion. Unless a learner can operate the system he has no chance of achieving the ability to communicate in true social terms and "operate the system" means controlling the grammar...The problem, therefore, was to find a framework which permitted the systematic teaching of communication as well as a coherent and consistent presentation of the necessary structure to go with it. (25)

This argument is put forward very strongly in Longman's catalogue entry for Alexander's course Mainline, where --

> Mainline Beginners represents an entirely new departure in course design. It sets out to teach absolute beginners functionally from the outset while at the same time giving students a firm command of the structures of the language.

8.8 Combination of notional and structural

As Johnson has written he finds this sort of argument entirely unconvincing.

> Courses which claim to be organised in both a functional and a structural way are probably neither, and they are likely to fail to teach the students both how to greet, invite, make arrangements and how to use the grammatical structures that are introduced. (30).

However, several writers including Johnson himself, are concerned with attempts to reconcile the structural and functional/notional approaches, with varying degrees of optimism.

According to Lee -

> A notional approach cannot reasonably be regarded as an alternative to a grammatical approach. Both are essential. In what ways they can be mixed or blended in a syllabus is another matter...
> These two main approaches need.. to be reconciled, and this can be done in the way they are put into practice in teaching. (27)

Candlin (41) with the same concern does not have quite the same optimism. While we expect learners to do three things: produce grammatically well-formed sentences and be aware of intra-sentential semantic identity; recognise and produce pragmatically equivalent utterances; and to manage the interaction, and while grammar instruction provides for the first and being aware of the communicative functions, together with varieties of language register, style and so on, provides for the second, the third kind of ability has not yet been taken into account. And as long as no way can be found to interrelate these two abilities in a pedagogical syllabus, the course-designer will not be progressing beyond the stage of phrase-book language.

8.9 Proposals for Integrating

There have been several proposals for integrating these two different approaches.

In the Widdowson-Brumfit model (29), to a structural core there are grafted on, not only items from a traditional structural syllabus, but also items from notional, functional and any other "appropriate taxonomies". This has the advantage that the syllabus core can be graded and sequenced, while, around it, the spiral, containing unsystematiseable elements, feeds into it the different elements as needed.

Keith Johnson's scheme (42), for general courses, involves a series of teaching units each containing theme-specific and language practice

materials...along with material with a functional orientation. Each unit covers a separate theme area and the theme text is to serve as the focus for both language practice and functional materials. With this sort of approach, Johnson could give his units functional, notional or structural focus, all with a structural core, until eventually the emphasis was on the functional.

This approach of Johnson's is not unlike another usually described as "variable focus", where the emphasis is shifted not so much within individual units, as between levels from the elementary to advanced. In this approach, structural material would dominate at the early levels, with functional and instrumental practice "out of focus". The name most associated with this approach is Allen's (43). He believes that "grading should be the focus".

> By making use of a variable focus technique we give recognition to the fact that there are three types of practice (structural, functional, instrumental) which interrelate, which are interdependent and which co-exist at all levels of langauge learning. At the same time, the notion of "primary focus" ensures that at all times the lesson content remains under control and adaptable to the needs of the student at any given level of proficiency. (43)

9. Varieties Available

The enormous variety of courses now on the market includes those which are based on a purely functional organisation, as well as those with structural-functional, functional-structural, or thematic organisation. But how their publishers in their catalogues describe this organisation -- or not -- does not always help to give the reader a clear picture of what exactly is being done in the course.

9.1 The Functionally Organised Syllabus

This is the form of organisation adopted, for example, by CUP's Functions of English, where each unit is based on a group of communicative functions (eg. Offering, Asking permission, etc) and where the functions are represented by forms chosen for their "communicative

usefulness" and "social appropriacy".

One advantage of this sort of course is that because it is not based on a structural progression, the units can be dealt with in any order. However, this sort of approach is not, generally-speaking, thought appropriate for schools and colleges:

> (functional organisation) would be unthinkable in a course design intended for classroom use. Teachers would rightly reject the idea of presenting language through slot-and-filler functional utterances in a way which undervalues grammatical content so that the learner is ultimately not capable of operating the grammatical system. (9)

Alexander does think the functional organisation works well at the survival-level catered for by tourist phrase-books or courses. What is offered is not so much language as "language-like activity" enabling the learners to ask for directions, order a meal, go shopping and so on. For example, the Daily Telegraph Survive in.. series claims you can "learn the essentials of a language in 5 hours" while the Reader's Digest claims that you will find it "easy to learn French, German or Spanish in 30-45 hours" in their courses, with "no boring textbooks to plough through", "no complicated grammar to learn" and "no written exercises, no list of verbs to mug up".

But it is not only tourist phrase-books which represent "functionalism in practice". According to Yalden

> the most pure application of the theory I have found is embodied in a book called Industrial English (Jupp and Hodlin 1975) subtitled An example of theory and practice in functional language teaching. (34)

The book selects and arranges its material according to functions, not forms and though, as Yalden says, it does not correspond to how Wilkins himself defined the functional approach, it represents an interpretation of it which has come to be widely accepted as the standard definition of functional teaching.

The interesting thing about Yalden's description though, is that while she describes the book as the most pure application of the theory,

she nevertheless classifies its approach, on the following page of her article, as exemplifying the functional/structural.

9.2 The Functional-Structural Organisation:

When a course is based on a functional-structural organisation, the priority is to teach functional objectives with language structures introduced as and when necessary. Learners are led from function to function, rather than from structure to structure, though structures presented would be graded from easy to difficult.

One example, often cited (34, 44) of this sort of course is Starting Strategies (Book 1 of Longman's Strategies series) in which the learner is presented with sequences of functions rather than structures. In such an approach, however, according to Alexander

> the acquisition of grammar would be far too unsystematic for any beginner to make useful connections. However, at intermediate and advanced levels (where more than a modicum of grammar has already been acquired) the approach is attractive. (9)

9.3 The Structural-Functional Organisation:

This type of approach meets with Alexander's approval:

> This is the most obvious and immediately attractive way of attempting a course design which will simultaneously meet the need for some kind of orderly progression and grading in terms of difficulty and the broader requirements of a functional/notional syllabus. (9)

9.3.1 Difficult to Design

Alexander, however, foresees difficulties here because, according to him, this kind of organisation is very difficult to apply --

> because the structural sequencing (inevitably) tends to predominate so that the end product is little more than a structural-course-by-another-name and functional connotations are forced to fit that particular mould. In the light of present knowledge (until proved otherwise) the approach can only be described as pseudo-functional (or, if you prefer, crypto-structuralist!)....
> Perhaps the most useful awareness to be gained from this approach is retrospective. Teachers working from traditional materials (and they are the majority) can adapt them on a day-

> to-day basis, illuminating the structures they are presenting by examining their communicative ramifications. (9)

Yalden's view is rather similar, though more charitably put:

> At first glance, the weak functional or structural-functional syllabus, as defined by Wilkins, is the easiest solution to the problem of communicative design. It has wide application...and it is...relatively easily implemented....(a matter) of adding a further component to an already existing syllabus, rather than integrating communicative teaching with teaching linguistic form. (36)

9.3.2 Wilkins' Expectations for it

Back in 1974, Wilkins himself had only modest aims for this sort of approach:

> I would..be content if, for the present, notional and functional considerations were to be regarded as simply providing another dimension to the existing grammatical and situational parameters -- a way of ensuring that general courses do not lose sight of the fact that linguistic forms provide a means to an end and that the end is communication. Greater concern should be given to seeing that what is learned has communicative value..whether or not it occupies an important place in the grammatical system. (23)

9.3.3 Courses Available

Of the courses on the market, Kernel, one of Longman's most successful EFL courses, is a typical example of this structural-functional approach. In their catalogue, Longman describes it as follows:

> The course has a well-planned structural progression and gives a variety of practice in the kind of language which learners need for practical communication.

Cassell's Foundation English Series is also of this type and is described in their catalogue as a course which is --

> structurally based, but has a strong functional component.

It is perhaps interesting to note, at this stage, that two of the most popular courses from the point of view of sales, (apart from Longman's Strategies course), Longman's Kernel and OUP's Streamline, can be termed structural-functional.

9.4 Thematically-Organised:

9.4.1 Topic or Theme

The term theme or theme-area is sometimes used to subsume the term topic, as in Alexander's case:

> The term thematic-area must not be confused with centres of interest (eg shopping, the garage, the bank etc). They are altogether broader in their application....
> The thematic area approach takes as its starting point a number of broader themes, some purely functional, some notional and some topical. (9)

-- and also in the case of Johnson, who explains the relationship in this way:

> theme areas are: red Indians, the generation gap, a holiday in London, a railway station. Associated with each, are sets of teaching materials including passages of prose, poems, dialogues, song texts, etc, on clusters of topics related to the central theme areas. (42)

However, other writers, like Littewood (44), Yalden (34) and V.J. Cook (45) use the term topic interchangeably:

> The topical or thematic syllabus is like the situational, in that it comprises a series of modules or lessons grouped around a topic, each of which will include grammatical practice. (34)

As Alexander writes elsewhere (5) "the problem in this approach is to define thematic areas".

9.4.2 Advantages

Of the four models influenced by the functional-notional theory -- the purely functional, the functional-structural, the structural-functional and the thematic (or topical),

> topical organisation is..more suited to communicative teaching. (45)

Alexander not only agrees, he considers this approach "by far the most radical of the four models".

With communication being the main purpose of the approach,

> structures are not taught for their own sake, but for their communciative validity and relevance in this particular thematic area. (9)

And because there is no grammatical progression to the materials, V.J. Cook points out (45) the students can study the topic in any order, and only those that appeal.

But Yalden considers that the opposite approach, one based on a grammatical progression, is also a possibility:

> Such an approach (thematically-based) as a matter of fact does not usually generate a new syllabus, but is grafted onto a grammatical one. The reverse is also possible: topics may be treated within a situation...(34)

9.4.3 Courses Available

These two types -- one based on a structural progression and the other, not at all -- are represented by two of Longman's courses: Journeys, and Mainline (by Alexander). In the catalogue, Journeys is described as topic-based:

> Alternate units extend the topics of this adventure and introduce general themes of wide appeal to young people...Journeys has a clear structural approach.

In contrast to this, the catalogue describes Mainline as representing

> an entirely new departure in course design. It sets out to teach absolute beginners functionally from the outset, while at the same time giving students a firm command of the structures of the language.

Describing Mainline and his other thematically-based course, Follow Me, elsewhere, Alexander writes:

> In conventional courses, grading is taken to refer wholly to the sequencing of structures...(Here) it is not just structures which are graded, but total situations

- and he concludes -

> Only time will tell whether the approach is valid and now much further refinement is needed. (9)

Time, unfortunately, seems to be showing that the Mainline series is not doing well and, according to Longman editors, there was a possibility of its being withdrawn.

9.4.4 Aim of Approach

Ideally, with a thematically-based course like Mainline, the intention is that, once a student has coped with a particular thematic area, say Finding your Way, through mastering all the small-scale objectives involved, like numbers, directions, distance, etc, the student would have thereby not only gained control over the necessary grammatical structures (asking for, and giving directions etc) he would also have acquired several useful communicative skills, such as listening for gist, note-taking, coping with maps etc.

9.4.5 Fears for Approach

However, while the theme- or topic-based approach finds favour not only with Alexander but other writers like Yalden (34), Littlewood (44), and Johnson (42), for developing communicative skills among students engaged in "real communication", there are, nevertheless, fears that the approach could perhaps produce only one kind of communicative skill.

> The major potential shortcoming of the approach lies in its suitability for developing proficiency at communication in conversational interactions. A theme-based approach making extensive use of project work runs the risk of overemphasising the "language of reporting" (describing, narrating). It may encourage the students to talk -- to describe railway stations, to narrate events from history...but this practice tends...to involve the construction of extended monologues on subjects of cultural relevance. The interactive skills necessary for conversational proficiency -- the ability to respond quickly and appropriately...to utterances whose content and form are not known in advance -- involve elements not required for acts of reporting, describing, narrating, and a qualitatively different kind of practice is required. (42).

10. Communicative Approaches

What unites these four kinds of courses -- functional; functional-structural; structural-functional; thematically-based -- and allows them to be collectively labelled communicative approaches is their interest in promoting communication among their learners.

As Alexander puts it:

> Communication skills are often regarded as the by-product of (a grammatical syllabus). By comparison, a course based on functional/notional specifications does exactly the opposite. It consciously sets out to teach communication skills. Structure and vocabulary, though carefully selected and graded, are the by-product of this objective. (9)

10.1 Roles and Goals

In her article, Chicken or Egg? Communicative Methodology or Communicative Syllabus Design (46), Yalden takes this point a little further, emphasising the role that communication is to have in course design:

> In current discussions of CLT, consensus on many matters has emerged. There is agreement first, that communicative competence is an appropriate goal at all levels and that it is not confined to extra-institutional settings. Second, it is agreed that since communicative competence is the goal of instruction, the message to be communciated is the point of departure in planning such programs, and not the language forms to be used in communicating. (46)

But has it been agreed "that communicative competence is an appropriate goal at all levels" and "the message to be communicated is the point of departure"?

10.2 Arguments Against

It would appear from Michael Swan's article that EFL teachers at any rate have reservations:

> Currently teachers feel guilty about not being communicative. (8)

- and it would also appear that one of the founder members of the communicative movement, Van Ek, never intended communication to be "the goal of instruction". In 1976, he indicated quite clearly what role he expected it to perform:

> It is obvious, then, that the present (threshold level) objective cannot be offered as the objective of foreign language teaching. It is merely offered as the minimum objective for the teaching of (mainly oral) foreign language communication. As such it can, in most cases, only be one part of a more comprehensive foreign language curriculum. (47)

The writers, Canale and Swain (48), investigating the role of communication in various approaches to second language teaching, describe the research and writings of several scholars engaged in EFL studies and they come to the conclusion

> that there is an overemphasis in many integrative theories on the role of communicative functions and social behaviour options in the selection of grammatical forms, and a lack of emphasis on the role of factors such as grammatical complexity and transparency.

10.3 False Assumptions

They felt that, from a purely theoretical point of view, there were at least three basic assumptions which could be held responsible for this misplaced emphasis on communicative functions in communicative syllabuses.

> First is the assumption that the essential purpose of language is communication.... As has been pointed out by a number of linguists (eg. Chomsky 1975, Fraser 1974, Halliday 1978) there is little reason to view (externally oriented) communication as more essential than other purposes of language such as self-expression, verbal thinking, problem-solving, and creative writing.....
>
> Second, the assumption that grammatical form follows the communicative purpose or use of language is often taken as the main reason for adopting an approach based on communicative functions... However, such an assumption is in our view inadequate as the basis for syllabus organisation for several reasons...even if one were to assume that communication is the essential purpose of language (an assumption that we would not support), it would be misleading to associate certain language forms with this purpose exclusively since communication is not the <u>only</u> purpose of language... the opposite view, namely that use serves grammatical form, is perhaps a more realistic one to adopt with respect to <u>second</u> language acquisition in the <u>early</u> stages. This opposite view even has some support in studies of first language acquisition at the early stages...
>
> Finally, Widdowson (1978) has made the assumption that in normal communication one is concerned with aspects of language use and not with aspects of grammatical usage...
> However, there is some reason to question (his) assumption as it applies to the beginning second language learner..it may be difficult to focus simultaneously on use and usage, particularly at early stages...(Findings) suggest that native speakers pay more attention to second language learners' grammatical usage than to their socio-linguistic use of language. (48)

They therefore conclude

> that there is little theoretical motivation for the overemphasis on language functions and lack of emphasis on grammatical complexity and the like that is characteristic of Munby's model of communicative competence and of the organisation of many communicative approaches. (48)

10.4 Influence of Threshold Level

Assumptions like these -- in particular the assumption that communicative competence is the goal of language teaching -- can often be traced back to how the Threshold Level specifications of Van Ek (47) have been interpreted, by various writers and in the course descriptions for many of the new courses developed following that text.

10.4.1 Courses Influenced

For example, several of the courses now on the market, including Cassell's On the Way and Longman's Kernel, Mainline and Follow Me, cite Waystage and Threshold Levels as goals for marking different stages of development.

> On the Way is a colourful, new, communicative course for the ELT classroom designed to take students from an elementary to intermediate level. Book One corresponds to the Council of Europe's Waystage level, Book Two to Threshold..

Others while not specifying Waystage and Threshold are similarly advertised as communicative or as emphasising functions rather than structures.

> (New Incentive) follows a structural progression based closely on genuine communicative needs and is designed to teach students to communicate effectively and accurately in speech and writing from the beginning.

10.4.2 Deficiencies of Approach

As writers like Johnson (42), Fish and Dudley-Evans (49) point out, early Council of Europe work was intended as tentative proposals only, for the way syllabus design could go, but unfortunately

> so many people appear to have taken it as an authoritative statement.... It is also unfortunate that the later Council of Europe (1976)

> work was produced prior to the appearance of an acceptable standard reference work on how functions are to be identified, to be categorised and to be realised syntactically....the Council of Europe work was the product of the perceived needs of a particular area at a particular time. Even if the needs identified can be substantiated for Europe this does not necessarily mean that they have a relevance elsewhere. (49)

Richards has another point to make:

> (Threshold Level) is an entirely subjective and speculative document based largely on the intuitions of its compilers...The Threshold syllabus lacks any form of validation, and even a cursory examination of it suggests that it contains major deficiencies..(18)

It is not only, however, misinterpretations of the Threshold Level and Council of Europe proposals which have led writers and researchers to reconsider the impact of the communicative movement on both classroom and textbook. There have been other disturbing indicators.

10.5 Research Findings

Richards (18) for example cites a study conducted in 1983 which compared how speech acts were performed conversationally by native speakers, with the way these acts were represented in communicative syllabuses and texts:

> Not surprisingly, there was a low degree of fit between the empirical real-world conversational data and the ESL textbooks. (18)

And, in a variety of similar studies over the past 5-6 years, such as that of Long and Sato in 1983 (50) and of Swaffer et al. in 1982 (51), it has also been shown that there is a similar "low degree of fit" between the language of native speakers outside the classrooms and the language used in classrooms, by teachers trained in communicative methodology.

Long and Sato not only found the language used by "communicative teachers" to be very different from the language naturally used outside the classroom, they also found that language practices in these so-called communicative classrooms shared many of the mechanical question-and-answer drills that were a strong feature of the non-communicative, audio-

lingual classrooms. Swaffer et al. found the same.

> One consistent problem is whether or not teachers involved in presenting materials created for a particular method are actually reflecting the underlying philosophies of these methods in their classroom practices. (51)

10.6 Misuse of Labels

And, in fact, many of the distinctions used to contrast the methods were not found at all in actual classroom practice:

> Methodological labels assigned to teaching activities are, in themselves, not informative, because they refer to a pool of classroom practices which are used uniformly...(51)

Using methodological labels in this way is not confined to classroom practices. Ann Raimes (19) describes how these can be mis-used in new editions:

> Textbooks that still divide and sequence the language into grammatical structures deal with the anomaly of "What about real language use?" by turning to functions. They add to the table of contents the functions covered in each chapter and include a few charts or exercises in the body of the text. ...Some practitioners do not go that far. They just change labels. They incorporate the terminology but not the concepts of the new theories. The 1980 second edition of a book originally published in 1973 retains 20 of the original lessons. Each chapter head, however, now includes a function as well as a grammatical structure as the focus of the chapter: "How many; need and want" is joined by "Expressing need and offering help. (19)

10.7 Claims Unsupported by Evidence

While writers in the EFL field share this unease at the misuse of the communicative approach, others are also concerned about what is being claimed for it.

> Despite the intuitive appeal of claims for the value of natural communication in the classroom and the anecdotes used to support them, there is equally convincing anecdotal evidence to the contrary which suggests that such activities promote fossilisation and pidginisation by placing learners in situations where the demands on their performance soon outpace their grammatical competence...The claims for the value of communicative classrooms, interactive games, and information-gap activities cannot be accepted without data on the types of language-learning that result from such activities. (18)

Swan voices his feelings of unease more bluntly:

> It is a shock to realise that, after more than ten very expensive years of communicative teaching, we cannot prove that a single student has a more effective command of English than if he or she had learnt the language by different methods twenty years earlier. (8)

Other writers have come to the same conclusion:

> It is not clear that a communicative approach is more or less effective than a grammatical approach (or any other approach) in developing the learners' flexibility in handling communicative functions and interactions on which they have not been drilled. (48)

> ..the results from teaching a good conventional course may not necessarily differ very much from those that might be obtained from a good functional/notional course. (5)

- which comes as something of an admission from Alexander.

11. Absence of Research in Methods

In the absence of research into and evaluation of methods in the EFL field, writers like the above know that a great deal of time, effort and money will simply be wasted.

> ..the poor language teacher is told to junk a large part of his or her repertoire of materials, activities, and methods, (because these are no longer scientific) and to replace them by a gleaming new battery of up-to-date apparatus and techniques .....raising hopes that cannot be fulfilled, and soliciting an investment of time and money which is out of all proportion to the return which can realistically be expected from the new methods. (8)

11.1 Training Required

Earlier, I argued that EFL departments in training colleges and similar institutions should be spending more time on training potential EFL teachers in evaluating textbooks and courses on the market, instead of, as at present, concentrating so much on showing students how to produce their own. They should, similarly, be showing students how to assess the pros and cons of the various methods. One who is in favour of this is Richards:

> ..if the study of methods is to assume a more significant role within the applied linguistics of language teaching, it must focus on more than merely the descriptive and implementational aspects of methods. It must, above all, address the issues of accountability. What criteria can be used to assess and evaluate the often competing claims of methods and their advocates? Surely the claims of any method or approach are only as good as the evidence that can be found to support them. Yet very few methods developers or their supporters have made any attempt to gather evidence that could be used to evaluate their claims. (18)

12. Survival and Success of Methods

It is no wonder, then, that it has always been something of a mystery why, in the absence of research, evidence, evaluative criteria, certain methods have had a higher survival rate or success than others.

> The rise and fall of methods depends upon a variety of factors extrinsic to a method itself and often reflects the influence of fads and fashions, of profit-seekers and promoters, as well as the forces of the intellectual market-place. (18)

12.1 Due to Publishers' Backing

The rise and fall of certain methods has definitely been affected by whether or not they can secure promotion and backing from governments and publishers.

> Whether or not change will come and to what extent society (and the school system) recognises the need for change depend in no small measure on the degree of responsiblity publishers choose to assume. The publisher has the latest educational research and testing at his command; if anyone is aware of the problems and deficiencies of current methods and materials, it is the publisher; he has the information and the resources to initiate change, to educate the public and to lead the market instead of follow it. (52)

There are reasons why publishers do not always initiate changes and promote a new method.

> Ultimately, determining trends, especially in today's changing market, is a matter of educated guesswork. And it's partly due to this -- the uncertainty of the market -- that publishers shy away from innovation. (52)

But it is not simply a fear of guessing wrong, and committing vast sums to introducing a new course which may or may not give adequate returns, instead of, as at present ensuring that -

> 80%-90% of our entire capital is aimed at keeping our major product in place -- in revision (52)

- a view shared here by several editors of EFL courses.

It is also the case that if a certain method -- Direct Method, Silent Way, Suggestopoedia or whatever -- does not depend on the use of a textbook, but on an educational philosophy or a teacher's skill, it will stand much less chance of surviving than any text-based method.

Publishers are one group that have a vested interest in promoting only those methods that will result in book sales.

> The message is that anyone who has an innovative instructional philosophy to market had better make it dependent upon the use of a student text; otherwise no major publisher will take it seriously. Publishers associated with notional-functional or communicative approaches in language teaching are, hence, major international publishing houses. The publishers of Asher's, Curran's and Gattegno's works, on the other hand, are do-it-yourself presses such as Sky Oaks Productions, Apple River Press and Educational Solutions. (18)

12.2 Influence of Teachers

But there is another group who also have an interest in the success of a new method: the teachers who might be persuaded to use it. And it is a fact that teachers vastly prefer methods which come in textbook form, to methods which do not. Teachers, however incompetent, without any special additional training can introduce new methods into their classrooms if they come in textbook form. But if a new method requires that staff have to undergo specialist training -- involving extra time and cost -- it stands much less chance with the teachers.

> Audiolingual and communicative methods are widely known for this reason; they merely require that a teacher buy a text and read the teacher's manual.
> Methods such as those of Lozanov (1979) or Gattegno, on the other hand, are known in practice only to those who have received special training in their use. (18)

12.3 Support of Professional Bodies

However, in addition to finding favour with teachers and publishers, any new innovative method must be seen to have the approval of the "intellectual marketplace", the support of academic or professional bodies. The Direct Method, at the beginning of the century, was backed by the French Government. The reason why it did not survive, however, in spite of this degree of support, was that it was, above all, an instructional method, not one that required specific text materials. On the other hand, the Audio-visual method, still in favour in France, not only has the backing of the French Government, it requires text materials.

The aural-oral method of the 50s not only had the backing of prestigious names like Charles Fries and Robert Lado and the famous Ann Arbour English Language Institute at Michigan University, it had outlets for its philosophy in Michigan's journal, Language Learning, the first journal to be devoted to the new science of applied linguistics, and in the Michigan series of student books with their distinctive coloured covers.

It is argued that, similarly, in this country, backing has been awarded to certain methods, by the British Council. Through the Council's influence, certain ideas and methods have been promoted, while others have been ignored.

> The British Council has for many years served the interests of British methodologists by providing an instant and international outlet for their ideas, as well as funds to present their latest speculations at international forums and conferences. It is doubtful if communicative language teaching or the British approach to syllabus and program design could have been established so rapidly without the Council's help. John Munby, for example, is a British Council employee. Even before the publication of his book, Communicative Syllabus Design...the Munby model has been presented in Council-sponsored workshops and used as the basis for several Council consultancy projects in different parts of the world....one wonders what the consequences might have been if, in the early 1970s, the Council had adopted Curran's or Gattegno's methods as a basis for its global teaching operations. (18)

12.4 Relative Failure of Learning Methods

What is known, though, from the limited studies so far available is that there is no evidence whatsoever that instructional methods like Curran's Counselling-Learning, Gattegno's Silent Way or Lozanov's Suggestopoedia are any more likely to produce successful results than any of the other classroom methods.

In a 1983 study, SuperLearning, a method derived from Suggestopoedia, using music, parapsychology and other techniques to enhance student learning powers and claiming that learners could learn 2000 lexical items in 23 days with only three hours study per day, was tested with one group receiving the Superlearning treatment, another group the same methodology but no music and a third group conventional classroom training. The results showed that the students in this third group learned significantly more vocabulary than those taught by Superlearning principles. Similarly, while Terrell's Natural Approach and Communicative Language Teaching both insist students acquire a second language more readily in a communicative classroom, nevertheless --

> no studies have been undertaken by those promoting this view to demonstrate that classrooms in which learners are encouraged to use the target language for problem solving, communicative tasks, information exchange and meaningful interaction are indeed more conducive to successful language learning than classrooms in which the teacher dominates much of the teaching time or where the primary focus of activities is on more controlled and less creative uses of language. (18)

13 Influence of Learning Methods

While instructional methods like Gattegno's Silent Way, Curran's Counselling-Learning, or Lozanov's Suggestopoedia, by themselves, have no hope of being widely adopted, they have had some influence.

Over the past decade or more, there has been a gradual re-orientation of teaching towards the learner, in sympathy with the ideas of Curran and Gattegno, in particular.

> The shift of emphasis from the teaching process to the learning process is very clear in the terminology used in current

> methodological discussions. The term pupil, with its associations of control and subordinate status, is giving way more and more to the term learner which implies active initiative and participation. Classroom activities are described increasingly from the learner's perspective, eg as learning activities, rather than from the teacher's perspective, eg as teaching methods. (2)
>
> It is generally agreed that teaching should be learner-centred, comprising the notions of needs analysis or needs survey, of the autonomy of the learner, and of emphasis on the process of learning. (47)

13.1 Problem of How to Learn

However, while we are being increasingly urged to "subordinate (our) teaching behaviour to the learning needs of the students" and "leave the learner scope to contribute his own personality to the learning process" (44), it is not at all clear how this is to be accomplished.

We do not yet know how people learn or acquire languages and until we do, we will not know for sure, how best we can help learners to learn.

13.2 Learning and Acquisition

Krashen's concept of learning as two distinct processes - (learning, in which conscious efforts are made and acquisition, a more subconscious process in which information from the linguistic environment is abstracted, organised and stored) while not exactly new has perhaps led to some re-thinking of our classroom procedures. As Alan Maley describes:

> It is clear that most of our procedures favour learning. It is, relatively speaking, easy to set up learning situations (even if no-one learns). That is what classrooms are, traditionally, for. But how can one arrange for acquisition to take place if it is by definition involuntary?.....How can we by-pass the inhibiting effect of conscious processing and create the right conditions for acquisition? (11)

Elsewhere, we read -

> learning strategies, incorrectly applied, are the cause of some 67% of student error. (53)

14. Teachers' Dilemma

The teacher faces a very real dilemma, then, in choosing the best approach to enable the learners to learn. No-one now believes that any

one method will suit all teachers in all circumstances. Even the very latest approach, the communicative approach, has failed to produce clear evidence as to its - absolute or relative-effectiveness. It seems it is very much up to the individual teacher to select whatever approach suits his own style and particular teaching situation.

The problem still remains: how to decide this.

14.1 Eclectic Solution?

Allen suggests one way out of the dilemma:

> This situation should not discourage us. On the contrary, it enables us to give expression in our teaching to Palmer's multiple line of approach (Palmer 1921). In Palmer's view, the essence of a complete method of teaching is that teachers should be flexible. The opposite of a complete method is a special or patent method which "claims to prevent or to cure all possible ills...by repeated applications of one special device or drug." As teachers we should be prepared to study linguistic grammars of all types, and to select from them whatever seems to contribute, from a teaching point of view, to what Palmer calls a complete and homogeneous system of presentation. (54)

14.2 Pitfalls of Approach

Palmer's multiple line of approach, an eclectic approach, has not met with universal approval.

> .. let's beware of thinking that there's some magic about eclecticism. It's quite easy to say "I'm an eclectic", and dip haphazardly into every attractive aspect of every conceivable method or theory, and then jumble everything together. It's quite another matter to practise enlightened eclecticism -- that is, to engage in an intelligent use of selected approaches built upon and guided by a well-informed broadly-based theory of second language acquisition. (20)

Yalden is another with reservations:

> .. the concept of a universally applicable method has given way to a kind of eclecticism in the classroom. The teacher is expected to proceed in accordance with cognitive code-learning theory...choosing teaching techniques which will fit in with some broad principles of the psychology of language learning, a generalised concern for the learner's state of mind, and appropriate language learning objectives...this is an entirely inadequate view of the kind of training that can and should be provided for teachers.
> This approach amounts to an admission that no one knows much about what language teaching is all about...

> If no one method is universally acceptable, and if only an undifferentitated collection of teaching techniques can be provided to teachers, they are left in an uncharted land. (36)

14.3 Support for Approach

But Johnson does not agree; he is entirely for a multiple approach. The exclusive adoption of any approach seems to him quite unjustifiable.

> Indeed, it is entirely plausible that the most efficient means of providing coverage for specifications such as the Council of Europe's Threshold Level, expressed in terms of functions, settings, topics, notions and structures, is by means of a multi-dimensional set of materials incorporating units of various orientations -- functional, notional, structural, etc..(42)

-- a view shared by Robert Lado:

> The designs of the 1980s should move away from single restrictive techniques to make use of a variety of things that will permit teachers to better meet the needs of the students and the learning tasks at hand. Variety is essential for good motivation, and in addition some features of different methodological proposals can be made part of the teacher's arsenal in any method. (55)

14.4 Course Available

CUP's Cambridge English Course, according to its catalogue description, seems to have aimed at Palmer's "complete and homogeneous presentation", and, like Lado, it feels the result is "motivating":

> By a combination of extremely varied teaching approaches, together with a carefully constructed integrated syllabus, The Cambridge English Course achieves (its) aims...the result is an up-to-date and motivating course for adult learners' needs in the 1980s and beyond.
> .....it allows for a range of different learning styles and has a highly varied teaching approach.....

14.5 Possible Dangers

If the eclectic approach is one in which we select the best, most attractive, most appropriate from other methods, none of which we want to adopt exclusively, there is the danger of this eclectic method becoming, itself, the very thing it opposes.

> The use of the term an eclectic method suggests, in one sense, the need for a single, best, method to follow. It also suggests an inability to be eclectic. (53)

14.6 Possible Solutions

And if we want to avoid the pitfalls of this eclectic approach -- a haphazard, random selection of ideas and procedures, a jumbling together of undifferentiated learning methods and teaching techniques, but still be able to draw on the most attractive and most appropriate features of the multiple line of approach by means of a multi-dimensional set of materials, there are several ways in which enlightened eclecticism can be put into operation. Johnson's way is through thematic units.

> A potential disadvantage of this multi-dimensional framework, where materials of differing orientations are presented together in the same unit, is that the students will find themselves confused by the frequent shifts in focus. It is, therefore, pedagogically desirable that the heterogeneous materials should be seen to be linked together in some way. Choice of the theme area mode of presentation in which both functional and language practice materials use the rich context of the theme-specific source texts as their starting point, provides such a link. (42)

Sheila Estaire (56) describing the project at the British Institute in Madrid shows how another approach at implementing enlightened eclecticism was found. To produce a modular communicative syllabus for adult beginners, combining a functional approach with Community Language Learning and free communicative activities, a communicative syllabus and a grammatical one, Estaire and colleagues first analysed the different coursebooks already in use at the Institute in various of their courses:

> Starting Strategies and Building Strategies (first half) by Abbs and Freebairn, (Longman);
> Encounters, by Garton-Sprenger et al., (Heineman) from their series Main Course English;

these coursebooks being predominatly functional, with emphasis given to grammatical material --

and Contact English I by Granger and Hicks, (Heineman);
Kernel One, by O'Neill (Longman);
Streamline Departures by Hartley and Viney (OUP)

these coursebooks being predominantly structural, each giving different emphasis to communicative aspects.

The interesting thing, here, is that blending these different ingredients together into a coherent modular syllabus was not as impossible as it might at first have looked because an analysis of this heterogeneous collection of coursebooks revealed that --

> in spite of their very different outlooks and emphases, they covered very much the same ground, both functionally and grammatically. This consensus was not only at overall level, but also in the sequence of presentation followed. Thus, if the books were divided into three parts, the contents of each equivalent part would be found to coincide closely. This fact enabled us to divide both core syllabuses - (communicative and structural) - into three sections, A, B and C corresponding to the three terms...(56)

Blending different approaches or ingredients from different methods, in one course, need not of course, be done in individual thematic units or communicative modules.

As described earlier, Allen's variable focus syllabus integrating the structural, functional and inter-relational, would shift the emphasis from structural practice to rhetorical (discourse) and then to the instrumental use of language, as the students progress from an elementary to an advanced level.

14.7 Course Available

One course that would appear to exemplify this shifting emphasis from level to level is Cassell's Foundation English series. The catalogue describes how --

> all four language skills are given the emphasis appropriate to the level...

While the course is structurally based, the teaching of communication skills becomes, by stage 2 "increasingly important", by stage 3 "requiring from the student a communicative rather than a mechanical response". By the last stage in Book 4,

> the use to which he will put the language is always borne in mind, and after he has completed this course the student should be able to speak and write with considerable fluency.

15. Conclusion

What teachers choose to adopt as a method may increasingly become less influenced by individual pundits and training-college promotions, but perhaps more influenced by the attractivenes of available materials. Teachers already seem less influenced by the need for one single method to cover all eventualities, all types of learner, at all levels of ability and learning, and much more influenced by factors that have particular significance in their own contexts, the need for answers to their specific problems.

Some may prefer the traditional role of teacher as teacher, at least at the elementary levels, to the learner-centred classroom. Native English speakers and European English teachers may feel differently from teachers of English, in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, about the Council of Europe's notions and functions and EFL teachers everywhere will go on debating a whole host of issues such as linguistic and communicative competence; competence and performance; mastery and coverage; accuracy and fluency; testing and evaluation; authentic materials and grade ones; learning and acquisition and so on. Certain issues raise questions that are easily answered; others appear to be unanswerable, at least at present.

> The scene before us in our discipline is still one of competing syllabuses, divergent methodologies, contradictory views of our profession, various attempts to deal with change, and innovative theories of second language acquisition, with all of us teachers trying to find our way in Terra Incognita. (19)

To some, this represents sheer confusion; but there are others, more confident and adventurous spirits perhaps, who welcome the freedom of choice in Terra Incognita as exhilirating. And writers like Raimes, Littlewood and others recognise that there are more teachers nowadays who are <u>not</u> willing to settle for the easy answers, who are, instead, asking more questions.

> Our readiness to espouse <u>communication</u> as a solution might be caused by a desire to establish certainty in our profession

> again. With our traditional paradigm in place, we relied on an established system of beliefs and we felt secure. We had our answers. Now, with confusion all around, we want to find new answers. Rather like children on a long car journey, we keep wanting to know "are we there yet?"....
> ...There are, however, some signs that, in spite of the current emphasis on "language as communication", we are not settling for an easy answer and a reductive view of language. (19)

There are many of us (2, 4, 7, 8 et al), who feel that it is the informed EFL teacher himself, Alexander's thinking teacher, who should- and will be producing and testing new ideas and techniques in his classroom. While research might produce new insights into language learning and teaching, and while gurus and pundits come and go, advocating the latest in methodology and classroom materials, as teachers,

> - we must listen to new ideas, discuss them with mentors and colleagues, read what we can find in books and journals, experiment with techniques and materials in our classrooms, reflect on why some things seem to work while others do not. In other words, as ESL teachers, as professionals, we should look to our own experience in the classroom and measure our own successes and failures for evidence of what works and doesn't work. (7)

or, as Peter Strevens put it:

> We as teachers must learn to adapt, chameleon-like, to an ever greater array of variables, so that we can offer to our students not a single technique which may or may not be effective, but the best possible choice of teaching for the particular variables that operate in our own students' individual circumstances. (4)

There is, in short, no "method for all seasons". In fact, the bandwagons are coming under fire. And, though we may feel, at times, we are wandering in Terra Incognita, with no more guidance than our rather inadequate and uninformative EFL book-catalogues, perhaps this should be seen as an exploration and adventure, together with the choices it confronts us with. And the secret of survival, for us as for the chameleon, may be simply adopt and adapt.

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SECTION 2

CHAPTER 5

THE INFORMATION IN THE CATALOGUES

Introduction

In his article, The Trouble with the Textbooks (1). Eric Broudy describes what he calls two questionable assumptions in selecting a textbook:

> One (is) that the customer knows what he wants and two, that what the publisher offers is responsive to that desire. (1)

Perhaps this is true too of catalogues. Readers and prospective buyers would appear to fall into two basic categories -- those who know exactly what they are looking for and those, the browsers, who are "looking about", wanting to see what is on offer. The catalogues should cater for both.

But an inspection of the 8 catalogues shows how differently the various publishers interpret and respond to "what the public wants".

From the standpoint of needing to inform the public of what there is on offer, (especially as most of the publishers offer more than one course aimed, it would appear, at the same market), it might be thought the catalogues would need to show clearly for whom the courses are intended, possibly even where (Middle East, European countries only, etc.) they would be best employed, what they offer, and what they do for the student, how the course material has been selected and graded -- together with information on what it all costs.

What information each catalogue provides, varies, not only from catalogue to catalogue, but also, within the catalogues, from course to course.

The information given in the catalogues can, however, be roughly divided into two sorts: information about the course, but not its content; and information about the content itself.

The first type includes information on appropriateness, appearance and so on, with information relating to levels and markets; authors, reviews and trials; what the course actually looks like; and how old, or up-to-date it is.

The other type includes information on actual course-content: method of approach; language forms and functions; exercises and activities; revision and test sections, and so on.

Let me deal with these two types, Non-Content Information and Content Information, in turn.

Non-Content Information.

Some of the first information we want from the catalogue is whether or not its courses are appropriate for our students: whether they are suitable for our (adult) age-group, relevant to our part of the world and of the right sort for the various learning levels.

Let me take these one at a time.

1. Age group.

When is an adult an adult? Surprisingly, perhaps this is not so easily determined, with the catalogues themselves being generally unhelpful in indicating how they apply the term.

Looking for "adult courses" in an index or contents page is also not likely to be the way to determine the courses for adults as distinct from those for school-children. Courses are not always described in the catalogues in terms of being for adults or not.

If we take the evidence of the contents page:

CUP list their two courses as MAIN courses; neither specifies whether it will suit adults;

CAS list their two courses under GENERAL, as against short courses; no age group is specified;

COL are very confusing in their contents page. Adult courses

are listed, after Secondary courses, starting on page 8. Unfortunately, page 8 does not mark the start of their adult section, but the end of their Secondary courses, and there is only the one course, classified under Adult, the two courses following being classified as General:

HEIN have Secondary and Adult Courses listed in their contents page and both their courses come in this group:

LON simply list Courses on their contents page:

MAC similarly list Courses (subdivided into Major and Minor Courses) but, again, without reference to age-group;

NEL list their courses under Secondary/Adult Courses but there is no sub-division among the 11 listed courses, according to age-group;

OUP similarly have a heading Secondary and Adult Courses but there are no details on which courses are for which age-groups.

The various contents pages are, in short, not very satisfactory in directing the reader to Adult courses. Only half of the catalogues actually mention the word, and in 3 of these, Adult is classified along with Secondary.

Collins alone give a heading Adult Courses, but unfortunately they have got the page wrong, and there is only the one Adult course, not "courses"; the two courses following are described as General.

In the page-headings or text, (having persevered to those sections described in the contents as Main or General, in the absence of Adult or Secondary/Adult sections) there are sometimes clues as to whether the course -- be it Main, General or Adult/Secondary, in the first instance -- can be used with an adult group.

CUP

Cambeng refers 6 times throughout its text to being specifically for adults.

> The major new adult beginner's course from CUP (The course) is specially designed for adults

Meanwords is described as

> a major new two-year course for intermediate and upper-intermediate students...

but there is no other reference to students or age-groups.

CAS

Ontheway is described in a sub heading

> as a new three book main course series for teenage and adult learners of English

There is no other reference to age.

Foundeng is described in its sub-heading as being for

> beginners to post-intermediate students
> but there is no hint that these are teenagers, adults or both.

COL

Express is described, in the very first sentence, as a course "for adults" and later we read that

> the subject matter has been chosen for its intrinsic interest for adults.

HEIN

Mainco is described as

> a complete and highly innovative course for both secondary school and adult learners of English.

Thereafter, this mixed group is simply addressed as students or learners.

Contact has a sub-heading which states that this is a course for secondary school and adult students.

LON

Jour is described as

> a two-stage pre-intermediate to intermediate course for young adults

Thereafter the words "young people" are used in the text.

Strat refers throughout the various descriptions for the 6 different books in the series to beginners or students "aged 14 or over", or later to those "aged 15 or over" or "aged 16 or over".

Kernel has several references to

secondary and adult learners of English

but in Kernel Intermediate, the market is seen as "older and adult students"

Mainline is described as being

for school-age or adult students

and later this is elaborated "for secondary (14+) and adult students".

Follme is a multi-media project

for adult learners of English

Chall is designed for "students aged 15 and over"

Esseng is designed for "adult learners with no previous knowledge of English" Strangely, though, the components are for "pupils".

MAC

Ace is similarly a course

for young adult learners

though the components here also list "pupil's book"

Conteng describes its intended students as Beginners/Intermediate

Secondary/Adult

NEL

Newincen while listed on the contents page and under the page-heading as Secondary/Adult, makes no further reference to age-group; references are simply to students

Function makes no reference to age-group in describing the first book, but the second book

is written for 6th form students, first year University students or adults

OUP

Access makes no reference at all to age-group though like the previous course in the catalogue (which does specify secondary students) it also comes under the banner heading Secondary/Adult.

Stream makes one reference: the topics-

> have all been chosen with young adult and adult students in mind

Quartet is

> a task-based course for students at upper secondary and university level

Network is a course

> for secondary and young adult beginners

Engforad as the title would suggest is for adults and the sub-heading emphasises that it is -

> uniquely suitable for adult students and their particular needs

(Uniquely" might be queried here; is it because no other OUP course actually does cater for the adult group?)

The term adult is used to cover different groups of learners, as a study of the various course-descriptions will show. For example,

a) it is contrasted with "teenage" learners (as in CAS)

or with "secondary school learners" (HEIN, LON,MAC etc)

b) it is included with "teenagers" (as in Strategies)

"Students aged 14 or over"

c) it is subdivided into

"young adults" (as in CUP, LON, MAC, OUP)

"young adult and adult students" (Streamline)

"older and adult students" (Kernel)

5 of the courses say they are specifically for adults.

> uniquely suitable for adult students and their particular needs (Enforad)
>
> This course is for adult learners..., (Esseng)
>
> This multi-media project for adult learners. (Follme)
>
> The major new adult beginner's course from CUP (Cambeng)

- and that leaves 18 courses listed, in one way or another, as suitable for adults though not specifically catering for "their special needs", or for that matter, for the specific needs and interests of the secondary school students for whom, in many cases, the course is also intended, despite being told by Longmans, Nelson and OUP, for example, that they too have special interests and needs.

It must be added that in interviews with the various publishers this short list of 7 courses that seem to be specifically suited to adults can be whittled down further. OUP let it be known that their English for Adults course is really intended only for Germany and German-speaking countries, and is not thought suitable for sale elsewhere around the globe, while again at OUP I was told informally that their course Access, listed under Secondary/Adult, must not really be considered an adult course.

It could be thought that two other courses, Longman's Essential English and Macmillan's ACE are similarly unsuitable for adults since they describe their materials as "pupil's"
Since in normal usage the term "pupil" is reserved for a child or minor, it could be argued that a course with "pupil's books" is not one for adults. However, the usage here, with ACE and Essential English, is more likely to be due to the courses' dating from the '60s or earlier when such usage was more common as Littlewood also notes:

> The shift of emphasis from the teaching process to the learning process is very clear in the terminology used in current methodological discussions. The term pupil, with its associations of control and subordinate status, is giving way

> more and more to the term learner, which applies active initiative and participation. (2)

It is also interesting to note the difference in treatment of the subject "adult beginners" in three separate articles in Communication in the Classroom (3) on Teaching Adult Beginners written by materials producers, Alexander (Mainline, Follow Me), Milne (Main Course English) and O'Neill (Kernel).

In his article, Alexander makes no mention at all of how the adult group is defined, including or excluding, for example, secondary school or teenage learners, or of how to cater for their "special needs and interests".

Milne, on the other hand, provides a great deal of detail on the kind of adult student for which his Main Course English is intended.

> the students we had in mind would be older teenagers and adults and they would be either complete beginners or beginners in the sense that they had forgotten most of any English which they had ever learned...
> the textbook (usually) imposes a standard, unified stock of language on all the students who use it. This is especially demotivating for adult students who may want to know particular items of language; for example, vocabulary items connected with their work or with their leisure activities....
> we assume that the students will be in their late teens or early twenties. They will live in a European tradition and will be reasonably aware of the world around them. (4)

Milne goes on to describe how these

> assumptions affected the choice of language we present as a model for production, the choice of the different characters in the Course who use that language, the choice of the situations these characters find themselves in, and the selection of games, songs and other classroom activities (4).

O'Neill (5) also devotes considerable space to describing some types of adult groups for which his materials are intended. There are, for example, those

> who seem to have mainly social rather than linguistic motivation. This is particularly true of some evening classes abroad.
>
> -- while there are groups

> composed of adults with rather vague notions that English may be useful to them in their jobs or the next time they go to the London sales. These may again be evening classes abroad. (5)

And he cites other adult groups with psychological problems, having tried to learn the language before, without much success, or having extremely traditional expectations of what learning a language involves. Having studied these assorted groups he concludes:

> I think it essential for adult beginners of the types I have described to identify not only a core syllabus of functions but also a core syllabus of language structures which can be used to realise them. (5)

In other words, like Milne, in the light of this specific, yet heterogeneous, grouping, adult learners, O'Neill chooses and selects his material to cater for their special needs.

In the catalogue description, however, for both Milne's course and O'Neill's there is nothing like this amount of information, in fact very little at all.

Table 1 below shows which courses specify <u>adult</u> in their catalogue-description, and which use the term loosely to include teenagers or school students too.

Table 1 Adult Students

	Adult Students	Young Adults	Over 14, (15, 16) years	Adult/ Teenager	Secondary + Adult	Older & Adult	Adult/ Pupil	No Mention * of age group
CUP	Cambeng	Cambeng						Meanword
CAS				Ontheway				Foundeng
COL	Express							
HEIN					Mainco Contact			
LON	Follme Esseng	Jour.	Strats. Chall.		Kernel Main.	Kernel Intermed.	Esseng	
MAC		ACE			Conteng		ACE	
NEL					Function			Newincen
OUP	Engforad	Stream.			Quartet Network			Access

Note: * Of the 4 courses which carry no mention in the body of the text of the catalogue description, of their "adult" students, 2 of these, Nelson's New Incentive and OUP's Access, are at least identified by the course-heading at the top of each page, Secondary and Adult. However, that is obviously not to be taken too strictly; as I mentioned above, OUP feels that Access is not really an adult course, and their representatives would not recommend it for adult groups.

1.1 Summary

The category "adult student", as has been shown, is not very easy to define and the 8 catalogues differ in how they use the term. For example, adult either contrasts with teenagers or includes them; and it can be sub-divided or qualified so that we can also have "young adults"; "young adult and adult students" as well as "older and adult students". While 5 of the course descriptions claim to be exclusively for adults (including Cambeng and Engforad,) 18 others are listed sometimes with teenagers or secondary school pupils, as "for adults" though they carry no reference to their "specific needs and interests".

As various writers such as Milne and O'Neill (themselves writers of courses in this study) have pointed out, it makes a great deal of difference to a class, both in motivating and interesting them, if their interests and needs are taken into account, and it would therefore seem to make it very difficult for a course to perform well with adults if it were aimed at the teenage/secondary school market primarily.

1.2. Recommendations

In view of the special interests and needs of adult groups (not to mention those of the secondary school children, with whom adult groups are often combined, as the target for a course), needs and interests to which EFL authors like Milne and O'Neill have drawn attention, as well as certain publishers like Longman, Nelson and OUP, course-descriptions should be less ambiguous about the specific age-groups for whom these courses are designed. To enable readers to choose more exactly between courses in each catalogue, it should be made clear which course is suitable for learners older than secondary or teenage students, with material (subject-matter, exercises, activities etc) chosen or designed with them exclusively in mind.

2. Market

For those of us who have been teaching outside of Europe, in the Middle East and Africa, it would be of considerable help in choosing a course from the catalogue, to know that the course is one that could be used, or adapted for use, in those areas. But very few course-descriptions give any clue to where the material is best suited.

CUP

Their Cambridge English Course is described as

> extensively piloted throughout the world

but there is no mention of actual countries in which the materials have been tried out and apart from that brief reference there is no other guide to market area. Meanings into Words offers no reference to market area, at all.

CAS

Neither of their courses gives any clue as to the intended market-area but, perhaps, the reader could deduce something from various pointers. On the Way, written by Gunther Reichwein and Geoff Tranter, is described on the microfiche which lists (some of their) prices, as "translated from German" and there is a footnote which reads

> Not for sale in the Fed. Republic of Germany, Switzerland, Austria or the Netherlands

- from which it could be deduced that it had originally been a course for the German-speaking market and this version would be competing with the original version, were it to be sold in the forbidden areas. With a German (?) author too, it is likely to be most suited to those countries in which it is banned, but there is no specific mention of intended or probable market areas, for this course or their other, Foundation English.

COL

There is no indication of any market area for their course, Express.

HEIN

In neither of their 2 adult courses is there any description of suitable/unsuitable market areas. However, in his article on Main Course English (4), Milne did write that

> we assume that the students.. will live in a European tradition and will be reasonably aware of the world around them

- but nothing in the catalogue description suggests that the audience should be limited to a European context.

LON

Follow Me was developed, we are told in the catalogue, in a joint project with TV stations in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Council of Europe and the BBC. That would seem to indicate its market.

The Kernel, Strategies and Mainline courses are based on the Council of Europe's Waystage and Threshold levels (intended mainly for the European market), but the courses do not admit to being specifically useful in a European context only. After all, Kernel is headlined as -

> one of the most successful and well-established courses for teaching English in the world

Longman's Secondary School course, New Concept English, related to Mainline and written by the same man, Alexander,

> exists in special editions for certain countries

-- but these countries are not listed and it is not indicated in what way these special editions differ. Additionally, there is a New Concept English for Colombia.

Challenges is described in a final paragraph as a co-production by Longman, the BBC and the Insitut fur Film und Bild, and at least one of their authors (Candlin) is a regular EFL contributor with German

pedagogical experience. It would therefore appear to be a course suited to German-speaking Europe.

MAC

There is no mention in the catalogue of likely markets for either of their courses, though in the trials for Contemporary-English we are told that -

> over 10,000 students took part

However, we are not told where. Elsewhere in their catalogue describing Junior courses, like Kaleidoscope, we are told

> it has proved highly successful throughout Europe and Latin America

- so specific areas can and do get mentioned.

NEL

Neither of their two courses is described in the catalogue as being intended for a specific market, though their new course Sprint is described as

> a special adaptation of New Incentive for Italian students of English -

which highlights -

> areas of difficulty for Italian students.

Similarly, there is

> a special American adaptation of Functional English (Moving Up On Your Own)

- presumably aimed at those markets (S.E.Asia?) which prefer American English to British English.

A senior editor at Nelson said their main markets were Greece, Italy and Spain, or the language schools in the UK, so it was more profitable for them to concentrate on these areas which they knew best than invest a

great deal to produce something specifically for countries in, say, the Middle East.

OUP

Like some of the other publishers, OUP produces specialised materials and courses for one country (for example, an Oman schools course) but there is no mention here in their 5 courses aimed at Secondary and Adult groups, of the intended geographical area. Privately, I was told that their English for Adults course (the only course described in the catalogue as being specifically for adults) was not in fact suitable for use outside of Germany. It did not sell well anywhere other than Germany. It is true that one of the authors has a German (?) name, W.Bliemal, and possibly another, J.Quetz, but there is no mention anywhere of its limited usefulness. Indeed, we are told the course is

> uniquely suitable for adult students and their particular needs -

without any proviso that they should be adults in Germany.

2.1.Summary

In discussions with editors at Collins, Heinemann, Longman, Macmillan, Nelson and OUP, it was obvious that certain of their courses were, more or less, specifically aimed at certain areas, mainly in Europe, but also in South America, and much less likely at African or Middle East countries, for whom individual firms often provided separate tailor-made materials.

Even within the European market, however, there are differences. Some firms have concentrated on the Mediterranean countries like Nelson with Greece, Italy and Spain, or OUP with France, Italy Spain. But the Scandinavian countries (with Longman and OUP) and German-speaking countries are being reached too.

It was made clear to me, though, (at Longman, Macmillan, Nelson and OUP) that even within Europe, even within the "Mediterranean countries",

like France, Spain, Greece, Italy, there were great differences; courses that would do well in one of these countries would not necessarily work well in another. In several cases the firm brought out special editions of the courses but, at the same time, courses originally devised and trialled in one specific region, were now brought out blandly and non-specifically, for adults.

Because it was made very clear to me, especially at Nelson, that publishing was a business and it was their business to sell wherever their books would sell, few publishers' catalogues therefore ever would pinpoint a particular country or region where their materials would or would not be suitable. As CUP described it, unless a course had been specifically prepared for a region, they would not mention any region, and they would consider it over defining to say, for example, "suitable for Western Europe".

While not a single catalogue describes any of their courses as unsuitable for the Middle East, in private interviews, nobody would commit himself to saying that any course was or could be suitable. On the contrary, several editors, for example at Longman, Nelson and OUP, told me why one or other of their courses was not practicable in an area like the Middle East.

The catalogues do offer restrictions on the market, generally with regard to publishing rights. On page 2 of OUP's catalogue, for example, under Market Restrictions, we are told that some of the titles advertised in the catalogue

> are not available for sale from OUP in certain countries

and, similarly, Cassell restricts their On the Way course to outside of Germany, Switzerland, Austria or the Netherlands. Heinemann are more specific, not in what they say about the marketability of their 2 adult courses, but in their inside covers, where it is printed:

> We must mention however, that an inspection copy cannot be supplied if we consider that a book is not applicable as a text in the apparent circumstances or is not regarded by us as a text book. No matter how full and well written a catalogue description may be, the wrong impression about suitability can very occasionally result.

While other publishers did not print advice of this kind, privately they agreed that they, or rather their area salesmen, would certainly not recommend a course if they knew it was unsuitable, from the point of view of content, photographs, cultural slant and so on, for a certain region.

2.2. Recommendations

For the average catalogue browser, however, without access to publishers, editors, authors, even salesmen, it certainly would be a decided advantage to have some more information, if only on content or cultural setting, as there are many students who do not expect or want to come to the UK and many of these also have backgrounds, habits and experiences far removed from these in the UK. It would therefore be very unlikely that one single course, say a course set in Manchester, could be suitable for students like these, when their special needs and interests would not include anything at all on the British pop-scene or life in a bed-sitter in Manchester.

If the publishers provided even the minimum of information that the course was, say, particularly suitable for UK visitors, or for those who are unfamiliar with the UK/European scene.., prospective buyers would have a much clearer grasp of what was possible and therefore could narrow their course-choices, more successfully, than with the aid of a pin.

3. Courses.

One of the problems in choosing a course from any of the catalogues is finding out precisely what kind of course is being offered, from the assortment of labels and categories used.

As I pointed out earlier, even where the category, for example Secondary and Adult, seems clear enough, in fact not all the courses in

that section will have been intended for adults. In fact, in OUP's Secondary and Adult section, scattered among courses which do mention adults, are at least 4 courses intended for the 11 - 15 year-old age-group, only.

Often the category label does not indicate either adult or non-adult. CUP, for example, describes its 2 courses as MAIN courses, though there are no other courses, Minor or whatever, listed. Macmillan offers MAJOR and MINOR courses and Cassell and Collins both offer GENERAL courses. Cassell's 2 adult courses fall in to this General category, but not Collins' Express which alone occupies the category, Adult Courses. In contrast to its General courses, Cassell's offer SHORT courses as do Longman.

Not one of the catalogues defines or describes its terms. MAIN/MAJOR/MINOR/GENERAL/SHORT are not the kind of labels which narrowly pinpoint the courses they classify, and in some cases they can actually mislead. Collins lists their General Courses separately from their Adult Course, though all 23 of the courses looked at here, not being ESP courses, are general.

Publishers would certainly be providing a service if they were to set out clearly what they mean by their choice of term, showing how it covers these courses. Unfortunately, these are not the only terms used to describe the courses here. In the text, some of them are described as being

complete	(Cambeng, Mainco, Newincen, Stream, etc)
comprehensive	(ACE)
complete and comprehensive	(Meanword)

What do these terms mean? Comprehensive is defined in the dictionary as including much. Can we therefore assume that a comprehensive course

offers enormous variety and detail in its language coverage? Or does it mean that the course has many components?

If the course is described as complete, would we be correct in understanding this to have the meaning given in the dictionary — with nothing missing or lacking? And a student who has completed this complete course would have covered everything there is to know about English? What else could it mean?

Reader's Digest in the advertising material for their At Home Language Course also describe it as complete :

> Your complete Language Course-designed to be taken anywhere
>
> - and

they also tell us there are absolutely

> no textbooks, no written exercises
>
> -- so obviously

complete here does not mean what it appears to mean for CUP or OUP.

It could be thought that a course that is promoted as complete and comprehensive is offering a great deal of language work over a period of 2-3 years and, in that, it would be differing from the so-called short course, also called a rapid review course as for example, Longman's Going Places, or an intensive course such as Cassell's Octopus.

However, the demarcation between complete and comprehensive courses on the one hand, and those described as short, rapid, and intensive, on the other, is not a clear one. While Longman's Going Places, their rapid review course, is grouped with other short courses, Collins' Express, on the other hand, their main adult course, is similarly described as a rapid revision course, though, it is constructed as a two-stage course.

Several of Longman's courses, including Strategies, Kernel and Mainline, are at the same time being promoted, in their separate stages, as intensive courses. Mainline is

> suitable either for intensive or for extensive study

while Kernel Lessons Plus

> was published to meet demands from teachers for an intensive intermediate or revision and extension course...
> it is designed to fit conveniently into an academic year of 25-30 weeks or an intensive course.

OUP's complete, three part course, Streamline, can also be all things to all men. On the one hand,

> Streamline's wide range of components-Student's Books, Workbooks, Cassettes, Speechwork and Teacher's Books -- make it ideal for extensive courses

- and, on the other,

> Streamline is also highly suitable for shorter, more intensive courses using just the Student's Book

- or, in other words, as OUP themselves describe it

> three independent self-contained courses

It could be argued that no series, nor any book, could be suitable for both intensive and extensive study, as Mainline, Kernel and Streamline, for example, all claim. If a series is structured to suit an academic year extending over 25-30 weeks, it cannot be equally suited to the class wanting an intensive programme fitted in to a period of 2-3 weeks. Macdonald-Ross and Klare argue this point in their article Selecting Textbooks: Some Preliminary Thoughts:

> We assume that, generally speaking, no book will combine all the possible virtues. If it did, it would probably have swept the market already. But actually, no book can combine all the virtues since some are incompatible with others.... A book that goes into the detail needed for advanced students can't have room for elementary explanations, and thus can't be used for beginners. And a book which holds to a particular style of teaching may rule itself out for other styles. (6)

But what particular style, intensive or extensive, the courses in these catalogues follow, is not made very clear. It does not emerge from reading the course-descriptions in the catalogues how the different courses are primarily structured: whether, for example, they are designed as a year's work, to take the students over a great deal of

ground carefully and in detail, with a considerable number of exercises and activities to reinforce learning; or whether they aim to have the student immersed on a short-term programme, with the emphasis from the earliest stages on his communicating fluently, though inaccurately. As Hauwiller explains in his article, The Mastery/Coverage Dilemma: a Case Study:

> All teachers face at least two conflicting expectations as they conceive of the structure of their courses. They expect to cover given amounts of material and they also expect their students to learn something of what is covered. Teaching decisions aimed at meeting one expectation often tend to hinder meeting the other....
> In practice, of course, mixes of these strategies are possible, but in principle such compromise raises the danger that it will achieve neither coverage of an ideal array of content nor an appropriate mastery of the elements of that content to the satisfaction of the teacher. (7)

Howatt also considers the problem of how much content a course should contain, with reference to this mastery/coverage dilemma:

> At first sight the question of how much to teach in a course appears relatively simple to answer: as much as the average member of the class can master in the time available.
> However, this raises the problem of what is meant by "master". Secondly, it begs the question of how this mastery is to be achieved.... Does "mastery" mean the ability to talk, read and write like a native speaker in any situation? Or does it mean something less than this and, if so, what is the criterion of success?... We cannot decide how much to include in the materials for a course unless we know how much the pupil is expected to recognise in reading and listening.
> We must also consider the question of performance standards. If the pupil is expected to be completely accurate, he will obviously learn less in a given time than he would if he were working to a less demanding (and perhaps more useful) criterion, e.g., fluent intelligibility. (8)

But we do not know from the course-descriptions what is considered their optimal "given time". Nor do we know whether the courses are structured to require an accurate performance, resulting in slower progress, or structured with an emphasis on fluency, so that students, even at an early stage, have a fair command of structures, relatively quickly. As Van Els et al describe:

> Choosing a certain type of gradation may.. depend on the total number of hours available for FLT (Foreign Language Teaching),

> and on whether these hours are allotted over longer or shorter periods. (9)

If the "given time" is only for a short period such as 3 weeks, the particular course, however intensive, can not offer the same opportunities either to master structures or cover the ground, as a course extending over several months. Even if the approach on such intensive courses is "communicative", intended to have "high surrender value", as Wilkins describes in his article, Notional Syllabuses and the concept of a minimum adequate grammar, so that the learner

> has the means to express the most fundamental elements of propositional content and can perform some of the most urgent social functions of language, (his) mastery of the grammatical devices he is using will, of course, be far from complete. The approach makes it almost inevitable that partial rather than whole systems are learned and that the full range of application of those forms that have been learned will not have been met. In a longer course greater grammatical generalisation with such an approach can be provided for, but the three weeks assumed in the present example would make this rather difficult. (10)

In other words a course purporting to be intensive cannot also claim to be described as "complete" as OUP's Streamline, for one, does.

3.1 Summary

There is a variety of labels used to describe the different courses and the overall description of the courses does not make it clear what, primarily, they see themselves providing: intensive or extensive course-work; mastery or coverage; an accuracy dominated approach (complete with tests) or one aiming for "fluent intelligibility" which, though less demanding, is, as Howatt says, (8) "almost impossible to mark fairly".

3.2. Recommendations

In view of the imprecise nature of some terms, such as main/major /complete/comprehensive, not to mention others like short, intensive, rapid revision, independent, self-contained, it would be helpful for publishers to give a brief description of such terms as they use, explaining them, for example, with reference perhaps to the number of

components, length of course, detailed work involved and so on. What the course is seen as basically aiming to provide, intensive or extensive work, aiming at accuracy or fluency, should be plainly set out.

4. Lessons/Units

Possibly one of the best ways of resolving this seeming confusion over whether a particular course is a main or major or comprehensive course as distinct from one suitable only for short, summer courses, is to consider how much work it actually offers, by examining how many lessons or units it contains, at each stage.

This may not be as straightforward as it sounds. What amount of work is actually covered in a unit or lesson? Alexander sees it this way:

> Traditional courses are often divided into lessons, but these lessons do not take into account what can be done in an average teaching period of 45 minutes or an hour. They simply consist of an amount of information and may run on for a great many pages....
>
> ...A lesson must be precisely what the word implies: an amount of material that can reasonably be covered in a teaching period, possibly with additional material which can be done as homework. (11)

It is interesting to see how Alexander's own courses here (Mainline and Follow Me) are described in the Longman catalogue, and how they compare with the other courses.

CUP

Cambeng is very precisely described as having, in its Student's Book 1, 32 units of 4 pages each. Each page, we are told, represents 45 minutes work, a total of 96 hours' classroom work.

Meanword is, similarly, described in very precise terms. Their first part, the Intermediate, provides 100-130 classroom hours. This comes from 24 units, each providing 4-5 classroom hours. Their Upper-Intermediate Part Two provides 80-100 hours, made up from 15 teaching units and 1 revision unit, each providing approximately 5 classroom hours.

CAS

On the way has 15 units with revision sections after every 5 units, in each student's book, but there is no indication as to how many lessons or hours these units represent.

Foundeng, a 4-book series, offers no description at all for its first 2 books. The 3rd consists of 30 units, each of which will require at least 2-3 hours' work. There is no information on the 4th book.

These two courses are obviously intended to contrast with their short course Octopus in a separate section. However, although we know Octopus has "8 multi-skill units", there is not enough information on units and hours to compare both sorts of course.

COL

Express, in Book One, has 15 double-page lessons, followed by 15 lessons of 3 pages each. There is no indication, though, of the time allotted to each of these lessons.

HEIN

Mainco student's books provide approximately 180 teaching hours at each level, but how this is set out in lessons and units varies. The first part has 10 units of 7 lessons each; the second has 10 units of 5 lessons each while the third has 6 units, unspecified.

Contact has no information at all on how many lessons/units/hours it provides.

LON

Journ describes its student's books as each providing one year's work. Each is organised in 6-page units, with 16 units in the first stage and 14 in the second, plus additional consolidation units. How many lessons or hours are provided by each of these units is not given.

Strat is a 4-stage course and there are 6 books in the series. Neither of the first two, Opening Strategies or Starting Strategies, used on the

first stage, gives any detail on the number of units or lessons. But for the next stage, Building Strategies, we are told there are 16 units (including 3 consolidation units), though we are not told how many lessons or hours that provides. The third stage has 15 units, as does the fourth, but again there is no information on hours or lessons. Nothing at all is given for the sixth book in the series, Strategies.

Kernel, like Strategies, offers two routes. These are Kernel One, Two and Three with 19 units, 17 units (each of 6 pages) and 16 units (of 6 pages each) respectively, with no mention however, of the number of lessons or hours that involves; and Kernel One, followed by Kernel Lessons Intermediate and Kernel Lessons Plus, offering 120 hours approximately for Lessons Intermediate, in an academic year of 25-30 weeks, with no details offered for Lessons Plus.

Mainline offers no information at all on the number of units, lessons or hours provided by the course and it would be interesting to know if the author, Alexander, was aware that no such details would be given.

Follme, co-authored by Alexander, is described as a course offering two years' work, but again there is no detail at all on units, lessons or hours.

Chall offers no specifications at all.

Esseng, a four-book course, similarly has no information at all on lessons.

How exactly all of these courses differ from the 4 short courses that follow is not made clear as the number of hours or lessons or the amount of exercise and reading material is nowhere given. So in the absence of this information catalogue readers must remain in some doubt about how Longman's rapid review course or flexible short course differs from, say, the Mainline ones, which are described as being suitable for intensive study.

MAC

ACE does not specify for its first three books, the number of units, lessons or hours. Its 2 later sections do offer more.

Intermediate Context is divided into 18 units and provides teaching material for one year's classes, while Broader Context also offers 18 units.

Conteng provides about 50 hours' work in each of its student's books. No more information is offered.

NEL

Newincen's student's books are each divided into 12 sections and provide material for about 90 classroom hours.

Function, a two-book course, offers with Book 1, 52 lessons of 50-60 minutes each, about 150 hours in all, while Book 2 contains 16 units of 4 x 1-hour lessons.

Nelson also offers a one-book course, Profiles divided into 10 units or topics, but it is not clear whether they would consider this a short course, in contrast to the other two.

OUP

Access, we are told, represents a year's work, in each of its 4 parts. There are scattered references to chapters and units, but no details at all on how many lessons or hours these contain.

Stream, in each of its student's books, contains 80 self-contained units, each of which provides material for a 50-minute lesson.

Quartet mentions having units, but offers no details on the number of hours or lessons they represent, beyond saying that clear lesson-plans exist for every unit.

Network too has units, but we are told nothing of how long or detailed they are.

Engforad similarly mentions units, without specifying the hours or lessons these represent.

4.1. Summary

Of the 23 courses, 15 offer no information at all on the number of lessons or classroom hours which each of their course-books represents. Here, it surely cannot be argued that it would be over-defining, to give details on the approximate number of lessons or classroom hours each contains, as clearly it can be done. Publishers seem willing enough to give details about one of the courses in their catalogue (as for example, Heinemann with Mainco but not Contact; OUP with Streamline but not for the other four) but it is not generally the case that every course in the one catalogue is described in terms of lessons and teaching-hours, as it easily could be.

Where there is no information on the number of teaching-hours, there is sometimes considerable variety in how the different catalogues, or courses in the catalogue, interpret unit and lesson, and there is also considerable variety in how the teaching-hour itself is interpreted.

For example, a unit can contain	1 lesson only	(OUP's Streamline)
	or 7 lessons	(HEIN's Mainco)
	or 2-3 hours' work	(Cassell's Foundeng)
	or 4 x 45min. lessons	(CUP's Cambeng)
	or 4 x 1-hour lessons	(Nel's Function)
	or 5 x classroom-hour	(CUP's Meanword)
	or 4 pages each	(LON's Mainline)
	or 6 pages each	(LON's Journeys)

Where units are based on the lesson or teaching-/classroom-hour, there can still be considerable variation, as these terms too are variously interpreted.

CUP's Cambeng, for example, is based on the page; each page/lesson is the equivalent of 45 minutes' work.

CUP's Meanword course, using their figures, provides lessons of 60 minutes.

NEL's Function, Book 1, has 52 lessons each of 50-60 minutes; while Book 2 has 16 units, each of 4 lessons, 1-hour long.

CUP's Streamline specifies that each lesson is 50 minutes long.

How many hours in total each course-book offers also varies considerably. In fact, only 9 of the 23 courses actually gives this information.

CUP's Cambeng		96 hours classroom work.
Meanword,	1	100-130 classroom hours
	2	80-100 classroom hours
CAS's Foundeng	3	60- 90 hours' work
HEIN's Mainco		180 teaching hours, approx., at each level
LON's Kernel L.I.		120 hours approx.
MAC's Conteng		50 hours' work, each, approx.
NEL's Newincen		90 classroom hours, each, approx.
Function,	1	52 x 50-60 minutes
	2	64 x 1-hour lessons
OUP's Stream		80 x 50 min. lessons, at each level.

The following table, Table 2, shows something of this degree of variation among the courses, in what information they offer and what they omit, about units and courses, as well as teaching-hours.

Table 2 Courses: Labels and Lessons

	Course Description	Number of Books/Stages	Number of Units	Number of Lessons	Number of Hours	Number of Pages	Other Description
Cambeng	Main	4	32	32 x 4	96	4 per unit	----
Meanword	Main	2	1st=24 2nd=16	1st:24 x 4/5 2nd:16 x 5	1st:100-130 2nd: 80-100	----	----
Ontheway	General	3	15	----	----	145/172--	----
Foundeng	General	4	3rd,30	3rd:30 x 2/3	3rd:60-90	128/144/192/144	----
Express	Adult	2	--	30	----	15x2pp+15x3pp	----
Mainco	Sec/Adult	3	10/10/6	70/50/--	180 approx.	192/160/128	----
Contact	Sec/Adult	2	--	----	----	208/192	----
Journeys	Sec/Adult	2	16/14	----	----	6 per unit	each bk=1 yr
Strategies	Sec/Adult	6bk/4 st	2nd=16/15/15	----	----	----	----
Kernel	Sec/Adult	5bk/3 st	* 19/17/16	----	K.Less.I.=120	--/17x6/16x6	----
Mainline	Sec/Adult	6bk/3 st	--	----	----	1st= -- 2/3=4 per unit	----
Follme	Sec/Adult	2	--	----	----	----	2 years work
Challenges	Sec/Adult	1	--	----	----	----	----
Esseng.	Sec/Adult	4	--	----	----	----	----
ACE	Major	5	4th=18;5th=18	----	----	160/192/200/160/160	----
Conteng.	Major	6	--	----	50	88/112/112/ 128/--/--	----
Newincen.	Sec/Adult	3	12 sections	----	90	96/96/96	----
Function.	Sec/Adult	2	2nd=16	1st:52 2nd:64	1st:52 2nd:64	128/144	----
Access	Sec/Adult	4	--	----	----	----	each part= 1 year's work
Stream.	Sec/Adult	3	80	80	80 x 50 mins.	----	----
Quartet	Sec/Adult	2	--	----	----	----	----
Network	Sec/Adult	3	--	----	----	----	----
Engforad.	Sec/Adult	3	--	----	----	----	----

*Kernel 1,2,3

It can be seen from the table that the catalogues have no common measure for unit, lesson, or even classroom hour, and there is considerable variation either in the time allowed for them or the number or layout of pages, for these units. Alexander is one of the few writers in EFL who has written anything on the subject of lessons in books and how the arrangement of these affects the teaching:

> We have to decide whether we want courses arranged in lessons on facing page layouts and so on, or in frames. A book arranged in lessons (however artificial the arrangement) tends to pace the teacher. Because of the great variety of language activities, functionally-based courses can sometimes best be organized in frames. (12)

In terms of times, Alexander (11) has defined his lesson as

> an average period of 45 minutes or an hour

- and it can be seen that the publishers cover the full range, with CUP having 45 - minute lessons, OUP, 50 - minute ones and Nelson, 1-hour long ones.

4.2 Recommendations

If publishers were all to define their courses as main, major, minor, short, intensive, extensive and so on, in terms of the number of units or lessons which the course contains, this would in itself be most helpful to the readers. And if there were, additionally, for every course, and not just for some of them, a guide to the units, indicating how many lessons or classroom-hours these contain, the readers would again benefit. And since there is this variation in interpreting how long a classroom-hour can actually be, publishers could be of further help by indicating how long they consider their average teaching hour to be, as well as indicating how many hours they estimate each level of their course would occupy, as of course some already do, for a few of the courses here.

As can be seen from Table 2, what a course can offer varies tremendously: a lesson can vary from 45 minutes to 60; a year's work can

be as little as 50 or 52 hours (and these are major courses) or up to 180 hours for Mainco. It would therefore greatly aid the prospective buyer to know exactly how much work each course can offer.

5. Levels

Ingrid Freebairn, co-author of Longman's Strategies series, has written:

> There is no such thing as a homogeneous classroom

- and she goes on to say:

> I know of no teacher who can categorically say that all her students are at exactly the same level of proficiency (13)

However, being aware of the diversity of learning levels among one's students is an important step in finding the appropriate material for the class. And it is obviously very important to the teacher seeking this appropriate material that what is being offered, in catalogues, for example, is clearly indicated as suitable for this or that level of ability, so that she, in turn, can then estimate how appropriate it is for the class in question.

Alexander (11) recommends that a full-scale course

> would resolve itself into three parts, each of which would consist of two stages;
>
> Stage 1: Pre-elementary level.
> Elementary level.
>
> Stage 2. Pre-intermediate level.
> Intermediate level.
>
> Stage 3: Pre-advanced level.
> Advanced.

Again, there is considerable variety among publishers in how they handled this question of levels, some offering a chart of levels, others indicating how their levels were selected, with the remainder offering no clues at all.

Let me show this, by taking each of the publishers in turn.

CUP

On page 5, opposite their page of contents, there is a large chart or table displaying all their titles in a grid with 7 levels of proficiency. Below this, they offer two notes: one elaborating on the table and the other on grading.

> Each level in the chart assumes about 100 class teaching hours supplemented by private study. In many adult teaching institutions each level thus approximates to one year of study.

Their Cambeng course is eventually to cover 4 levels:

> Beginner/Elementary
> Lower Intermediate
> Intermediate
> Upper-Intermediate.

and we are told that having finished Book 4, students will be at a level equivalent to the Cambridge First Certificate in English.

Their Meanword course is

> a major two-year course for intermediate and upper-intermediate students

CAS

Curiously, the very last item in their table of contents is a mention of their chart which is a large 2-page spread in the very centre of their little catalogue. The chart indicates where all their materials (main and short courses, readers, etc) fit, in their 4 chosen levels:

> Elementary
> Pre-Intermediate
> Intermediate
> Advanced

The chart itself does not offer any explanation of what level of proficiency these different labels represent, but the text describing the two courses does offer more. Ontheway's Book 1 corresponds to the Council of Europe's Waystage level; Book 2 to Threshold; Book 3 is at intermediate level. Their Foundeng course takes beginners in 4 stages to post-intermediate level. Although their chart specifies only 4

levels, another is introduced in Book 3, for lower-intermediate students. The level in their Book 4 is

> approximately that of the Cambridge First Certificate examination.

COL

Their level chart is featured in second place in their table of contents. There are 8 levels and the accompanying notes give a fair indication of how these levels are graded, levels 1-6 being mainly based on a combination of wordlists and structure-lists.

Express covers levels 2 (elementary, with 600 words) up to 5 (Upper Intermediate, with 2000 words), over two years.

HEIN

Their catalogue lists their level chart, second, in their table of contents. The chart occupies a 2-page spread, showing all their materials fitting in to their 6 level categories. There are, unfortunately, no notes describing what the different levels represent.

Mainco is

> published in three levels (and) takes learners from beginner to post-intermediate level

Contact, a two-part course, takes the students from beginner level to intermediate level.

LON

Surprisingly, for a large and detailed catalogue like Longman's there is no chart. Neither is there any mention in their Contents page of any information on how they use the different labels for levels. However, tucked away, halfway down column four on an inside page, preceding even the Contents page, is a small section headed Levels, in which they claim:

> the levels used in the catalogue are broadly defined here

Unfortunately, the first three listed: Beginners/Elementary/Pre-Intermediate are not described or defined in any way. The other three are: Intermediate: up to and around the level of the Cambridge First Certificate; Post-intermediate/post-FCE (First Certificate in English) ; and Advanced, leading up to Cambridge Proficiency level through to university level.

Journeys is a two-stage course, pre-intermediate to intermediate.

Strategies is a four-stage course, beginners to upper-intermediate.

Kernel is a beginners' course in its Book1, a pre-intermediate course (up to Waystage) in Book 2, an intermediate course in Book 3 (designed to reach Threshold). Kernel Lessons Intermediate is for pre-intermediate students, while Kernel Lessons Plus (up to and beyond Cambridge F.C.E) is for intermediate students.

Mainline in their 6 books, for three stages, take the beginners in Mainline Beginners A up to Waystage and then, with Mainline Beginners B, up to Threshold; Mainline Progress A takes the students, now called pre-intermediate, to

beyond Threshold Level

and Mainline Progress B then takes them to what is called, full intermediate level. The level of Mainline Skills is up to the Cambridge F.C.E.

Follme is also based on Waystage (part 1) and Threshold (part 2).

Challenges is designed for students at intermediate level.

Esseng a four-book course, takes students (or pupils) from beginners (Book 1) to elementary level (2), to pre-intermediate (3) and intermediate (4).

MAC

There is no chart, (though their later catalogue for 1985 offers one) but they indicate levels on the page preceding their Context course: Beginners/Elementary/Intermediate/Higher Intermediate. There is

probably a misprint here as Broader Context English is taken to precede Intermediate Context, though the text itself makes it plain that Intermediate Context is a pre-First Certificate course linking the first 3 stages of ACE with Broader Context, which takes students up to the Cambridge F.C.E.

Conteng is sub-titled for Beginners/Intermediate and the course is in 6 steps.

NEL

There is no mention in their table of contents that the catalogue offers a level chart, in fact an extremely large 4-sheet centre-fold. This sets out all their materials against their 6 levels. Unfortunately, these are not defined so we can not tell how Beginner/Elementary/Pre-Intermediate/Intermediate/Post-Intermediate/Advanced are all distinguished from each other.

Newincen takes students, in three stages, from beginner to intermediate level.

Function in its Book 1, takes students with about 150 hours of English behind them, (pre-intermediate on the chart) and Book 2 takes them on to a level suitable for students preparing for the Cambridge Proficiency examination, which, in their chart, corresponds to their post-intermediate level.

OUP

They provide no chart at all. Privately, I was told at OUP by a senior editor that they did not want to narrowly specify levels as their experience showed that what served at one level in, say Uruguay, would serve at a different level in, say, Spain. Whilst not providing a chart, they do make use of level-labels, throughout the catalogue, but there is no explanation of these in an introductory section, in the absence of a chart. For the adult courses the following terms are used:

Beginners/Pre-intermediate/Intermediate/Intermediate/Post-intermediate/Advanced.

Access takes students from Beginner to Post-intermediate, in 4 stages.

Stream (1984 catalogue) takes students from Beginner to Intermediate, in 3 stages (though a later one has since been added).

Quartet, an Intermediate course, in 2 stages, describes their Book 2, as suitable for students at upper-intermediate level. It is not made clear whether upper-intermediate is equivalent to post-intermediate level, or is something else altogether.

Network is a three-part course for Beginners up to Intermediate level.

Engforad, also in three parts, takes students from beginner to intermediate.

There is no indication in any of the text-descriptions, under these labels, of standards, word-lists or Council of Europe Waystage/Threshold guidelines in order to guage OUP's levels.

The following table, Table 3, sets out the levels used in the course-descriptions and what specifications, if any, the catalogues use to identify these. And from this it can be seen that only CUP and Collins give a clear guide on what each of their levels is related to: CUP relates every level to about 100 class-hours while Collins relates their levels (in particular the first 6) to the grading-scheme they use for their readers, which is based on word-lists, word-formation guides and structure-lists. Thus, Beginners with 300 words differs from their Elementary with 600, and so on.

Table 3 Provision of Levels and Charts

	Chart of Levels	No. of poss. Levels	Levels used in these c.s.	Levels specified	Levels specified with reference to a guide/ chart
CUP	Yes	7	1-4	Yes	Each level=100 hours 4th level=Camb. F. Cert
CAS	Yes	4	1-4	1,2,4	1=Waystage; 2=Threshold; 4=Camb. F. Certificate
COL	Yes	8	2-5	1-6	Grading scheme based on word-lists and so on.
HEIN	Yes	6	1-5	3,4,5	3 & 4 = Threshold; 5 = (Up to) Camb. F.C.
LON	No	5	1-4	Several	With reference to Way-stage, Threshold & Camb. F. Certificate
MAC	No	4	1-4	3,4	Camb. F. Certificate
NEL	Yes	6	1-5	3-5	Number of hours and Camb. F. Certificate
OUP	No	5/6	1-4/5	No	No

5.1. Level-labels

There is, in fact, a great deal of variation between publishers on how the different labels are applied, and even within one individual catalogue, the labels can be variously applied to the different courses there. Where the catalogue does not itself offer a chart or table or guide, it is even more difficult for the reader to interpret the labels. One area of confusion, in particular, seems to be with the category covered by terms like Beginner, Elementary, or Beginner/Elementary.

CUP group Beginners of all kinds in their category, Beginner/Elementary.

CAS uses the term Elementary only, in its chart.

OUP uses the term Elementary, only for its non-adult courses. Adults, however, are Beginners.

COL, HEIN, LON, MAC and NEL use both categories, Beginner and Elementary.

How the terms are actually applied, though,also varies quite a bit.

CAS describes Book 1 of Ontheway, the Elementary stage, as equivalent to Waystage.

LON's Mainline, however, equates their Beginners stage to Waystage and their Elementary stage to Threshold. Confusingly, though, their Kernel 1 (for Beginners) is not similarly equated to Waystage; Kernel 2 (for pre-intermediate) is.

Since the specifications of Waystage and Threshold are not given by either Cassell or Longman, it is to be hoped that prospective customers are already familiar with these criteria, for, certainly in the description for the Longman courses, there is some inconsistency in how these are used:

Waystage = Beginners (Longman's Mainline)
= Elementary (Cassell's Ontheway)
= Pre-intermediate (Longman's Kernel 2)

Actually, Kernel 2 claims to be for pre-intermediate students and it will take students -

up to Waystage

Does this therefore mean that pre-intermediate here is actually below Beginner (i.e. Waystage) for Mainline, and below Cassell's Elementary? Similarly, Kernel 3 is for intermediate students and is designed

to reach the Threshold level

- which, for Mainline Beginners B, is described as the Elementary level. It can therefore be very confusing, even where there is a semblance of a guide, using the Council of Europe's Waystage and Threshold guidelines.

Again, at the upper levels, you can be engaged in Cambridge First Certificate Work

at Intermediate level	(e.g. Longman's Strategies)
at Upper-Intermediate	(CUP's Meanword)
at Post-Intermediate	(Heinemann's Mainco)
at Advanced level	(Cassell's Foundeng)

In short, the labels are unreliable, with or without a guideline of the kind mentioned. As the examples from Longman show, even within a single catalogue, and even with some sort of specification, like the Council of Europe's Waystage and Threshold levels to relate levels to, there is no consistency of use and, across catalogues, the differences are even more striking.

Frechette in his survey of French textbooks found the same difficulty in interpreting the labels used by the different authors:

> In presenting us with (an) array of grades and level indicators, authors do not appear to know or be sure of their classification, which can be rather confusing to the person about to select a textbook. This situation seems to call for the profession to initiate a serious study of existing texts to seek and establish variable criteria (depending on different goals sought) for the appropriate classification of each text. The scope of the textbooks should probably be defined and a suggested scale should be developed for rating them. (14)

5.2. Level Progression.

How the levels are ranked, one above the other, or how many stages are involved in the progression, is also very confusing. The catalogue may indicate, by means of a chart or diagrams or headings, how progress is to be made, from one level to the next, and yet there may be, introduced into the course-description of a particular course, some additional term not previously indicated, in their chart/list/table of levels. How differently the catalogues indicate progress between levels can be shown here in Table 4.

Table 4 Level Progression

	Beg/ Elem	Beginners	Elementary	Lower-Interm. Pre-Interm.	Intermediate	Upper-Intermediate	Post Intermediate/ Advanced
CUP	✓			Lower-Inter	✓	✓	Advanced + * Proficiency
CAS		* ✓	✓	Pre-Inter	✓		Advanced
COL			✓	Lower-Inter	✓	✓	First Cert + Proficiency * + Advanced (= 3)
HEIN			✓	Lower-Inter	✓	Up to Camb. First Cert.	* Advanced
LON			✓	Pre-Inter	Up to Camb. First. Cert.		Post Intermed/Post F. Cert. + Advanced = (2)
MAC			✓		✓	Higher Intermed.	
NEL			✓	Pre-Inter	✓		Post-Intermed. + * Advanced = (2)
OUP			* ✓	Pre-Inter	✓		Post-Intermed. + * Advanced

* Used for materials other than the courses studied here.

Where there are charts, as in Cassell's catalogue, it is interesting though confusing, that the text introduces additional level-labels. For example, there is no way of telling whether lower-intermediate students (Foundeng 3) fit between their chart's Pre-intermediate and Intermediate levels, or within one of them. Similarly, Heinemann introduce the label, pre-intermediate, into the text for Mainco's Exchanges, but this is not a label in their chart, where they have Beginner, Elementary and Lower Intermediate all before Intermediate.

What is therefore not clear is whether pre-intermediate refers to any students before the intermediate band, or only to those classed as lower-intermediate. OUP does something similar by introducing the term Post-intermediate in Access and Upper-intermediate in Quartet without giving any indication on how to apply them: whether, for example to equate upper- and post-intermediate levels or fit upper-intermediate between intermediate and post-intermediate.

5.3 Summary

There is considerable variation between publishers in how to interpret labels like elementary, intermediate and advanced. Even within one catalogue, the same terms can be variously applied to different courses. Furthermore there is inconsistency in how the different catalogues indicate the progression from one level to the other.

5.4 Recommendations

The provision of chart-tables, as well as some definition or explanation of terms and how these levels are linked together, is definitely to be recommended to publishers, as, in their absence, there is a great deal of confusion and inconsistency. Frechette's recommendations to the profession might well be the starting-point. In fact, one of OUP's senior editors, I have been given to understand, is

engaged on such a study of levels and markets, and it is to be hoped that he might come forward with some suggestions acceptable not just to his own firm, OUP, but to the EFL profession as a whole.

6. Authors and Editors

Writers of successful novels soon become household names and their next book has virtually guaranteed sales. One would think publishers would fall over themselves to promote their famous names. This does not appear to be at all the case with writers of textbooks, not at any rate with the writers of successful EFL textbooks, in this country. In America, according to Robert Bierstedt:

> Considerable pressure is exerted by the publisher to enlist the services of authors who..have a favourable or influential position in the market, and this, rather than the possibly superior competence of academicians with less prestigious affiliations, may determine the selection...At the stage of initial decision, therefore, economic factors of a rather simple kind may be found to be operating in the selection of the writers of texts. (15)

In this country, according to the publishers whom I visited, authors of their major courses are generally solicited, too, but not because of their favourable or influential position in the market. EFL teachers (perhaps contacted through the company's sales force) or writers in the EFL field known to be interested in or researching on a particular aspect (eg communicative activities or notional/functional syllabuses) could be approached to produce a book or course for the company, if it had been decided that there was, in fact, a market need and there were sufficient funds for this major new investment. Authors were selected, I was told, mainly for competence in their field, and it was all the better if the author were well-known.

While another American, C.Allen Tucker, feels that

> the question of an author's competence is largely answered through an examination of his product, the textbook...(and)... the name of a highly esteemed author is of little value on the jacket of a book that appears to be unsuitable (16) -

- it could be argued that knowing an author's reputation and previous work is bound to weigh with someone browsing through the catalogues; if the author is respected, and is a recognised authority in the field, one is disposed to making a favourable assessment (though sampling the book may bring disappointment), and if the author is known as someone with rather unsound opinions, one would be inclined to scrutinise the course very carefully.

One comforting piece of information about an author is knowing that he, too, is an EFL teacher who is aware of the learning problems in this particular field. So the more experience we know he has, of this area, the more reliance we feel we can place on his material.

O'Neill, the author of Longman's best-selling series, Kernel, describes how he and other authors began:

> ...all the different kinds of materials teachers write or assemble in direct response to the needs of the class....are an essential part of the process through which new textbooks and published materials get written. It is a process that often begins with a nibble which becomes a bite and then a gulp. At first the user of a textbook -- the teacher -- becomes dissatisfied with some aspect of it and replaces parts of it with his or her own material.....
> Gradually..more and more of the published textbook is abandonned and replaced by materials the teacher devises or finds elsewhere and regards as more suitable or relevant. This is how I started writing textbooks.
> Sometimes, of course the process is more radical and less gradual.
> A teacher or group of teachers set out to create what is in essence a new textbook because nothing on the market seems suitable. (17)

When an author, like O'Neill, or a team of authors, has a text to submit to a publisher, it is the publisher's editor who then takes over. And, to some critics, the most important person in producing a textbook is the editor. According to Schramm (18) of all the people involved, publishers, editor, author, adviser(s), production men, designers and salesmen,

> Of all these, by far the most important in text making is the editor

In fact, of course, where a particular company has solicited manuscripts for a course they have in mind, it is often the editor who has selected the author, or team of authors if a series is envisaged.

> ..it is the editor who sees a market where a text or series of texts could usefully and profitably be published and then relies on his own acquaintance, his salesmen's reports, and his advisers' nominations to select the author or team of authors to do the job. (18)

As I learned in my visits to the different publishing companies, these editors do have the responsibility of seeing the manuscript through all the steps involved in the editing, designing and producing the text and it is often the case that the editor will become the series editor, as a great many of the courses run into several volumes, with many components in the course-package. And several editors confirmed Schramm's claim that

> it is an increasingly common pattern...for the editor himself to do the writing, using the author-teacher as an expert adviser (18)

- though this is probably not as widespread in Britain as in the USA.

It could then be argued that when the competence of the course-author(s) is being queried by writers of evaluation articles and checklists, as for example, in the following:

> Have the author's intentions as stated in the preface generally been carried out? (19)
>
> (Can we conclude) that the text is authoritative and that the authors know what they are talking about? (20)
>
> Some authors have not kept pace with recent developments. Their new or revised editions reflect their lack of knowledge. (14)
>
> (Has the author been induced) to lower the level of his exposition and to broaden its appeal...if the author lacks publishing alternatives he may be inclined to accede to this inducement...and thus alter the character of his work in order to conform to a textbook formula. (15)

- perhaps the checklist-writers and authors of evaluation articles should be directing

more of their attention to the editor of the textbook or series, which is what Schramm, for one, suggests (18), as he poses a series of questions that are more often asked of authors than editors:

> Who are the editors?...
> What is their professional experience and educational ideology? How many of them have taught in the kind of school or classroom for which they are editing texts?.....
> What concept have they of what should happen in a classroom and what part the textbook should play in classroom activities?
> What kind of help do they think a text should give a teacher, and to what extent do they think it should control his teaching of the subject?
> What qualities are the editors selected for?...
> What kind of training and experience and educational viewpoints are valued by the publishers?..
> What are their concepts of the role of the editor?
> What do they regard as their rights and responsibilities in making texts?
> Where does the work of the author end; where does theirs begin? What do they think is their responsibility for subject matter? What do they regard as their part in shaping the kind of teaching that goes on in the classroom? (18)

Perhaps it is because the various publishing companies place so much more responsibility on their editors than their authors, in the textbook market, for the book's success, that, in general, there is so little space devoted in the catalogues to the authors themselves.

CUP

Cambeng is practically unique among the 23 courses examined in having a whole paragraph devoted to the authors. The last paragraph of the course-description tell us that the course

> is written by 2 highly experienced and imaginative authors

and

> Both of these well-known authors have extensive teaching experience with adult learners. Michael Swan is the author of many successful books in the Cambridge ELT list, and Catherine Walter's Authentic Reading forms an important part of Cambridge's innovative First Certificate and reading material.

No other course offers this amount of information on their authors, many of whom might be thought better-known.

In their other adult course, Meanword, nothing is said of their three authors or their experience, except, incidentally, in a quoted review that

> the course is systematic and thorough, and...successfully realises the author's intentions of integrating grammar and communication.

CAS

No information at all is offered about the two authors of Ontheway. One of Cassell's major writers, Joanna Gray, (author or co-author of 9 of their listed books) gets a mention in the description for Book 1 of the Foundeng series --

> and all the materials reflect the active and continuing work of the author in the classroom

But none of the other authors in the series (5, in addition to Ms Gray), gets a mention.

COL

The last paragraph of its text in Express, about one-sixth of its total text, is devoted to its author, Geoffrey Broughton:

> the author of a number of well-known English Language textbooks. He has worked at the London Institute of Education, and until recently was director of Eaton Hall International.

Although the information may not be quite what prospective customers might want to learn, Collins does stand out, like CUP with Cambeng at least, in comparison with other publishers, in giving out personal details about several of their authors.

HEIN

While neither of the Adult courses in the catalogue offers any information on their authors, two of whom are well-known and prolific contributors in the EFL field (John Milne being, in fact, a series editor for Heinemann), Heinemann does occasionally refer, obliquely, to some of their authors, as for example, in their Junior course, Snap:

> written by a highly experienced team of primary English language teachers

LON

In describing Kernel 2, the catalogue promotes

> the unique writing talent of Robert O'Neill

Given that there are over a dozen courses for children and adults listed in the catalogue, with several dozen authors and co-authors involved including very well-established names like L.G. Alexander, who has 17 entries in the index and is solo-author of three of their major courses, for Longman to single out O'Neill is unusual, since Longman has not written up any of their other authors, no matter how well-known, or however many courses he has on their lists.

Indeed, it seems generally the case with Longman that the author is squeezed out of the credits. Challenges, for example, is described as

> a co-production by Longman, the BBC and the Institut fur Film und Bild

- and the authors including Professor Chris Candlin of Lancaster University, well-known for his writing on EFL methodology, and Brian Abbs, well-known for courses like Strategies, are, neither of them, mentioned at all.

Similarly, Follow Me (authored by Alexander) is described as a multi-media project developed by a consortium of TV stations in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, the Council of Europe, the BBC and Longman. The author himself is omitted.

MAC and NEL do not single out their authors.

OUP

In the course-description for Quartet, one of the three authors, Alan Maley, is singled out under the heading - Highly acclaimed.. a reference to the book, not the author himself

> Quartet Teacher Books feature Alan Maley's much-praised introduction which brings...

No other course in their catalogue highlights any other author, even though Network, for example, has the well-known EFL writers Ronald Mackin and Peter Strevens.

6.1 Summary

It is difficult to see the whys and wherefors. Longman singles out one of their successful authors and virtually ignores all the rest; OUP does not single out the authors of their trend-setting and highly-regarded course, Streamline, but does promote, briefly, Alan Maley, co-author of a smaller project, Quartet.

It might be argued that publishers are unlikely to promote an author who opts to write for different publishing firms. Professor Peter Strevens for example, co-author of OUP's Network is also a series-editor with both CUP and Cassell OUP's Streamline authors, Bernard Hartley and Peter Viney, are also published in Nelson and the man behind Longman's Strategies series Brian Abbs, is published with OUP too.

But this can not be the case as a promoted author like Longman's O'Neill has a refresher course published with OUP and Collins' Geoffrey Broughton has also published with Longman.

In evaluating a product, it makes sense, one would think, to know something of the qualifications and expertise of the man or men behind it all. While Tucker (16) argues that the product speaks for the author's competence, and indeed the book should be accepted on its own merit, nevertheless, in cases where the books are not available to speak for themselves and all that is available is a catalogue description of them, the catalogue should do the speaking for the author. Indeed, where publishers have authors on their lists, with a great deal of experience in their field, or very well-known and highly respected for their academic contributions to EFL, as is the case with OUP's Mackin and

Strevens, or Longman's Candlin, or very prolific and, commercially, successful EFL course-writers like Longman's Alexander and Abbs, it does not make sense for the catalogue not to build on all their expertise.

6.2 Recommendations

As CUP has done, in the case of Cambeng, publishers should provide catalogue readers with some basic information on the author's background, their qualifications and expertise in the EFL field. It should not matter that the authors are not well-known as lecturers or writers on EFL methodology, as long as they have experience in the EFL classroom, and it would be extremely helpful to EFL teachers around the globe, to know where. It makes a difference after all, if all the experience was gained in UK, with visitors or immigrants to the country, and none or very little, say, outside of Europe.

And if publishers could provide a line or two on the qualifications and experience of their EFL editors, all the better.

7. Reviews

Similarly, with reviews, publishers do not seem to exploit their potential to the full. And considering that catalogues are regarded as being in the business of advertising and promoting their books and courses, it is surprising that they make scant use of the favourable reviews that materials receive. One can hardly imagine the West End play or latest Vauxhall motor, that took no notice at all of favourable press criticism and made no use of it in promoting their productions. Yet it happens all the time with EFL courses.

It could be argued that if it is not possible to provide reviews for all the books in the catalogue (as it probably is not), it is better not to show up those which did not get reviewed or which received only poor reviews, against those which did receive good reviews, and publish no reviews at all, good or bad. But this is not the case either. None of

these publishers have refused to use quotes, altogether. However, considering that EFL catalogues, like any other catalogues, are in the business of advertising their wares -

> leaflets from publishers..are intended as advertisements. (9)

- it does seem surprising that they do not always use quotes that endorse their products, and if publishers have a policy on using reviews, it does not always appear to be a consistent one.

Naturally, it is only feasible to quote from reviews if there have been reviews, but in several cases, the opportunity to quote favourable reports seems to have been missed. For example, Longman makes no use of a positive review in the ELT Journal no.36, on their Strategies course and OUP similarly does not quote from the favourable review in number 37 of the same journal, written for Quartet.

If as Van Els writes

> the information provided by authors and publishers usually leaves much to be desired

- then surely the same cannot be said of the writers of these reviews which are found, for the most part, in academic journals and the Times Educational Supplement?

But reviews are not without their critics. Pfister and Rada (19) evaluating 26 textbooks sought information from reviews but found this to be patchy, for, in the first place, only 8 of their short-listed 26 textbooks had been reviewed, and reading what reviews were available

> left the writers bewildered and with no clear-cut conclusions as to the relative worth of each book. At least one of the books had merited diametrically opposed value judgements (19)

- and other writers like Van Els recount similar experiences.

The following criticisms emerge as those that are generally levelled at reviews:

(a) They are often too brief and superficial to offer much real information;

(b) Because they are written by a variety of writers, who might sign their reviews, but not offer their qualifications for this role, and who use a variety of standards to judge by, the reviews can be of variable quality, subjective and full of value judgements;

(c) It has not been possible so far to make reviews more reliable, by being made more objective through standardising criteria and co-ordinating frames of reference.

However, not all reviews can be considered as unreliable sources of information. If the review on the one hand provides pertinent information and on the other, sets up an explicit frame of references so that value judgements can be interpreted, then the reader should be able to rely on its information in evaluating the book he is considering. The catalogues vary in how they made use of review material.

CUP

The company probably had not time to collect reviews for its new Cambeng course before producing their 1984 catalogue, used here, though they do promote its well-known authors. (Interestingly, however, their new 1985 catalogue does include a review, one from the Times Educational Supplement).

Meanword includes a quote from the Times Educational Supplement that promotes the first part of the course, the second part not having been published at that time.

CAS

There is nothing for their Ontheway course, but at the beginning of the description for Exploring English, Book 3 in their Foundeng series, there is a short quote from ARELS Journal:

> A very thorough basic structural course book

COL

There are no reviews for Express, though Collins do promote their author; elsewhere in their catalogue they do print reviews from Journals and the Times Educational Supplement.

HEIN

No reviews are quoted for either of their courses, although the ELT Journal, number 39, devotes over two pages to Mainco and elsewhere in their catalogue Heinemann use quotes from academics.

LON

No reviews are cited here either for their adult courses, though there are several available, for example, for Strategies, like that in the ELT Journal number 36, and for Challenges, in ELT Journal 37.

MAC

None are used.

NEL

Newincen begins with a quote from ELT:

> A straightforward course which manages to combine structural and communicative approaches effectively. The Student's Book is very attractively presented.

- and though there are no reviews quoted for their Function course, throughout the catalogue there are a dozen reviews quoted.

OUP

No use is made of reviews at all in their catalogue although both Streamline and Quartet have received good reviews in the ELT Journal; Quartet even mentions this indirectly, describing the course as "highly acclaimed" and its introduction as "much-praised".

7.1 Summary

How quotations are used in the catalogue, both how infrequently and at times, inconsistently, can be seen from the above. It can also be seen from the quotations used, how slight these appear, something which has disturbed some critics of review material. On the other hand, it can be argued that entire reviews such as the 2-page review of Heinemann's

Mainco course and others of similar length for OUP courses, could not be quoted in full.

But inconsistency of use is a problem: sometimes the catalogue while not altogether ignoring reviews (as the catalogue might elsewhere be using some for other books or courses) appears to be ignoring useful reviews for these courses.

7.2 Recommendations

It should be recommended to both reviewers and publishers using reviews that the public would welcome reviews which contain pertinent data rather than subjective impressions and if there were a certain objectivity that reviewers could achieve, through agreeing standardised criteria and frames of reference, perhaps both publishers and readers would feel happier about using them.

8. Trialling

A different kind of review takes place when evaluating courses and textbooks before they come on the market, making a formative rather than (or in addition to) a later summative evaluation, such as a review, by trialling them first in schools and colleges.

However, this does not often take place. Eric Broudy (1) cites testimony before a House sub-committee in 1971, that 99% of America's teaching materials -

> were never systematically tried out to see if learning resulted. And of the then current 60 best-selling textbooks, less than 10% were tested before publication.

Professor Christopher Brumfit echoes this:

> More than one big name in the business has told me that he simply types and sends his manuscript to his publisher. Surely, to put a book on the open market implies a moral contract that that book has been cleared of basic faults...books could have basic procedural faults eliminated by trial in one or two classes. (21)

Similarly, Candlin and Breen evaluating EFL teaching materials want answers to questions like:

> Are the materials sensitive to the teaching situation in which they are to be used;
> Have the materials been learner-tested;
> Have they been evaluated by these learners who use them? (22)

Advocates of trialling would agree with Stenhouse (23) that a course or

> a curriculum, like the recipe for a dish, is first imagined as a possibility, then the subject of an experiment. The recipe offered publicly is in a sense a report on the experiment.

Writers like Jack C. Richards (24) and Van Els (9) suggest how these trials should be conducted, recommending, among other things, the use of interviews and questionnaires with groups of teachers <u>and</u> learners,

> to identify weaknesses in content, sequencing and materials

and

> analysis of test results may be used to identify whether the content and methodology are consistent with the curriculum and appropriate to the objectives and the learners. (24)

And Richards quotes researchers Pfannkuche et al., who emphasise that a really detailed, comprehensive formative evaluation could take "a period of years".

Time, however, is what publishers feel they cannot afford to spend, on such extensive trialling. Not only, goes the argument, could they thereby lose their advantage in the race to be first in the market with, say, the first communicative course, with less scrupulous publishers leaping in with untried materials, while they are still at the <u>testing stage</u>; the testing <u>itself</u> is extremely epensive. It is claimed that

> to prepare prototype materials, monitor the test, and then make revisions, all of which delay publication, would double the price of the books. (1)

The counter-argument, put by a school-division publisher and quoted by Broudy is that -

> better materials and better-selling materials result from extensive testing and validation..Publishers must not keep on reminding people of how expensive it is to test and how we can't afford it...We must test as an integral part of our materials creation, and we shouldn't complain about it. It's really our obligation. (1)

And according to Alexander Platt, vice-president of Grolier Education Corporation, quoted by Broudy,

> Publishers should do something because they have a social obligation to produce products which will do what we say they will do and because the more valid a product, the more likely it is to sell. (1)

This social obligation and Brumfit's moral contract would seem to make a strong case for getting -

> a publishers' agreement that no manuscript will be looked at without a detailed description being provided of class trials and an indication of the modifications which have been made as a result of such trial. (21)

But publishers, privately, have offered me a variety of reasons, other than time and expense, why little testing is done.

(a) Most books and courses are only extensions or improvements of already widely-used materials;

(b) There is already sufficient feed-back from users;

(c) Schools and colleges are sometimes reluctant to commit students to trying out innovative/experimental materials and parents too object to their children being used as guinea pigs;

(d) There are difficulties evaluating test results;

(e) Reports from individual teachers and schools or institutes are impressionistic - (I find it impossible to work with this textbook), and small-scale testing is discouraged as not being scientifically valid.

Another criticism is that

> most field-testing has been concerned with the classroom manageability of a product, rather than its validity...Students and teachers are asked where in the material they encountered difficulties or were confused, and the materials are revised on the basis of the reports (1)

- while the two major issues of the content itself - Are the materials sensitive to situation? and Does any learning take place at all? are seemingly ignored.

It is interesting to compare the different publishers in this survey, as viewed from the information, or lack of it, in the catalogues, on trialling before publication.

CUP

Cambeng, we read

> has been thoroughly tested in a wide range of teaching situations throughout the world before publication

and

> been extensively piloted throughout the world.

Where exactly in the world is not specified, and considering that another claim made of the course is that it -

> is specially designed for adults and takes account of their needs and interests

- one wonders how all the diverse adults around the globe can equally benefit from a course of this kind.

Candlin and Breen would answer:

> Many current materials seem to give the impression of ideal usefulness and applicability for any learner -- at some assumed level of proficiency -- in any place in the world. Such materials are not so much ideal as idealised; they do not take account of the situation.... In fact, there can be no such thing as both ideal and universally applicable language materials. (22)

CUP's other adult course Meanword has been

> extensively tested and revised

- but where, why and by whom is not given.

CAS

There is no information about trials, tests or pilot schemes for either of their courses.

COL

There is no mention here either of any piloting, nor is there any

mention of pilot scheme or trialling with their school course, Time for English, which I know was extensively tried out in Spain.

HEIN

There is no mention of trials for their two adult courses, though in the text for Snap, their school course, we learn that it has been

> tested in schools around the world

LON

Longman also plays down, it seems, any trialling that has taken place. Tucked away, on an introductory page to its series Roads to English, of which Journeys is the last, we read:

> The Longman Roads to English courses have all been the results of much research into the needs of students and teachers at each level

Nowhere in the catalogue is there any description of how or where this research or trialling was carried out.

MAC

No information is offered on any possible trials for the ACE course, but in the text for Conteng., we read -

> Over 10,000 students took part in the trials of the course material

Informally, at Macmillan's I learned that the publishers themselves had not initiated these trials and would not normally initiate trials, relying on a combination of author-editor experience instead.

NEL

There is no information on their two adult courses, in contrast to their Primary Course Now for English which

> was written with the aid of an international group of consultants and takes account of the requirements of teaching English at primary level in many countries throughout the world.

As with the CUP course for adults, this course for primary pupils, with its

> impression of ideal usefulness and applicability for any learner..at his level of proficiency..

would not meet with Candlin and Breen's approval, as there is similarly no specific country or group of learners for whom this course was tailor-made.

The catalogue reader must also wonder why, if there were similar trials and consultations for its adult courses, these have not been written up, or alternatively, if no such consultations took place for these courses, what reason can be given.

OUP

Nowhere in their catalogue is there any mention of trialling of any courses.

8.1 Summary

It could be that publishers have chosen methods, other than expensive trialling or piloting, for evaluating their new courses.

One very strong voice arguing against trialling is that of Macdonald-Ross:

> There is a widespread belief among instructional psychologists that the only way to get valid information about the quality of curricular materials is to try the materials out, in some more or less organised way, on the students they were meant for. (25)

Macdonald-Ross does not believe that it is necessary and sufficient to show the merits and defects of instructional materials in student outcome.

> The equation of quality with attainment of objectives is unsound in two ways: it is unsound conceptually, and it is unworkable in practice... Furthermore the equation rests absolutely on a strong version of the case for behavioural objectives, which has now been substantially demolished. (25)

And instead of expensive and time-consuming developmental testing, formative evaluation, which

> rarely gives any insights that a skilled analyst could not have predicted

- he recommends concentrating on the problem-solving techniques of individual students as well as "expert criticism of the text itself".

> The systematic and intelligent analysis of texts ought to be one of the central procedures of curriculum development: it is fast and relatively cheap, and if done by an expert analyst it has a creative potential that formative testing lacks. (25)

It would appear, therefore, that the majority of these courses were not put to the test in

extensive trialling throughout the world

- the publishers preferring, as indeed they admitted informally to me, to rely on a combination of their experts, the authors and editors, on the one hand, and feedback from teachers and salesmen in the field on the other.

8.2 Recommendations

However the materials were evaluated, by trialling or through consultation with experts, it would be of interest to the readers to know that this was done, and how it was done: how randomly selected, for example, were the groups around the world; how were the experts themselves selected; and how long were the materials in this trialling/formative stage before being brought on to the market. If the publishers feel there is no place for this in the catalogue (despite present mention of trialling and expert consultants) what justification do they offer?

9. Date: New, Old, Revised Materials.

When these formative evaluations are over and the course published, there will be other evaluations, to settle such questions as, for example -

> How long should the course stay on the list?
> Is it out-of-date, out of tune with current practice and methodology?
> Has it outlived its usefulness, or can it be revised and revamped?

Although none of the courses here (apart from the very new ones) make a point of giving their date of issue, it is obvious in some cases that there have been revisions, if not a major revamping of the entire course. Others appear to have survived on the list for decades with minimal modification. How or why the revisions and additions have been made is rarely explained.

CUP

Their Cambeng course is a new course: Book 1 came out in 1984; Book 2 being planned for 1985, Book 3 for 1986 and Book 4 for 1987.

Like many courses involving several stages (for example, Collin's Express, Longman's Strategies and OUP's Streamline), this course is being produced piecemeal, the last part not due till several years after publication of the first book.

The publisher's argument is that with such an enormous investment going into producing a new course, it makes sense to spread it over several years. To colleges and schools, however, anxious to use the whole package, this piecemeal production can be very frustrating as well as more expensive than buying an already complete package. Broudy (1) cites the case of Holt's Urban Social Studies

> brought out in haste to take advantage of the newly discovered disadvantaged market. Rushing to be first, they published it piece-meal, a book a year. The teachers were impressed but wanted more than one book, and by the time the third volume was out, no one cared anymore.

Rather reminiscent of what happened with programmed learning materials, some years later.

But it does bring into question CUP's claim that the course

> has been thoroughly tested in a wide range of teaching situations throughout the world before publication.

If the course, all four stages of it, was so thoroughly tested out in, say 1983, for publication in early 1984, of Book 1, why does it take until 1987 for Book 4 to be ready?

Meanword is similarly described as a

> major new two-year course for intermediate and upper-intermediate students

- and carries a heading Meanings into Words is new and different.

The first part of the course appeared in February 1983 (the previous year) and the second, a year later in January 1984, so that it can justifiably claim in the 1984 catalogue to be new.

CAS

Ontheway is headlined as NEW and the word new also appears in the sub-heading. The course was introduced in September 1984; Ontheway, Book 3 is due in June 1985 we are told, so the course is new.

There are no dates in the catalogue for Foundeng, but from the microfiche giving price information and so on, it can be learnt that it first appeared in 1979 (Book 3, first), Starting English, Book 1 arrived in 1981, Book 2 in April 1982, and Book 4 in January 1983. So, since the course was completed within a year of this catalogue, it could justifiably call itself new too, but the word is not used.

COL

The page devoted to Express in the catalogue nowhere bills the course as new or the latest, the only references being to publication dates, such as early 1985 for Book 1 and

> Stage Two is currently in preparation

The catalogue does have a large two-page spread at the very beginning showing their new titles, one page listing titles, the other showing an illustration of their covers. But no emphasis is given to their newness.

HEIN

Mainco, has been, similarly, produced piecemeal, between August 1982 and February 1984, though this catalogue does not give that information. What we are told is that Encounters and Exchanges (Books 1 and 2) are NOW WITH WORKBOOKS and Advances, Book 3, is starred NEW and IN COLOUR. There are no other references to their new-ness.

Contact is described in the text as

> This exciting venture in EFL publishing

but there is no clue to its new-ness or the novelty aspect which makes it exciting. Part 1 came out in June 1977, Part 2 in June 1978, but these dates are not given in the catalogue. The course can therefore hardly be classed as new though the word venture suggests a new development.

LON

Journeys is not described/headlined as new, though, in the catalogue, when it first appeared, this must have been a brand-new course. Under each component list, (for Part 1 and Part 2), there is the line publication in early 1984.

Strategies, as a series, was first launched in 1975, but Opening Strategies billed here as NEW, came out in 1983 (the year before this catalogue, and before their other course, Journeys). Other items such as workbooks or tests are also billed NEW, due out in early 1984.

Kernel's heading draws attention to Kernel Three (1983 was when this part was published) but apart from NEW marking its title, in column 4, on page 3 of a 4-page spread on the Kernel course, there are no other references to its relative new-ness.

The course was seemingly built around Kernel Lessons which came out, originally, in 1971, so overall the course goes back a long way.

Mainline, related to New Concept English which came out in 1974, dates back to 1978. Mainline Progress carries a sub-heading New Edition and there are 3 other references to this new edition which promises -

> Improved visual clarity in the Student's Book with greater pedagogical use of artwork
> Clearer structure focus
> Much more help and guidance..with conversation and composition
> Better contextualisation of language
>
> (my underlining)

Follme has no claims of up-to-date-ness or new-ness. It came out in 1980-1.

Challenges makes no claim either to newness. It first appeared in 1978, and the Teacher's Book in 1982.

Esseng, in its present series, is the latest in umpteen issues and reprints since it was first brought out in the '30s. Eckersley wanted

> to cover the pill of learning with the jam of gaiety

and it has to be said his pill has lasted well. Longman said they had no plans at all to drop it from their list, not as long as it continued to sell well. In the text, we are told that

> the pupils' and Teachers' books, 1 and 2, have rewritten and expanded grammatical sections and the texts and illustrations have been brought up-to-date

In fact, from inside-cover information, we learn that Book 1 is in its new edition of 1971; Book 2 goes back to 1971, and the Teacher's book ot 1972, but books 3 and 4 are still in the 1963 edition.

MAC

ACE goes back quite a way too, to 1971-72, which helps account for its emphasis on audio-visual and oral work.

Conteng dates from 1979-80, although the reference to trials almost makes one feel that it has just been issued.

NEL

Newincen, based on Incentive English of 1979-80, was issued in 1982-83, this edition being New mainly, I was told informally, at Nelson's, in its introduction of colour.

Function came out between 1979-80, but there are no references in the text to dates.

OUP

Access first started appearing in 1974 but now it is headlined as being a NEW EDITION. This includes:

Improved workbooks
new communicative activities..
grammar practice with added exercises
words and phrases with new word-games, re-arranged word-lists
Revised Teacher's Books
with New introduction with more help for the teacher..
New section at the beginning of each chapter...
New word-lists...
New additional notes on the texts and dialogues
New key to the workbook exercises
New alphabetical list of all the words in the book
There are re-recorded cassettes,
The music is new,
the dialogues are even livelier than before...and there are two new books of tests

The key to all this revision would appear to be in their sentence

Now Starting Out and Getting On are better than ever...

Streamline started appearing in 1978 and the last of the series of four books, Directions, appeared this year (1985) but there is absolutely no mention of it at all in this 1984 catalogue.

Quartet features its new Book 2 in a bold heading NEW. It came out at the end of 1983 but absolutely nothing else is said about its newness.

Network offers no information about dates or newness, but it came out between 1980-82.

Engforad, published around the same dates, 1980-81, also does not comment on dates.

9.1 Summary

None of the catalogues makes a point of telling the age of their courses and unless the course is new or recently revised, no reference to date is the rule.

In fact, more than half the courses studied (13 out of 23) were launched before 1980 and several of these -

ACE (Macmillan)
Kernel (Longman)
Esseng (Longman)

- appeared 10 years or more before that, with Esseng first appearing in 1938, but no catalogue actually says so.

Revisions are sometimes made either of part of the course only such as Mainline or Esseng, both from Longman, or of the whole, as in Nelson's Newincen, re-issued with colour, and in OUP's Access.

Few courses actually spell out what the revisions are, Mainline and Access being exceptions for they do spell out in some detail what has been revised or improved.

However, though Longman's Mainline Progress is sub-titled New Edition, and its revisions and improvements are spelt out, this new edition in fact goes back to 1981 for Progress A and 1982 for Progress B.

6 other courses:

Cassell's Foundeng

Longman's Strategies

Follow Me

Challenges

OUP's Network

English for Adults

- go back to that period and none of them is featured as new. So how new is new?

This would appear to be within the previous year, the year before the catalogue's issue. For there is considerable variety in how the different publishers apply, or do not apply, the term. Of 5 courses which appeared in 1983-84, for example,

CUP's Cambeng

Cassell's Ontheway

Collins' Express

Heinemann's Mainco

Longman's Journeys

curiously neither Collins' Express nor Longman's Journeys has been featured in their catalogue; on the pages describing the course, there is no mention of newness in the headings, titling or text of either.

Similarly, for the same period, 1983-84, 4 courses added a new stage/course-book.

Cassell's Thinking English, (Book 4)

Longman's Opening Strategies (Alternative Book 1)

Kernel Three

OUP's Quartet 2

and Cassell alone does not feature its new addition.

However, while OUP does draw attention to its new Quartet Book 2, and its new, revised Access, strangely, it makes no mention at all of its forthcoming (now published) Book 4 of Streamlines, Directions. By contrast, CUP advertises ahead its future components to the year 1987.

It might also strike catalogue-readers as odd, as it did at first strike me, that a firm produces new courses, as does Longman with Journeys and new components for Strategies, while still retaining on its list titles that go back nearly 50 years. Brammer, in describing the pyramiding of costs facing today's publisher, writes;

> to keep in business, he must replace each title every 5-10 years with an entirely new one which will cost him several times as much as the previous one. (26)

The criterion, obviously, is whether the course still sells. Curiously, Mainline, revamped as recently as 1982, is being considered (I was told informally at Longman's) for dropping, as it has been performing disappointingly on the sales side, while Esseng, a course nearly 50

years older, is still being retained, for there are always orders coming in. This example brings up the problem for the publisher, of whether it is economically viable to scrap an unsuccessful course or one with diminishing sales, and commit the enormous sum required for investment in a brand-new course, or go instead for a revision, a revised edition, with minor modifications or a complete revamping, such as Longman had already given Mainline.

According to Broudy (1), because of the uncertainty of the market, determining trends, trends like programmed learning, functional/notional courses, being often a matter of educated guesswork, publishers would prefer not to invest in a new course if there were a reasonable possibility of saving an existing course, by revising what they had. Nelson confirmed this with me. One publisher puts it strongly:

> I would judge that 80% to 90% of our entire capital is aimed at keeping our major product in place -- in revision. (1)

The following Table 5, sets out the life, or as much of it as is known, of each of the 23 courses from their first publication through possible revisions till the present.

Table 5 Age of Course

	When issued First part	Last part	Newness featured	If revised	In what way
Cambeng	1984	1987	Yes	---	----
Meanword	1983	1984	Yes	---	----
Ontheway	1984?	1985	Yes	---	----
Foundeng	1979	1983	No	No	----
Express	1985	1986/7	No	---	----
Mainco	1982	1984	Yes	---	----
Contact	1977	1978	No	No	----
Journeys	1984	1984	No	---	----
Strategies	1975	1983	Very little	No	----
Kernel	1971	1983	Very little	No	----
Mainline	1978	1982 (revised ver)	Yes	Yes	Extensively, both in lang. and art-work.
Follme	1980	1981	No	No	----
Challenges	1978	1982	No	No	----
Esseng.	1938	1972 (revised ver)	No	Often	Re-written, ex-panded & up-dated
ACE	1971	1972?	No	?	----
Conteng.	1979	1980	No	No	----
Newincen.	1979	1983 (revised ver)	No	Yes	Mainly in intro. of colour
Function.	1979	1980	No	No	----
Access	1974	1984 (revised ver)	Yes, a lot	Yes	Additions and revisions overall
Stream.	1978	1985	No	No	----
Quartet	1982	1983	No	No	----
Network	1980	1982	No	No	----
Engforad.	1980	1981	No	No	----

9.2. Recommendations

The age of a course might be of more than passing interest to prospective customers, and it could be construed as misleading the public to represent a course as innovative, an "exciting venture", when no date is given which could show the course in question is, in fact, several years old. It could, therefore, be recommended that the date of the first edition be given as well as the dates of any revised editions, possibly with some reference to how these improved on the original. These references need take up only a line, as for example, "First issued: 1969; revised thoroughly with the addition of colour in all student books and reissued: 1979".

10. Appearance

How old a book really is, can be disguised by giving it a glossy new cover and, inside, new, up-to-date illustrations or the addition of colour. In bringing out their revised versions, publishers, such as Longman and Nelson here, can give old material a completely new look that can often revitalise it.

For example the drab hard-covers of the 1938 Esseng course have gone, along with its dated illustrations, in its place, the revised version looking as smart and up-to-date in its glossy covers as any of its much younger competitors.

Appearance has now become a factor in the evaluation process and is listed on many a checklist.

> Is the text physically attractive and durable? (19)
>
> Does it show quality in editing and publishing (cover, typeface, illustrations etc)? (27)

- and critics also draw attention to this, for example, in reviewing the books:

> Streamline English Departures has immense appeal. At first glance the clear page layout, the photographs of everyday scenes and, above all, the numerous beautifully-executed truly humorous illustrations, often in full colour, compel even the

most hardened recipient of Inspection Copies to flip through the pages. (28).

Connections has the same impressive presentation as Departures which makes the series one of the most visually attractive available anywhere. The design and artwork are superb..(29)

It is interesting then, to turn to the different catalogues and examine how much space the publishers devote to describing (in text or by means of illustration) the appearance and presentation of their courses.

CUP

For both its courses, there are Black and White (B/W) illustrations of outside covers, but in neither case is there any reference to the real colour of the covers. Size is also not mentioned but perhaps may be inferred, at least in the case of Cambeng from the illustration of a sample page. Cambeng also tells us that the Student's Book has

alternate spreads in colour

However, there is no mention of colour for their other course, Meanword nor any mention of the use of photographs, lay-out or drawings.

CAS

Ontheway is described as

a colourful, new communicative course

but there is no indication anywhere else in the text if colourful is here to be taken literally. There are two small B/W illustrations, much reduced in size, of book covers but there is no indication what their real colour is and no other indication of presentation at all.

Foundeng has also only small B/W illustrations of 4 book-covers.

Starting English is described as "attractive in design", but this is not elaborated and there is no other reference to presentation in any of the other descriptions for the three other books in the series.

COL

The two book cover illustrations are prominently displayed, again in B/W, but there are no sample pages and no reference to presentation at all.

HEIN

There are B/W illustrations of covers, cassettes and 5 sample pages, for Mainco, but there is no mention of design or presentation (apart from what can be deduced from the sample pages shown), until the last page, where the last-mentioned item in the description for Advances is

attractive, full-colour format

and the page describing Advances not only stars it as NEW but also gives it the headline IN COLOUR. One would therefore have to assume that the other 2 books in the series are not in colour.

Contact has a B/W illustration of 2 overlapping book covers and 3 cartoon drawings, which we assume are from the series. We are told the Student's Book has

extensively illustrated material

and it is easy to use because of the "clear layout". Perhaps, an accompanying illustration of a sample unit could have been used to enforce this, rather than the cartoons.

LON

Journeys has one illustration of 2 B/W book covers, plus another, smaller reduced B/W illustration of 2 overlapping sample double-page spreads. We are told

the Student's books are illustrated in full colour
-- a striking feature of the course

- and many of the illustrations are

original photographs taken during Operation Drake

Strategies is illustrated, like all the Longman courses, again in B/W mainly with cover-illustrations and one of an overlapping sample double-page.

Opening Strategies' Student's Book is in "full colour" and

> presents the material in visually exciting and highly motivating contexts. The use of photographs throughout ensures that the language is set in an authentic cultural background.

Starting Strategis, by contrast, has no mention of colour or photographs.

Building Strategies mentions only that it has

> an exciting variety of visual material

Developing Strategies' Student's Book is

> fully illustrated in colour

Studying Strategies' Student's Book is

> fully illustrated in colour and in black and white.

Strategies has no mention at all of colour or presentation.

Kernel is illustrated again with B/W pictures of book covers and one barely seen overlapped sample unit.

Kernel One Student's Book is illustrated throughout "in photographic style", but there are no references to colour and no mention in any text about the other books of the series, of design, style or presentation.

Mainline has B/W illustrations of 2 bookcovers and the new edition of Mainline Progress is described as having

> improved visual clarity in the Student's book, with greater pedagogical use of artwork

- but whether this involves colour is not stated. There is no mention in the text about the other books in the series, of artwork or design.

Follme has only B/W illustrations of book covers.

Challenges has a B/W illustration of overlapping covers and a sample double-page but no mention of colour or presentation.

Esseng has neither illustrations nor any mentions of its appearance.

MAC

The only indication of presentation in both the courses is in a B/W illustration of 16 book covers on a following page where both courses have covers included. Otherwise, there is no clue to presentation at all.

NEL

Newincen has a colour illustration of its 3 (overlapping) covers, which rather unfortunately, happen to be mostly white with a narrow colour-band, and the course is described as

> a complete full-colour course

and

> lively full-colour photographs and drawings illustrate the language structures and exercises throughout.

Function has no illustration of the course-material and no text references to layout, photographs or colour.

OUP

Access, in OUP's colour-catalogue, is illustrated with a three-page spread showing the coloured book covers and cassettes to advantage. We are told, among other things, that the "attractive drawings" add enormously to its appeal to students. But apart from that, there is no mention of artwork or general presentation.

Streamline, similarly, is illustrated in full-colour, in a three-page spread, showing the coloured book covers and cassettes and one sample page. Each Student's Book, we are told, has

> attractive full-colour pages

and

> large easy-to-work-with format

Even the workbooks are described with

> every unit clearly laid out
> on a separate page

and there are

> lively attractive illustrations
> and realia

The Teacher's Books have full students' pages interleaved with detailed teaching notes and they are "spirally-bound.. to open out fully" and teaching points are "clearly laid out".

Quartet is shown on a two-page spread with its 4 book covers and cassettes but no sample pages. The text tells us that the course has-

> highly visual authentic and semi-authentic material

which includes plans, maps, photographs, letters, tables, etc. The Teacher's Books provide "clear lesson plans for every unit".

Network is illustrated also in colour with 9 overlapping covers and cassettes, in a small photograph. How colour or presentation features in the course is not mentioned.

Engforad has also a small colour photograph of 9 overlapping book covers, with cassettes, but the text does not mention how colour and presentation feature in this course either.

Summary

According to the American publisher, Mauck Brammer,

> While the continued adoption of a textbook must be based upon its success in doing, exceptionally well, the educational task it was designed for, its initial start depends to a large extent on successful packaging of the content. To secure a favourable examination by a teacher or a rating committeee, a textbook must now be attractive physically as well as educationally. (26)

Perhaps, then, the surprising thing here is that in advertising material such as these EFL catalogues, publishers do not appear to be making the most of their opportunities to show off the attractive features of their courses. The presentation of course-content is regarded as an important factor in the motivation of customers, so this must include catalogue readers too.

> Designers, art editors editors and production experts must co-operate to produce something that is pleasing enough to stimulate the potential customer to examine it with what a schoolman might call buying readiness. (26).

While publishers do seem to be taking this seriously nowadays in their textbooks, they appear to neglect this in their catalogues. In 14 out of 23 cases, the illustrations used are in B/W, a pity since they are intended to depict coloured covers. The usual justification of publishers for showing cover-illustrations, rather than sample-pages, that this helps their product to be identified and recognised, is hardly met here. Not only do the B/W illustrations not show the identifying colours of the covers they concentrate on, but the accompanying text also omits any reference to their colour. In fact, 11 of the courses are described without reference in the text at all, to the use of colour, lay-out or illustrations.

10.2. Recommendations

Surely publishers could provide more representative cover-illustrations, as well as more sample pages, because these, more than any text, reveal the kind of layout and illustrations used in the textbooks. It cannot be argued either that these do not show up well for both in the larger-sized catalogue, CUP's and in the smaller ones like OUP's and Heinemann's (even with very reduced sized sample pages, 2 to half a page) enough can be seen to judge on space and layout, and quality of illustrations, whether these were photographic or drawings.

The following table shows how the 8 catalogues at present use illustration and text to depict how their courses are designed, illustrated and set out.

Table 6 Appearance and Presentation of Courses

	Use of illustration in catalogue	Shows covers & sample pages	Text ref. to colour	Text ref. to Illust. s.	Text ref. to layout	Text ref. to Appearance	Other
Cambeng	Yes, B/W	Both	Student book only	No	No	No	No
Meanword	Yes, B/W	Covers + photos	No	No	No	No	No
Ontheway	Yes, B/W	Covers only	No	No	No	No	No
Foundeng	Yes, B/W	Covers only	No	No	No	1	No
Express	Yes, B/W	Covers only	No	No	No	No	No
Mainco	Yes, B/W	Both	2	No	No	No	No
Contact	Yes, B/W	Covers/ cartoon	No	1	1	No	No
Journeys	Yes, B/W	Both	Student Book only	2	No	No	No
Strategies	Yes, B/W	Both	3	5	No	No	No
Kernel	Yes, B/W	Both	No	1	No	No	No
Mainline	Yes, B/W	Covers only	No	2	No	No	No
Follme	Yes, B/W	Covers only	No	No	No	No	No
Challenges	Yes, B/W	Both	No	No	No	No	No
Esseng.	No	----	No	No	No	No	No
ACE	Yes, B/W)*	Covers only	No	No	No	No	No
Conteng.	Yes, B/W)	Covers only	No	No	No	No	No
Newincen.	Yes, Colour	Covers only	2	2	No	No	No
Function.	No	----	No	No	No	No	No
Access	Yes, Colour	Covers only	No	1	No	No	No
Stream.	Yes, Colour	Both	Student book	1	3	1	spirally-bound
Quartet	Yes, Colour	Covers only	No	No	No	No	No
Network	Yes, Colour	Covers only	No	No	No	No	No
Engforad.	Yes, Colour	Covers only	No	No	No	No	No

* One illustration for both courses.

Content Information

The information we have so far derived from the catalogues, on age-groups, markets, levels and so on, while relevant and of interest, helping persuade us that this or that course is a possibility, it is probably the actual content of the course itself, that is likely to sell the course to us. And the more information the catalogues provide here, the more "pertinent and verifiable data" we acquire, on what the courses can offer, the better our evaluation.

Before examining the content of the courses, described in the course-entries, it should be worthwhile examining what the author and publisher hope their course will achieve.

11. Aims/Objectives; Needs/Motivation.

What the aims and objectives are for the course are sometimes set out, specifically, in, for example, a preface, or the teacher's guide. The obverse of this is the special needs of their intended audience. It is interesting to see whether the course aims to cater for these, and see also what attention it gives to the motivation of the students.

The problem with courses for heterogeneous groups like adult-groups, taking a general course, as distinct from a specialised ESP course, is to avoid being labelled TENOR, Teaching English for No Obvious Reason. For, given the lack of any specific reason, there is bound to be a problem for authors and publishers selecting content for adult-courses.

> Some attempt to gain readers through human interest is common, and there is usually some statement regarding the importance of what is to be read. Arousing a casual interest, however useful in promoting willingness to read, is not at all equivalent to arousing serious purpose. Aims arise when people see things to do which will satisfy significant needs and which they have confidence that they can do. (30).

Keith Morrow who writes EFL materials for CUP, Longman and OUP sees this as a challenge:

> The opportunity is to design a programme which appeals to the learners immediately through its clear relevance to their needs in using the foreign language; the problem is to design

> such a programme when the needs of the learners may not be easily specified or may be extremely varied..(31)

Breen, Candlin and Waters offer a solution:

> that, rather than encourage learners to learn a language in order to communicate, we may encourage learners to communicate in order to develop their own learning. (32)

Choosing topics or themes-semantic areas-to encourage and motivate learners, especially those on a general course, is no easy matter, however.

> Since semantic categories can be had almost for the asking, we would have to be very selective in choosing those that might be of use to our learners, and, as the particular needs of the learners are difficult to establish in a general course, this selection would have to be largely arbitrary and subjective. (33)

But what still gives most concern to EFL teachers and writers is striking a balance between giving their students mastery over enough structures to be able to make communication possible, and giving them activities and tasks which are realistic and motivating to keep them sufficiently interested to pick up the necessary language basics. As Marton suggests:

> a perfect mastery of the whole grammatical system is not at all neccesary for successful communication and .. it is rather more important from a motivational and practical point of view to build for the learner, a basic self-contained system which makes communication possible although it does not guarantee faultlessness. (32)

The trouble is, however, that while it may be sufficient from the learner's point of view to have just a few basic structures to start him off on those basic communicative activities like Greeting, Asking the Way and so on, it is very often forgotten, it seems, that the learner has <u>also</u> to be able to understand all those he is in communication with; he can structure and select his own utterances, but not those of the other speakers. Some courses for beginners take this into account by allocating a fair proportion of their early syllabus to exercises like listening comprehension, encouraging a receptive knowledge, until it can become more activated. Though teaching for receptive communication

skills is not given so much prominence as the active skills -- Greeting, Asking, and so on -- there is no doubt it is essential. Marton equally feels there is no doubt whatsover --

> - that developing successful receptive strategies is much easier and takes less time than the development of productive strategies. For this reason observing the distinction between productive and receptive command would bring much more realism into the stated objectives of foreign-language courses, and any teacher knows that usually these objectives are set too high and are impossible to fulfil. (33).

How the different authors and publishers meet the challenge of discovering needs, encouraging motivation and fulfilling their (stated) aims and objectives is sometimes described, sometimes only hinted at, in the different catalogue-descriptions.

CUP

Their Cambeng course claims it has achieved its aims of providing for the special needs and interests of adults:

> Adults learning English need a course which takes into account their experience of the world and enables them to use their knowledge, feelings... The course must also provide a sound foundation for further progress... The Cambridge English Course achieves these aims...the result is an up-to-date and motivating course for adult learners' needs in the 1980s and beyond.

And if that is not enough, it lists several motivating or encouraging features of the course; that it

> provides activities that adults feel happy with, contains topics, facts and ideas known to interest adults, and often allows students to make choices about their learning.

Meanword does not go into such detail or depth. The word aims is not here. In fact it is not until we reach the last item in the description, a quote from a review, that we discover there was one:

> the course is systematic and thorough, and ... successfully realises the authors' intentions of integrating grammar and communication.

What they do list, however, is their

motivating ideas for free practice and role-play

together with

challenging and interesting listening and reading material throughout.

CAS

Ontheway indirectly suggests its aims:

The dialogues, texts and exercises are designed to give students the opportunity to listen to the natural language and to express themselves with ease.

And to encourage and motivate the students, there are exercises

that promote confidence and communicative ability

Foundeng does not specify aims and objectives either, but Book 3 does provide

numerous stimulating exercises.

COL

Express has no specific aims or objectives given, but the needs of their adult learners are borne in mind:

Subject matter has been chosen for its intrinsic interest to adults

Lessons are deliberately contained within a set number of pages, to generate a sense of achievement and rapid progress.

HEIN

Their Mainco is one of the few to specifically declare their aims. Each section (for the 3 books on the course) has a paragraph on Aims, and these are the same two in each case: one for Communication and one for Language, though the phrasing varies.

Communication: To help students communicate effectively in common everyday situations.

Language: To provide a systematic grounding in the basic forms of English needed for communication.

Listed as Key features of the course are:

Topic material drawn from interesting and varied sources (which) stimulates students to express their own feelings and thoughts in English.

and Innovative communicative activities (that) stimulate free language use.

Contact does not provide aims or any information on adult needs and interests.

LON

Journeys does not offer any aims or objectives and depends on its authentic and international themes to provide

lively and convincing contexts

Strategies has

the communicative needs of the students

as their

priority and promotes their material, contexts, exercises and activities as "highly motivating".

Kernel does not suppy aims or objectives but thoughout the description for its 5 books, it does refer to student needs:

> The variety of language practice is directly related to students' communicative needs.
> The content is immediate and relevant to the students' experience and needs.
>
> Kernel Lessons Intermediate was published to meet demands from teachers for an intensive intermediate or revision and extension course suited to the needs of older and adult students of English.

Mainline is based on the specifications for Waystage and Threshold and follows

the same functional/notional objectives.

Follme does not explain its aims or objectives but we are told that the Teacher's Books

explain the aims of the course.

Challenges offers nothing specific on aims but it apparantly

> stimulates students to use English for communicative tasks which have a direct relation to their own ideas and needs

and

the themes and approach are described as, in all Longman's courses, as "highly motivating".

Esseng has no information on aims or needs.

MAC

Neither of their two courses specifies aims or needs.

NEL

Newincen, we are told,

> follows a structural progression based closely on genuine communicative needs and is designed to teach students to communicate effectively and accurately in speech and writing from the beginning.

Function has nothing on aims and objectives.

OUP

Access does not describe aims or possible student needs, nor does either Streamline or Quartet, though Quartet

> involves learners in a wide range of motivating activities that require them to understand and produce authentic language-

and

> units can be selected in any order to meet the students' particular interests and linguistic needs.

Network offers no information at all on aims or student needs.

Engforad is described in a sub-heading, as

> uniquely suitable for adult students and their particular needs --

but the text does not make clear wherein lies this uniqueness, although we are told that -

> Right from the start the students learn to use lively communicative language that is appropriate to an adult's needs and way of thinking.

How the various courses compare in setting out their aims, and in describing how they cater for the needs, as they see them, of the heterogeneous adult-groups, can be seen from the following table.

Table 7 Aims, Needs and Motivating Features

	Aims/Objectives	Learner-needs	How spelt out	motivating features
Cambeng	to take account of adult needs	adult-needs	in some detail	3/4
Meanword	----	----	indirectly	2
Ontheway	to encourage commun. ability.	----	indirectly	1
Foundeng	----	----	----	1
Express	----	----	----	2
Mainco	To aid commun. & prov. lang. base.	----	in special sections	2
Contact	----	----	----	-
Journeys	----	----	----	1
Strategies	----	commun.needs of students	very little	4/5
Kernel	----	student's comm. needs	in some detail	-
Mainline	C.of Europe's (func/notion)	----	indirectly	-
Follme	----	----	aims to be found in T.bks	-
Challenges	----	students' comm. needs	generally	2/3
Esseng.	----	----	----	-
ACE	----	----	----	1
Conteng.	----	----	----	-
Newincen.	----	genuine comm. needs	----	-
Function.	----	----	----	-
Access	----	----	----	3/4
Stream.	----	----	----	2/3
Quartet	----	----	----	2/3
Network	----	----	----	-
Engforad.	----	adults' needs	generally	2/3

11.1. Summary

There are problems in defining needs and interests for as heterogeneous a market as one which includes both adults and teenagers, and these are compounded when the course is a general one rather than a specialist one, such as an ESP course. Therefore, courses aimed at a mixed market tend not to mention the "special needs or interests" of adults, but rather make a general reference to the motivating/stimulating/challenging/interesting nature of their material (themes, topics,activities) or the linguistic aims and objectives of the course or the "communicative needs" of students.

Courses designed exclusively for adults, such as Cambeng, Express and Engforad can, however, lay more emphasis on the subject-matter and activities being chosen with adult needs and interests specifically in mind.

11.2 Recommendations

Where courses are designed to cater for the needs of a very mixed range of students including both teenagers (whether at secondary school or not) and adults, it could be recommended that the catalogue-descriptions be a little more specific about the kind of content (topics, exercises and so on) that have been selected to cater for this diverse range, or else indicate if there are tips/suggestions/guidelines in the Teacher's book, to show the teacher how to adjust or adapt the materials for these different groups.

12. Method of approach.

What method of approach, what sort of structure or syllabus a course may have, can be directly dependent on how student needs are perceived. Of these 23 courses, only 9 express either an aim or an interest in learner needs and 8 of these 9, representing 6 publishers, express their concern for the students' communicative needs.

With a heterogeneous adult group, in a general course, deciding and defining what these are, will not be as easy as with an ESP class, but, according to Robert O'Neill, Kernel's famous author:

> the assumption that each group is so unique that its needs cannot possibly be met by material developed to meet the needs of another group.. is false.. (there is) the common need to possess enough of the generative equipment of a language to use that language as an independent creative tool. (and) the basic functional needs of one group differ from those of another only in their specific application (17)

- and, elsewhere, he suggests

> not only a core syllabus of functions but also a core syllabus of language structures which can be used to realise them (5)

To this, Johnson would add that

> one fundamental criterion for deciding whether or not a given item should be included in a course is its communicative utiltiy to the student. (34)

If the goal is communicative competence -

> There is agreement.. that communicative competence is an appropriate goal at all levels. (35)

- what appears not to be agreed is how this is to be achieved; what method or approach, structural, notional or functional, we should adopt for our adult group. There are strong views on all sides. Louis Alexander, author of Longman's Follow Me and Mainline courses, backs the Council of Europe's functional/notional approach which

> is here to stay and any course designer writing materials today must be influenced by functional/ notional considerations. Mainline Beginners is an attempt to apply the principles of this approach at zero level (36)

- while Keith Johnson, co-author of CUP's Communicate course, holds the opposite view:

> There is one central and persuasive argument against the use of functional syllabuses at the zero beginner level. It is simply that a functional organisation automatically implies structural disorganisation... a beginners' course may be designed structurally and at the same time incorporate many valuable (communicative) features.. (34)

Apart from those course-writers who hold these strong views on the approach to be used in their course, there are those, especially publishers, who are accused of leaping on the latest band-waggon (be it audio-visual, programmed-learning, notional-functional) to exploit it, in the expectation of wide sales:

> The terms notional-functional and communicative sell. Many an underpaid academic has .. succumbed to attractive offers to lightly work over an audio-lingual or structural course so that it can be published in a new edition bearing a notional-functional or communicative label....
> ..The rise and fall of methods depends upon a variety of factors extrinsic to a method itself and often reflects the influence of fads and fashions, of profit-seekers and promoters, as well as the forces of the intellectual market place. (37)

Ann Raimes is another author who is aware of unscrupulous practice whereby older material is re-worked by authors and publishers conniving to deceive the public into believing that the course has been truly up-dated and re-organised in line with the new methodology:

> Textbooks that divide and sequence the language into grammatical structures deal with the anomaly of "What about real language use?" by turning to functions. They add to the table of contents the functions covered in each chapter and include a few charts or exercises in the body of the text... Some practitioners do not go that far. They just change labels. They incorporate the terminology but not the concepts of the new theories. The 1980 second edition of a book originally published in 1973 retains 20 of the original lessons. Each chapter head, however, now includes a function as well as a grammatical structure as the focus of the chapter...(38).

As Ann Raimes goes on to say:

> The scene before us in our discipline is still one of competing syllabuses, divergent methodologies, contradictory views of our profession, various attempts to deal with change, and innovative theories of second language acquisition, with all of us teachers trying to find our way in Terra Incognita.(38).

Whether the scene is Terra Incognita or the intellectual marketplace of competing syllabuses and divergent methodologies, the case is, as both Jack Richards and Ann Raimes describe, that certain labels such as functional-notional or communicative sell. They advertise today's bandwaggons. But there is all this competition for the market's attention,

because, as various writers, like Littlewood for example, point out, there is

> little firm evidence about the comparative effectiveness of the alternative forms of organisation (39)

- be they structural, functional-notional, topic-based or whatever, and whichever approach is to be adopted will very much depend on the individual teacher's preferences as well as those of the learners. According to Richards:

> the important issues ... are not which method to adopt but how to develop procedures and instructional activities which will enable program objectives to be attained. (37).

In the light of the above, it is interesting to examine the 23 courses seeing how each describes and justifies the chosen method of approach, and what features have been singled out for mention.

CUP

The Cambeng course, we are told,

> offers a combination of extremely varied teaching approaches, together with a carefully constructed integrated syllabus.

What the extremely varied approaches are is not specified; nor is how the syllabus is integrated. In the list of the course-features, we are also told:

> (the course) allows for a range of different learning styles and has a highly varied teaching approach -- systematically integrates grammar, functions, notions, vocabulary and pronunciation through a carefully constructed syllabus

Meanword is first introduced as a course-

> teaching grammar in a communicative context

and the

> syllabus is carefully organised, incorporating functional, notional and grammatical areas.

The review quoted from the Times Educational Supplement also draws attention to this approach --

> the course is systematic and thorough, and.. successfully realises the authors' intentions of integrating grammar and communication

It is rare, in the '80s to see the word grammar; in new courses (as also in EFL articles) the more usual term is structure(s). The course appears to be mainly a grammar-communicative one.

CAS

Ontheway is introduced as

> a colourful, new, communicative course

- and Book 1

corresponds to the Council of Europe's Waystage level, Book 2 to Threshold; while the series as a whole -

> has a notional/functional base.

Foundeng is described in the sub-heading as structurally-based, but the individual books of the series, the first two written by Joanna Gray, the third and fourth by Michael Thorn, with other writers involved in writing the Teacher's Books and the workbooks, are described in different ways. For example, the workbooks are described as being based on the main structural and functional areas covered in the coursebooks.

Book 1 is

> notionally based but backed up with thorough and progressive structural practice.

Book 2 is

> structurally-based but has a strong functional component.

Book 3 uses

> both structural and functional/notional approaches

Book 4 develops

> the student's structural and communicative grasp of the language.

The course would appear to be changing its emphasis, as it proceeds from stage to stage, but the rationale behind this is not altogether clear.

The one review quoted (for Book 3) recommends it as -

> a very thorough basic structural course book.

COL

Express has no mention anywhere, heading, sub-heading or text, of the underlying method or approach. Nor is there any reference to terms like structural, functional/notional or communicative.

HEIN

Mainco is first introduced to us as

> a communicative course (though) to balance this, systematic attention is paid to language form...

However, the main emphasis does seem to be on communication. Although we are told in the account for Book 2 that the major components of the Council of Europe's Threshold Document are included, nowhere in the 4-page spread devoted to the course do the words functional or notional appear. However, in the article on Teaching Adult Beginners, about this course two of the authors, Tom Jupp and John Milne, say:

> the syllabus of the Course would be arranged on a functional/communicative basis... (and) the process of syllabus design was.. one of continually choosing and modifying both forms and functions so that they fit together and represent as useful and as simple a progression for the learner as possible. The final language syllabus consists of one syllabus of transactions and functions and one syllabus of structures and the structural syllabus is generally subservient to the purposes of the functional one. (4)

As described in the catalogue the course is a communicative one.

Contact is described as

> a mainly oral course

but this is not made clear as there is no further reference and no mention of functions or communication.

Lon

Journeys is topic-based. It has

a clear structural approach

while at the

same time developing

> the language skills students need to be able to use English as a means of communication.

Strategies like Cassell's Ontheway varies from book to book in the series.

Opening Strategies, for example, is

based on a carefully controlled

> functional and structural syllabus

while Starting Strategies

has a

> structural progression based on communicative needs

Building Strategies is

> functionally based, with the communicative needs of the student as its first priority

and Developing Strategies

aims to

> develop effective and confident communication in English

while Studying Strategies revises

> important functions and structures in new contexts and gives practice in both spoken and written communicative tasks.

We learn that

> the principles behind the course

are to be found in the

Teacher's Book. In Strategies the approach adopted is primarily functional and secondarily, structural.

What is often not made clear is the distinction between the approach and the aim. It would appear that the overall aim of the course is "effective and confident communication", which is reached through a combination of functions and structures: a functional-structural approach.

Kernel we are told, has

a well-planned structural progression and gives a variety of practice in the kind of language which learners need for practical communication.

Kernel 2 has slightly less structural coverage than Kernel Lessons Intermediate (the alternative stage 2) while Kernel 3,

as with other books in the Kernel series.. has as its framework a carefully graded progression of structures and function.

Kernel is therefore promoted as a structural/functional course.

Mainline has

its emphasis on the functional, oral presentation of English

Students using parts A and B -

will develop a very thorough structural and functional competence in the language.

The course

sets out to teach absolute beginners functionally from the outset while at the same time giving students a firm command of the structures of the language.

Like Kernel and Strategies it quotes the functional/notional objectives of the Council of Europe and the new edition of Mainline Progress is described as showing that -

all of Mainline reflects the notional and functional approach.

Follme too is based on the specifications for the Council of Europe.

Challenges does not say anywhere specifically what its approach is; just that

the themes and approach are highly motivating, thought-provoking..

This is not of course very enlightening, nor is the mention, unelaborated, that the Teacher's Book contains

a full methodological introduction to the project.

There are

alternative teaching strategies to suit the needs of different students

In fact, unlike the previous Longman's courses, Challenges does not describe what its basic approach is, thought-provoking or not. Esseng, a course originally brought out in 1938 in the heyday of grammar, has been brought up-to-date, we are told, but how exactly, we are not told, and it is unlikely to have changed this basic grammatical approach.

MAC

ACE is an audio-visual course, in keeping with its period, being first launched in the early 1970s. No details are given.

Conteng lists among its course-features

> intensive coverage of major structural elements and vocabulary areas with additional practice of functional elements in interaction sequences...

There being no other description of the course, it would appear to be mainly structural-functional.

In neither is there any mention of communication or communicative activities.

NEL

Newincen is described first in its opening quote -

> A straightforward course which manages to combine structural and communicative approaches effectively.

And in the text we read:

> It follows a structural progression based closely on genuine communicative needs and is designed to teach students to communicate effectively and accurately in speech.

The course would therefore appear to be structural-communicative.

Function, as could be expected from its name, aims to teach students to communicate effectively

> by understanding and controlling the relationship between language forms and functions. Functional English does not dismiss grammar, it rather begins with the use of language and then looks at the structures which characterise that particular language function.

It could therefore be described as functional-structural.

OUP

Access, we are told,

> has a clear structural progression

with

> a wide range of audio-visual components.

It is probably basically still showing its grammatically-based audio-visual origins in the '70s, although, as if to counteract that term of the '60s and '70s, audio-visual, there is repeated use of the new 'in' term, communicative.

The improved workbooks now offer

> new communication activities

and there is

> communication practice in every unit.

Perhaps, this is a case, such as those described by Jack Richards and Ann Raimes, where underpaid academics re-work

> an audiolingual or structural course so that it can be published in a new edition bearing a notional-functional or communicative label.

The course would appear, however, to remain basically clearly structural.

Streamline has nowhere any mention of method(ology) or approach. We are told, about Book 1 that at this early stage

> the emphasis is on the development of oral/aural skills to enable the students to communicate at a basic level in day to day situations.

If we were able to get hold of the review for this Book in the ELT Journal, (Volume 35) and EFL Bulletin (Number 6) we might hoever, feel confused.

From the first of these, we learn the course

> is basically structural but with a strong communicative approach

while in the second, it is described as being

> a successful compromise between the communicative objectives of the functional approach and the grammatical restrictions of the structural.

The catalogue itself does not specify what approach is followed. Quartet is introduced as a task-based course but there is no mention of functions, notions, communicative needs. However, if we were to read the review in the ELT Journal (Volume 37), we would learn that the course in its section, Views on Language, describes itself as

> both structural and functional.

The catalogue however, does not supply this information.

Network is a three-part communicative course and later on we read that it has

> a steady structural progression

and

> communication functions and notions are taught right from the start but these are built onto a structural foundation.

The course seems then to be structural though it also incorporates notions and functions and it describes itself as communicative.

Engforad has a sub-heading, Communicative Approach, for the paragraph telling us the students learn to use

> lively communicative language

and another sub-heading, Structural Syllabus for the paragraph telling us that adults expect to learn a language structurally. Engforad could therefore be called structurally-based.

The following table attempts to set out the main approach, or framework, for the course as it can be deduced purely from the information given in the catalogue. As has been shown above, a series may alter direction between its first and last stages, and again, it may be described in the catalogue somewhat differently from how it has been perceived in different reviews, not to mention how it sees itself in its own books, in special introductions found usually in the Teacher's Book.

Table 8 Method of Approach: Syllabus or Base

	Method of approach/ syllabus/base/progression	Communicative Aims practice/activities	Other references
Cambeng	"combination of extremely varied T. approaches"	Not specified	
Meanword	"grammar taught system. in a communic. context"	"Wide variety of communicative practice"	
Ontheway	"communicative course" "notional/function.base"	Yes	
Foundeng	"structurally-based" Bks 1/3 not/functional	Yes	
Express	Not specified	Not specified	
Mainco	"a communicative course"	Yes	
Contact	"mainly oral course"	Not specified	
Journeys	"topic-based", with a "clear struct. approach"	Yes	
Strategies	Bk.1=struct. base/2 = funct. bks. 3/4 "commun. approach"	Yes	"approach = primarily functional; second. = structural
Kernel	"structural progression"	Yes	
Mainline	functional/notional	Not specified	
Follme	"basis. = Waystage/Thresh. specifications"	Not specified	
Challenges	theme-based, with alternative teaching strategies	Yes	
Esseng.	Not specified	Not specified	rewritten/expanded grammatical sections
ACE	"Audio-visual"	Not specified	
Conteng.	Structural-functional	Indirectly specified	
Newincen.	Combin. of str. + commun. approaches/str.progression"	Yes	
Function.	Functional-structural	Indirectly specified	
Access	"clear structural progression	Yes	
Stream.	Not specified	Indirectly specified	
Quartet	"Task-based"	Indirectly specified	
Network	"a communicative course"	Yes	
Engforad.	"a communicative approach" + "structural syllabus"	Yes	

12.1 Summary

If one could agree on the possible composition of a class, whether adults or teenagers, and on their needs and interests, as well as bear in mind the time available, it might then be easier to choose the method by which the class can best be taught.

Not all writers on EFL are agreed that "communicative competence is an appropriate goal at all levels" nor if this is best achieved by means of a structural, notional, or combination type syllabus.

It would appear that Alexander's championing of functional syllabuses at zero beginner level is not shared by other EFL authors and several stress the need for students, right from the beginning, to have a good grasp of structural essentials.

In fact, it would appear there is "little firm evidence about the comparative effectiveness of the alternative forms of organisation" and it could then be argued that it should be left to the teachers to choose whatever sort of approach suits them and their classes (with their "perceived needs").

While the catalogues show a considerable variety of approaches and syllabuses, it is by no means always the case that each course-entry shows what method of approach has been selected. Sometimes, too, it is unclear what line the course takes because there may be several descriptive items used in the entry. Sometimes the words "communicative course" are used as with Ontheway and Mainco or "communicative approach", as in Engforad, with some courses only (Ontheway, Engforad, for example) making it clear that the course or syllabus could be structurally-based. The term structural, whether applied to approach (Journeys) or progression (Access) course or base (Foundeng), would however always imply a structural emphasis, while communicative, sometimes used interchangeably with notional/functional, does not always imply a similar emphasis on a notional/functional syllabus. Course-entries do not

always make it clear. And this could be because sometimes the course as a whole does not follow one particular line: each book in the course might take a different viewpoint, as it might appear from the course-entries for Foundeng and Strategies.

12.2 Recommendations

It would therefore greatly aid the catalogue reader, and potential consumer, if the entry for each course had a sentence or paragraph clearly setting out the course-approach, in general, and of each level or book in particular, if these differ. And it would be helpful too to have a clear indication how each publisher is interpreting the term approach, in relation to terms like syllabus, course-aim, teaching-strategy or whatever.

13. Skills

When a course is seen by its author as taking care of certain special needs, the materials are prepared with a particular skill or skills in mind; reading and writing on the one hand, or perhaps, speaking. This is especially the case with many ESP courses where, by far the most significant skill is seen to be reading. But, in a general course, it might be thought that all the skills would need to be practised. Nearly 20 years ago, in the audio-lingual days, Alexander wrote:

> The student must be trained adequately in all four basic language skills: understanding, speaking, reading and writing...(but) the student is trained to use his eyes instead of his ears and his inability to achieve anything like correct pronunciation, stress and intonation must be attributed largely to the tyranny of the printed word...
> The following order of presentation must be taken as axiomatic:
>
> Nothing should be spoken before it has been heard.
> Nothing should be read before it has been spoken.
> Nothing should be written before it has been read. (11)

Times, of course, have changed. Today, there is nothing like the same emphasis on speech; reading seems to have returned to favour, and listening is regarded as more important probably than anything.

Identifying skills themselves is not as straightforward as it might appear. In EFL articles and course-descriptions, now, we can come across terms like major and minor skills; receptive and productive, actual and enabling, and there are also references to basic study skills and to integrated skills. The student in a general course is usually faced with a wide range of language activities and it is unlikely that such a course could depend on just one skill. However, at times, one skill is emphasised over the others and is referred to as the major skill. As Alexander (12) now puts it, where

> in traditional courses there is a tendency to assume that the student has to acquire productively everything there is in a course
>
> - there is nowadays, a tendency
>
> in functionally-based courses to present students with authentic or quasi-authentic realia for listening and reading comprehension to train them to listen or read for gist...

And sometimes students are enabled to acquire a particular skill by first engaging in another activity -

> discussion may not be a skill required in a particular target situation but it can serve as preliminary practice for writing, which itself is a required skill. (40).

The different courses vary a great deal, not only in whether or not they make any mention of the skills required, but also in the kind of skills they expect these adult learners to acquire, and in what order.

CUP

The Cambeng course mentions that

> particular emphasis is given to reading and writing, but it also encourages the student to think about pronunciation and intonation.

It also

> teaches language and skills for practical use.

Meanword offers

> challenging and interesting listening and reading material throughout.

and

> comprehensive coverage of the language skills required for the Cambridge First Certificate examination is provided --

though

these "language skills" are not specified.

CAS

Ontheway tells us that

> at the early stages, emphasis is placed on listening and speaking; reading and writing are given increased importance as the course progresses.

Foundeng. in its opening paragraph has it that

> All four language skills are given the emphasis appropriate to the level and student participation is encouraged throughout, particularly in the listening activities.

COL

Express does not refer to skills, but does mention

> the workbook provides follow-up practice in both reading and writing

- and the cassettes of course, have dialogue and

pronunciation work listed.

HEIN

Mainco, in its general introduction to the course, is described as

placing emphasis

> on equipping the student with techniques to aid self-study of the language. Careful attention is paid to the development of language skills...

The individual parts of the course, three of them, each feature a

paragraph on skills.

Encounters, in its paragraph for example, describes that they have do-it-yourself sections which

> encourage learner independence by introducing basic study skills...

Exchanges says that

> specific attention (is) paid to the development of reading, writing and listening skills

-while Advances

features -

> authentic listening and reading material

and

> systematic attention given to learning-how-to-learn and to skills for studying English.

Contact is described in the opening paragraph as a mainly oral course. There is no direct mention of skills but we read that the Student's book contains

> extensively illustrated material for reading and writing practice.

LON

Journeys we read,

> develops the language skills students need,to be able to use English as a means of communication. Emphasis is placed on interesting texts for the development of reading skills.

Strategies makes different recommendations in the different books of the series: Opening Strategies offers

> thorough practice in all four skills- speaking, listening, reading and writing -

and elsewhere in comparing the book with the alternative Starting Strategies, it is described as having

> more skills practice, particularly reading and writing.

Building Strategies -

> integrates and develops the skills of listening, speaking reading and writing in a lively and highly motivating way.

Developing Strategies similarly -

> develops the learner's oral and aural skills with extensive practice in communicative settings; it also systematically develops the learner's reading and writing skills.

Studying Strategies continues the communicative approach -

> linked to the integration of the four skills -

There is also practice in both spoken and written communicative tasks .. (and) .. the book emphasises the importance of good study habits.

Kernel lays -

> the emphasis of the course on oral production and listening. At the same time there is graded development of reading and writing skills.

In Book 2 there is a long section illustrating how all the language skills are practised, while Kernel 3 has

> development of all four skills .. woven into the course design through an imaginative series of oral exercises, reading practice and listening and writing tasks.

Mainline has its -

> emphasis on the functional oral presentation of English..

and the new edition of Mainline Progress offers

> much more help and guidance to students with conversation and composition

- while strangely enough, Mainline Skills, does not describe how it deals with any skills at all.

Follme describes how -

> the Students' Books concentrate on the skills of listening and speaking (and reading), while the accompanying Workbooks aim to develop reading and writing skills.

Challenges describes how in the students' books,

> starting from reading, listening and note-making, chains of language activities develop the learners' communicative skills...

Esseng has no mention of skills at all.

MAC

ACE is an audio-visual course.

Conteng offers

> consistent and integrated practice of the main language skills

and all

> the basic skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are fully covered.

NEL

Newincen

> is designed to teach students to communicate effectively and accurately in speech and writing from the beginning.

Function, in its Book 1,

> develops the receptive skills through a variety of listening comprehension material ..Writing and reading skills are practised in a variety of graded exercises.

OUP

Access makes no direct reference to skills but does point to how it helps the teacher in providing a wide range of optional audio-visual components.

Streamline, at the elementary stage, Departures, lays the emphasis..

> on the development of oral/aural skills to enable the students to communicate at a basic level..

In stage 2,

> the quantity and variety of reading material increases and

in 3,

> the four basic skills are developed equally, and there is a special appendix of material for extensive listening practice

Quartet requires -

> Students to understand and produce authentic language

and lists various tasks (including note-taking, problem-solving etc) but there is no specific mention of skills.

Network --

> teaches all four skills, but the primary emphasis is on speaking

and there are

> open-ended exercises which encourage students to talk about their own experiences

Engforad does not mention skills but we are told,

> right from the start the students learn to use lively communicative language..

How the courses, with their major emphasis, compare, can be seen from Table 9 following.

Table 9 Skills emphasised/singled out in course

	Particular/Primary Emphasis Given	Skills for pract. use/ communication	Some attention given
Cambeng	Reading and writing	Yes	Pronunciation + inton.
Meanword	Listening and reading	---	Skills for the C.First C.
Ontheway	Listening and speaking	Yes	Reading and writing as course progresses
Foundeng	all four given emphasis "appropriate to level"	partic. listening	
Express	No	No	Reading and writing practice
Mainco	Basic study skills	Study skills	
Contact	No	No	Reading and writing practice
Journeys	Reading skills	Yes	
Strategies	All four skills varying at different levels	Yes	
Kernel	Oral/aural	No	Graded development of reading/writing skills
Mainline	Oral	No	"composition"
Follme	Listening and speaking (and reading)sic	No	Reading/writing skills
Challenges	Reading, listening and note-making	Yes	
Esseng	No	No	
ACE	"audio-visual"	No	
Conteng.	"main language skills" "basic skills"	No	
Newincen.	Speech and writing	Yes	
Function.	Receptive skills, partic. listening.	No	Writing and Reading.
Access	No	No	
Stream.	Primarily oral/aural, then more reading+listening	Yes	
Quartet	No	Yes	(Note-taking, etc)
Network	Speaking	Yes	
Engforad.	No	Yes	

13.1 Summary

Where, 20 years or so ago, speech, in particular pronunciation, intonation and stress rather than the conversational skills, was being emphasised, nowadays many EFL writers and course-authors emphasise the receptive skills like listening and reading as a glance at the table will confirm. Very few courses even mention pronunciation, even in those courses which lay emphasis on "communicative tasks" (Strategies), "practical communication" (Kernel), "oral presentation of English" (Mainline), "communicative activities/practice in every unit" (Access), and "lively communicative language" (Engforad).

But while course-entries are more likely to refer to listening and reading, most courses (apart from Esseng) provide cassettes (student, class etc) offering drills and other exercises as well as conversational and dialogue listening practice, though none of this is given much emphasis in any course-entry.

The courses vary a great deal in where and how they introduce the different skills. Courses with several stages, in particular, must have some under-lying rationale which justifies the author's introducing material for a certain skill at one level and materials for another skill later on, as for example in those courses which emphasise, say, receptive skills initially. And in those courses which emphasise an oral/aural approach or audio-visual one, it would be interesting to learn how the other skills are introduced and catered for.

None of the course-entries, however, goes into much detail on this: why one course is structured around one skill rather than another or why certain skills are introduced ahead of others.

13.2 Recommendations

Where a course is arranged so that at each separate stage or level, a different skill is given emphasis, such as Foundeng appears to do, with all four skills being given emphasis "appropriate to level", it would

greatly benefit the reader to have more specific information about how (or in which order) the different skills are being introduced, level by level, together with, if possible, some explanation on why the course has been structured in that way.

14. Language Content of Courses.

Choosing the content for a General, Adult Course must present any course-writer with even more problems than other courses.

On the one hand, he cannot obviously teach the whole of the English Language and, on the other, he cannot narrow down to a specific area in it, in quite the same way as ESP or EAP course-writers can.

One suggested solution is to put into the course (the unit or lesson) what we feel these students can master in the time available, which, as Howatt has pointed out, raises the problem of master-ing, while begging the question of how this mastery is to be achieved:

> Does mastery mean the ability to talk, read and write like a native speaker in any situation? Or does it mean something less than this, and, if so, what is the criterion of success? (8)

Some years later, in 1981, Hauwiller in his article The Mastery/Coverage Dilemma: a Case Study went into more detail on this topic:

> All teachers face at least two conflicting expectiations as they conceive of the structure of their courses... there is a body of material, topics listed in an instructor's syllabus or an assumed content of a standard course, to be covered. At the same time, there is an expectation of mastery by students of that content derived from the very notion of teaching. (7)

Before his study was conducted, it had been assumed that teachers coped with this particular dilemma by following one of three strategies: by emphasising mastery, through numerous examples, extended discussion of topics, more practice and so on; or by pressing on with coverage of the material in a syllabus, hoping that revision by students would give them sufficient mastery; mixing these strategies, though compromises like this run the risk of achieving neither mastery nor coverage.

After the study, and from a review of the literature, Hauwiller suggests that

> when a teacher sees his instruction objectives as learning specifics, this perception limits the possible ways in which he can provide for pupils' individual differences... teachers have a greater capacity to deal with individual differences insofar as they are able to make a separation between activities and the goals that these activities seek to illuminate.. a separation between objectives and activities discourages instruction aimed at specifics and procedures that stress recognition, verbalism and memory. We can infer that as a teacher pursues broad rather than narrow goals he could more effectively deal with the mastery/coverage dilemma. (7)

It is in effect , a question of how we assess our course priorities. A study of the advertising for some language courses on the market shows how they have settled their priorities:

> Learn the essentials of a language in 5 hours. (38)
>
> You want to speak French (or German, or Italian, or Spanish) Now you can in 24 hours of easy home study. (39)
>
> With the Linguaphone Method you can learn a second language in much the same way you learnt English. Simply by listening, understanding and then speaking. It's the fastest, most natural way to learn. In fact, you could be speaking your new language within 3 months. (40).

Courses like these obviously do not plan to cover very much of the field; they aim for a limited mastery. What they limit the course to, as regards material content, obviously depends on what their students need (or what the authors perceive them as needing): perhaps a reading knowledge is sufficient, as with many EAP courses or a speaking knowledge, such as the foreign visitor to the UK might need.

How much is included in the course, how many activities, how many opportunities for practice, how much revision and testing, how many components, how much detail altogether, very much depends on what the author thinks the students, and possibly the teacher, can cover in the allloted time. If accuracy is to be regarded as an important factor (as in the more traditional and school courses), then the student is likely to cover a lot less ground and require a lot less material, than if the chief criterion were fluent intelligibility.

Perhaps the surprising thing, considering the vastness of the English language and the difficulties in deciding what to leave out of a course, is that most language courses, according to Howatt,

> contain hardly any language. A native speaker of English, for example, could easily read the whole of a year's course for foreigners in an hour or two. (8)

All this could be said to apply, in some measure, to the writers of course-descriptions in catalogues. They obviously cannot include everthing about a course. Just as a course-writer selects from the vast total of language forms and functions, what he feels will meet his students' needs and wants, so also does the catalogue-writer have to make his selection, from all the detail he has on the course, in order to meet his two aims: on the one hand, represent in a short space, what the course is and does, and, on the other, offer just enough to whet the reader/consumer's curiosity.

If we take a look first at the various course-descriptions, at what they contain and concentrate on, we can then examine some of the points they raise in detail.

Most of the information on the courses is given in paragraphs describing the course as a whole, with sometimes additional information given about it in a section or paragraph devoted to the student's (or course-) book. The contents of the Teacher's Book is dealt with separately.

CUP

Cambeng lists several course-features:

> it systematically integrates grammar, functions, notions, vocabulary and pronunciation through a carefully constructed syllabus;
> teaches language and skills for practical use;
> provides activities which adults feel happy with; contains topics, facts and ideas known to interest adults;
> often allows students to make choices about their learning;
> makes wide use of authentic material; is not dominated by fictional characters and storylines.

Meanword similarly lists its major features:

grammar taught systematically in a communicative context; syllabus is carefully organised, incorporating functional, notional and grammatical areas; wide variety of communicative practice material for use in pairs or groups; motivating ideas for free practice and role-play; challenging and interesting listening and reading material throughout;
comprehensive coverage of the language skills required for the Cambridge First Certificate examination is provided.

We are told the Student's book, in each unit, contains presentation and practice material, free oral practice and an extended piece of either reading or listening. At the end of each unit is a language summary.

CAS

Ontheway does not present its course-features in a list, such as those for the 2 CUP courses but it does feature certain items in the text:

> the most important functions of English have been included and practised in everyday situations to provide the student with language sufficient to cover typical communicative needs; the dialogues, texts and exercises are designed to give students the opportunity to listen to the natural language and to express themselves with ease;
> a large number of authentic items have been included; pairwork groupwork and role-play exercises play an important part in the development of new material in each unit.

The Student's book has a grammatical summary at the end of the book and a vocabulary checklist organised by unit.

Foundeng gives most of its information about the books of the series, stage by stage. The first features:

> listening activities which encourage the active participation of the students;
> texts (not just dialogues) from the first unit onwards; a variety of practice material.
> 4 progress tests and wordlists at the end of each unit.

Book 2 features

> the development of the student's reading and writing skills through increased use of texts and narrative; communication skills;
> listening activities.. interspersed throughout the units and closely linked to the texts and main teaching points of the units.

Book 3 features

> structural and functional/notional approaches to lead students towards a sound grammatical and communicative grasp of the

oral section of each unit (which) concludes with a clear expositon of the grammar;
grammar..always linked to meaning, while useful functions are introduced without explanation of (complex) grammatical structures;
numerous stimulating exercises..requiring from the student a communicative rather than a mechanical response;
the second half of each unit is intended for written work.

Book 4 features

more demanding reading passages (with) increasingly varied subject-matter.

COL

Express does not have a list either, of its features, but, in the text, it does mention some of its material:

subject-matter chosen for its intrinsic interest to adults (covering) both fiction and non-fiction areas;
lessons..deliberately contained within a set number of pages to generate a sense of achievement and rapid progress.

The Student's book contains all the "core material".

HEIN

Mainco is described in a general introduction to the whole course as well as in separate lists of key-features for each of the three stages.

Features mentioned include the following:

as a communicative course, emphasis is on the students using the English they learn;
to balance this, systematic attention is also paid to language form through special Language Study sections devoted to the study and practice of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary;
techniques to aid self-study of the language;
extensive use of authentic material;
flexible lesson/language study format enabling teacher and learner to adapt the materials to their own needs and situations;
topic material drawn from interesting and varied sources stimulating students to express their own feelings.. in English;
specific attention paid to the development of reading, writing and listening skills;
innovative communication activities in each unit;
self-diagnostic language check-up tests (providing) opportunities for individualised work;
authentic listening and reading material;
innovative reference grammar covering major areas of language-form;
stimulating role-play and communication activities.

The course-description in the text and features-list is further supplemented by sample-pages for each of the three units: no other course gives this much. Some features are emphasised several times (authentic topic material, language check-up tests, etc) and there are at least 6 references to individual or individualised work/learner and to self-study, on which the course lays much emphasis.

Contact offers much less information, but those features it does mention include:

> extensively illustrated material for reading and writing practice;
> summaries of class work;
> all the material needed for a complete intensive course which need not be supplemented by any other material.

LON

Journeys is topic-based and features:

> the topics of Operation Drake..(and) general themes of wide appeal to young people;
> emphasis on interesting texts for the development of reading skills;
> scope for a variety of teaching techniques within a well organised framework.

Strategies, in its 5-page spread, offers a considerable amount of information, separately, for each of the 6 books in the series, though it is not at all well set out.

Opening Strategies offers

> more structures, more grammar and more vocabulary - (ie compared to Starting Strategies) more skills practice, particularly reading and writing;
> thorough practice in the 4 skills'
> new language presented through lively dialogues;
> practice work moving from controlled contexts to situations in which the learners can use their own ideas..;
> a grammatical summary at the end of each unit;
> regular consolidation work in every 5th unit.

Starting Strategies offers

> highly motivating material;
> emphasis on authenticity;
> speaking and writing tasks suited to particular communicative needs;
> authentic reading and writing practice from the very beginning.

Building Strategies offers

exercises and activities which integrate and develop the 4 skills in a lively and motivating way;
an exciting variety of visual material, activities, games;
language practice and transfer activities;
new ideas and a framework for communicative role-play;
vocabulary presented in organised sets;
a careful progression of grammatical structures.

Developing Strategies offers

development of the skills practised in earlier books;
oral and aural skills (developed) with extensive practice in communicative settings;
systematic development of the learner's reading and writing skills;
regular and accessible summaries of the functions and structures covered in the material;
themes presented through authentically-based materials;
practice in the use of relevant study skills such as note-taking and organised writing.

Studying Strategies offers

general practice at a level leading to the Cambridge First Certificate in English;
internationally relevant themes;
students' own knowledge and experience through authentic reading and listening materials;
revision of important functions and structures in new contexts;
practice in both spoken and written communicative tasks;
good study habits, the building of vocabulary in word fields, dictionary work, strategies for reading challenging texts and the organisation of ideas in sequenced writing;
a summary of main language points at the end of each unit.

Strategies offers

the language skills that may be required for and are relevant to a wide range of communicative situations.

The whole description offers a great deal of detail, as you can see from the above, but unfortunately, it is not easy to find, as it is by no means set out as above, in readable list-form. Mostly it is embedded in dense, closely-packed columns and, hence, difficult to dig out.

Kernel, similarly, offers its information in densely-packed columns and would also have benefitted from using separate lists of key features. The material is given, separately, book by book, but here it is arranged for easy reading, in lists.

Kernel 1 offers

an exciting storyline based on a kidnap plot;
emphasis on oral production and listening;
graded development of reading and writing skills;
basic reinforcement tasks throughout the book, but supplemented by 5 special Read and Write sections which provide authentic styles of text for reading and as a basis for simple independent writing.

Kernel 2 offers

variety in language practice, directly related to students' communicative needs;
news in focus and theme of the week topics;
content..immediate and relevant to the students' experience and needs;
a variety of forms (text, dialogue etc) followed by a carefully developed (but varied) progression of oral and written practice;
an episode, in each unit, of a serial..a thrilling story;
a large variety of material for practice of the 4 skills;
4 mini-units of authentic listening;
realistic and authentic reading texts;
short functional writing practice in each unit;
skills picked up and extended in the Workbook.

Kernel 3 offers

new material as well as consolidation of previously learned material;
a carefully graded progression of structures and functions;
development of all 4 skills woven into the course design through an imaginative series of oral exercises, reading practice and listening and writing tasks;
language and life presented through the experiences of 4 characters;
a great variety of text types and skills exercises (developing) out of the episodes;
a wide range of communicative tasks.

Kernel Lessons Intermediate does not specify its content; it meets demands for

an intensive intermediate or revision and extension course..

Kernel Lessons Plus offers

more extensive work on the patterns and structures required up to and beyond the level of the Cambridge First Certificate;
a challenging treatment of themes, ideas and areas of interest (for) adults;
development of language skills necessary for the students' active involvement with discussion;
adaptability and flexibility to suit the needs of small and large groups in intensive and extensive courses.

Mainline, in a 2-page spread, presents some features in a general introduction to its course and others in the separate sections for each

introduction to its course and others in the separate sections for each of the three stages. Basically it offers

> functional, oral presentation of English;
> topics demonstrating the variety of language styles in different situations;

Book 1 offers

> a firm command of the structures of the language;

Book 2 offers

> clearer structure focus;
> much more help and guidance..with conversation and composition;
> better contextualisation of language in real-life situations;

Book 3 offers

> preparation for the Cambridge First Certificate;
> development of the structural and functional competence which is a feature of the course.

Follme has only one page to describe its features which include

> concentrating on the skills of listening and speaking (and reading);
> development of reading and writing skills in the Workbooks.

Challenges has nearly a page and a half to present its main features which include

> stimulating students to use English for communicative tasks (related to) their own ideas and needs;
> highly motivating themes and approach;
> development and practice of language skills;
> flexible and adaptable (approach) to different teaching situations;
> specifically tailored material (in different media) offering different language activities and demanding different skills from the students;
> using reading, listening and note-making to develop chains of language activites, developing the learners' communicative skills from controlled practice through to free discussion.

Esseng offers

> rewritten and expanded grammatical sections;
> texts and illustrations, now brought up-to-date.

All the Longman courses suffer from not having their course-material presented clearly, such as in lists or boxes of special features. This is especially a problem in view of their usually copious information of

course features, at present embedded, hidden even, in densely-packed columns of print.

MAC

ACE describes in very little detail the contents of their course.

These are

> consistent elements (to) maintain students' confidence while new structures are introduced;
> revision work included throughout;

ICE has

> new structural patterns and items of vocabulary are introduced in passages of dialogue, expanded upon and practised in the oral and written exercises in each unit.

BCE has

> a lively dialogue in each of the 18 units followed by a great variety of practice material in both the spoken and written registers..together with specific preparation for the First Certificate Examination.

Conteng sets out their course-features clearly in a list citing

> contexts which emphasise the use of English as an international language;
> realistic and varied frameworks for language practice;
> intensive coverage of major structural elements and vocabulary areas;
> additional practice of functional elements in interaction sequences and (in later books) in activities such as role-playing and partially guided conversation;
> consistent and integrated practice of the main language skills;
> systematic, cumulative practice and revision exercises;
> notes on American English equivalents of the British English used in the course;
> regular review and complementation units ensure that new material is thoroughly understood and revised.

NEL

Newincen offers

> a structural progression based closely on genuine communicative needs and designed to teach students to communicate effectively and accurately in speech and writing from the beginning;
> emphasis throughout on active student participation, the use of realistic situations for presentations and exercises and natural everyday English;
> in each unit Study and Summary sections consolidate structures and language forms, and tests in every 6th unit providing opportunities for revision and assessment.

Function has the aim of getting the students to communicate effectively by understanding and controlling the relationship between language forms and functions

> the use of language and..the structures which characterise that particular language function.

Book 1 emphasises

> development of receptive skills through a variety of listening comprehension material -- dialogues, formal talks, and informal conversation;
> writing and reading skills practised in a variety of graded exercises.

Book 2 emphasises

> difficult areas such as modal verbs and shifts in viewpoint or attitude;
> textual material (with) strong professional orientation and drawn mostly from authentic sources such as newspapers and subject textbooks.

OUP

Access does not go into much detail of its course as a whole or the student's books in particular; most of the description is devoted to the improved workbooks and revised Teacher's books. But we are also told that Access has

> a clear structural progression...and the course is structured to provide entry at any stage.

Streamline divides its description of course-material almost evenly between student's books, workbooks, speechwork and Teacher's books, and then between the 3 stages (up until then).

The course offers

> imaginative up-to-date material;
> realistic lively dialogue;
> practical language;

Book 1 offers

> emphasis on the oral/aural skills to enable the students to communicate at a basic level in day to day situations;
> wide range of topics-from amusing dialogues to news reports, from exciting cartoon strips to romantic stories -- all chosen with young adult and adult students in mind.

Book 2 offers

an even greater variety of stimulating material than (book 1);

Book 3 offers

all the basic structures and vocabulary, revised, consolidated and extended;
equal development of the 4 language skills and a special appendix for extensive listening material.

Quartet's books offer -

a wide range of motivating activities that require them to understand and produce authentic language;
tasks including problem-solving, role-play, group and pair work, note-taking, map and diagram work;
highly visual authentic and semi-authentic material;
theme of each unit dictating its shape and extent, so course is very flexible, with units being selected in any order to meet students' particular interests and linguistic needs.

Network offers

a communicative course with lots of opportunities for group and pair work;
primary emphasis on speaking;
a steady structural progression and a wealth of exercise material;
communicative functions and notions taught right from the start but built onto a structural foundation;
slower progression than many other courses and much more thorough (because of) the extensive exercise material;
thorough exercise, practice and revision material;
a special presentation section at the beginning of each unit;
open-ended exercises which encourage students to talk about their own experiences;
lots of group and pair work;
new language presented through photographs and recordings;
story line presented by means of recorded dialogues followed by oral and written exercises and oral drills for intensive practice;
extra exercise and activity material for more relaxed, open-ended communication practice.

Engforad offers

adults' own experiences, thoughts and ideas as subject matter;
communcative approach where students right from the start learn to use lively communicative language appropriate to an adult's needs and way of thinking;
structural syllabus (as) many students expect to learn a foreign language structurally;
each unit includes grammar summary sections for the students.

Even a cursory glance at these features, put forward in the catalogues as information on the content of the courses, will show just how much variety there is, both in the kind of information afforded and in the

amount of detail devoted to it. The publishers obviously differ considerably in what they select and what they promote.

The following list culled from all the course-descriptions sets out this variety:

- a carefully constructed syllabus
- flexible lesson/language study format
- a structural progression
- a functional, oral presentation of English
- communicative functions and notions..right from the start
- activities which adults feel happy with
- subject-matter chosen for its intrinsic interest to adults
- Arthur's entertaining adventures
- themes presented through authentically-based materials
- an exciting storyline based on a kidnap plot
- do-it-yourself sections
- exercises that promote confidence and communcative ability
- innovative reference grammar
- emphasis on active student participation
- emphasis on interesting texts for the development of reading
- realistic lively dialogues
- authentic listening and reading material
- grammatical summaries
- authentic cultural background
- dictionary work
- lots of group and pair work
- crosswords
- self-diagnostic language check-up tests
- regular consolidation work
- areas of special difficulty such as modal or phrasal verbs
- authentic and semi-authentic material

- realistic situations and natural everyday English
- the building of vocabulary in word fields
- stimulating role-play
- language practice and transfer activities
- practical language

Although this list shows an extremely diverse set of ingredients, it is possible to group these into various categories. For example, a category like Grammatical Information would encompass items like grammatical summaries and a structural progression, while a category like Activities could take in items such as dictionary work, stimulating role-play, as well as realistic lively dialogues. The categories would thus display not only what the different courses have in common, but also how they contrast.

14.1 Grammatical Information

From what we can learn from the catalogue-descriptions, the courses vary, particularly if their main interest or focus or framework is audio-visual or notional/functional, in how they introduce, organise, present and consolidate grammatical/structural material. It is interesting too to note how few courses actually ever use the word grammar or grammatical, most preferring to use terms like structure and structural. Whatever the chosen method of approach, however, none of the course-descriptions devotes much space to the subject. In almost every case, it rates less space than topics or themes, communicative activities or skills.

References are often slight, sometimes only part of a sentence, and often no more detailed than the following typical examples:

- grammar taught systematically in a communicative context
- the course is structurally based but has a strong functional component
- clearer structure focus

- summary sections consolidate structures and language forms (sic)
- each unit includes grammatical summary sections for the students.

The following table shows the amount of reference there is to grammar/structure.

Table 10 Grammar/Structure Reference

	Gramm.syll.	1-sent or less	2-5 references	6-10 references	no references
Cambeng		✓			
Meanword			4		
Ontheway		✓			
Foundeng	✓			9	
Express					✓
Mainco			4		
Contact		✓			
Journeys	✓	✓			
Strategies				10	
Kernel	✓		5		
Mainline				6	
Follme					✓
Challenges					✓
Esseng.	✓	✓			
ACE			3		
Conteng.		✓			
Newincen	✓		3		
Function.			3		
Access	✓		3		
Stream.		✓			
Quartet					
Network	✓		3		
Engforad.	✓		4		

14.1 Summary

The distribution of grammatical references between courses with a strong structural progression like Kernel, say, and those with a strong functional approach, such as Mainline, is not at all clearly differentiated.

Sheila Estaire (41) discovered something similar when she and others at the British Institute in Madrid made drastic syllabus changes, adopting a functional/notional approach in addition to the structural one already in operation. The staff decided on a modular syllabus, based on a core communicative syllabus and a core grammatical syllabus and to do this, analysed 6 of the course-books used (Strategies Books 1 and 2); Mainco Book 1; Contact Book 1; Kernel 1; and Streamline 1.) She described these first 3 books as predominantly functional with emphasis given to grammatical material; the latter three, predominantly structural, with different emphases given to communicative aspects.

What was interesting to her, was:

> The analysis of the 5 course-books proved that, in spite of their very different outlooks and emphases, they covered very much the same ground both functionally and grammatically. This consensus was not only at overall level, but also in the sequence of presentation followed. Thus, if the books were divided into 3 parts, the contents of each equivalent part would be found to coincide closely. (41)

This is similarly the case here. 23 courses, with "very different outlooks and emphases" appear to cover the same ground grammatically, in the absence of detail in the course-entries.

14.1.2 Recommendations

Course-entries might indicate more clearly how early, and how much, structure is introduced into the course, especially if it is not a "structurally-based" course. Perhaps, too, publishers could be recommended to inform readers whether selected structures were chosen on the grounds of frequency, or communicative utility.

14.2 Vocabulary

References, in the catalogues to vocabulary (words, wordlists) and exercises contextualising vocabulary items are, if anything, even scarcer than references to grammar and structure. As McCarthy's article, A New Look at Vocabulary in EFL, describes:

> the teacher of English as a foreign language would be forgiven for holding the view that not much vocabulary teaching goes on at all, especially if it is true that teaching reflects what is in the coursebooks. (42)

Although there are, on the market, supplementary materials for vocabulary expansion, such as readers,

> ...in coursebooks as such especially at the beginner and lower intermediate level, the treatment of vocabulary as a teaching area in itself is sadly lacking. Beginner courses do present many new orthographic words in a carefully controlled way, but do not generally deal with words lexically, and they view vocabulary acquisition as a cumulative by-product of the teaching of structures or the communicative functions of sentences. (42)

Other writers also feel this second-class status for vocabulary in EFL teaching, as Elliot Judd explains:

> vocabulary has been relegated to secondary status in favour of syntax. It is felt that students need to master basic grammatical patterns first to gain both understanding and ability to communicate in English. Lerning new words or phrases is often viewed as a hindrance to this task because such study distracts the learner from observing and using the syntactic patterns of the language .....
> ....second..vocabulary knowledge is generally not taught as a skill in itself. Rather, most methodologies discuss the indirect teaching of vocabulary as part of the wider areas of language learning such as reading or listening comprehension (Chastain 1976; Rivers 1968; and Michel and Patin 1972). Vocabulary instruction is thus seen as a means to an end and not as a goal in itself. What results from these two suppositions should hardly be a surprise. Because vocabulary has received secondary emphasis in the classroom, students, upon leaving the sheltered atmosphere of the ESL classroom, often find themselves at a literal loss for words. (43)

Nowadays, with so much emphasis on the students' having appropriate language or authentic language, in which to communciate, there is certainly a need to bring vocabulary more to the forefront of language-teaching, right from the beginning. As Ann Raimes has discovered:

> In the classroom, teachers will ask questions about content and will seek out materials and methods that will allow their students the time space and opportunity to generate and explore ideas by means of language. That could mean that learners will produce real instead of simulated discourse...Our students have been telling us for many years, "What we need is vocabulary." They are probably right. They certainly do need vocabulary to engage with content, to turn clusters of words into syntax and to use those words and that syntax to make sense of what is around them. (38)

Michael Swan would agree. And he tends to blame the neglect of vocabulary on the "new toy" effect of the communicative approach -

> leading us to look at everything in functional terms:
> we see the whole of our job as being to teach students to convey and elicit information, to describe, to define, to exercise and elicit social control, to express approval, make requests, establish rapport, warn, apologise, and the rest of it.....
> Students can already convey information, define, apologise and so on -- what they need to learn is how to do these things in <u>English</u>. And secondly, when we have taught students what they need to know in order to carry out the main communicatve functions, we <u>still</u> have most of the language left to teach....
> (Students) also have to learn the words and expressions which are used to refer to the things in the world they want to talk about, ask about, or request.....
> Functions without lexis are no better than structures without lexis. And referential lexis is a vast field -- it certainly makes up the bulk of the learning load in any general-purpose language course. (44)

As Raimes, McCarthy, Judd and Swan all point out, students are simply not being given enough vocabulary. And no matter how functional the course, how concerned it is with communication, it appears students are not being equipped with the vocabulary to generate <u>or</u> carry on much communication.

Aside from functionally-based or communicative courses which, one might have thought, would be serving the students' interests by providing sufficient lexis - "the bulk of the learning load in any..course" - as Swan puts it, to equip the student with more than just basic survival language, there are also the courses that claim to give the students <u>real discourse and authentic items</u>, and those courses, one would also assume, would have a genuine interest in presenting and promoting lexical items. But this is certainly not brought out in the course-descriptions in the

catalogues. And this appears to be the case, even where special efforts have been made, by course-writers, to introduce the learner to vocabulary work. For example, we learn from the article John Milne wrote explaining the background to his adult course for Heinemann, how he set about choosing vocabulary and vocabulary work for his students:

> What each learner wants and chooses to learn -- especially as far as items of vocabulary are concerned at beginner level - is individual to that learner. But the textbook imposes a standard, unified stock of language on all the students who use it....We therefore encourage students from the beginning to learn additional material by featuring a Do-It-Yourself-Section -- DIY. These sections provide students with varied strategies for asking for those words and expressions which they themselves want to learn. Also, in these sections we try to latch on to the use of English in the learner's environment. (4)

Heinemann's catalogue entry however, for Milne's Main Course English, gives no indication of the thinking behind the vocabulary work for the course.

And, in general, it is the case that even these courses which promote real discourse or communication or authentic language do not give any real indication of how they select vocabulary for their courses, in the first place, or how they set about introducing the items (and how many of them) into a lesson, and then how the items are practised, recycled and consolidated. It is not known, as with structures, whether vocabulary items are presented in order of difficulty, or frequency or utility. What criterion the different courses use, is rarely given.

According to Frechette (14) in his detailed survey of textbooks teaching foreign languages, frequency lists are used for both structures and vocabulary. Collins alone of the 8 publishers in this survey, makes it clear how they grade their books and series on the basis of wordlists, word formation guides and structure lists. The others do not. McCarthy shows how -

> it is in the popular, best-selling coursebooks.. O'Neill's Kernel One...and Hartley and Viney's Streamline Departures (that) of the word load presented...the closed-system items are the dominating element in the exercises accompanying

> the unit, which makes it clear that grammatical structure is being focussed upon..
> ..new lexical items are not reinforced or practised in vocabulary exercises...these two coursebooks, typical of many others, continue to follow the lead of the structural courses in putting the burden of learning in the early stages on grammatical items by repeated exercises drilling the paradigms of closed systems. It is in this way that we identify such courses as having a high grammatical and low lexical priority, irrespective of their functional intentions.
> What has prevailed has been a (perhaps quite rightly) felt need to retain a grammatical/structural element in the beginner course, but this compromise has led to the continued prevalence of the view that the lexical load should be minimized and that vocabulary will accumulate incidentally. (42)

McCarthy points to the same problem in the courses at the intermediate level too, with courses like Strategies coming under attack.

> Widely used courses such as the Strategies series..continue to restrict vocabulary while they concentrate on structural paradigms...an inevitable effect of restricting vocabulary at this level is artificial texts and dialogues, with peculiar and jarring lexical patterns. (42)

Articles and checklists on evaluating textbooks reflect this absence of any specific interest in vocabulary. While, as McCarthy writes,

> the choice of how many items to present at the different levels will still be a matter for debate and will vary according to learner's ages, motivations, needs etc. (42)

- it is interesting to note how little attention is given to this topic at all in the EFL literature, and in checklists evaluating the EFL materials. In a 19-page article, Evaluating Beginning Textbooks (16), for example, Tucker devotes two-and-a-half pages to pronunciation, two-and-a-half pages to grammar, and even half a page to competence of author, but there is no separate section for vocabulary. Structure and vocabulary jointly form the material for another section, content criteria. Similarly, in his final checklist, there is no category for vocabulary: his 4 main categories are Pronunciation, Grammar, Content and General.

The following references to vocabulary and vocabulary work are typical of what little detail in general is given in the catalogues to the subject:

- systematically integrates grammar, functions, notions, vocabulary and pronunciation through a carefully constructed syllabus; (Cambeng.)
- a vocabulary checklist organised by the unit; (Ontheway)
- wordlists at the end of each unit; (Foundeng.)
- items of vocabulary are introduced in passages of dialogue; (ACE)
- vocabulary is presented in organised sets. (Strategies)

Examining how vocabulary is actually referred to, reveals some oddities; for example, in the CUP catalogue, we read that Cambeng -

> - systematically integrates grammar, functions, notions, vocabulary and pronunciation through...

- which not only suggests, through its ordering of items in the list, its sense of priority in language-teaching, but also leads one to query the relationship of fucntions and notions vis-a-vis grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

And Longman too give us a strange glimpse into their view of vocabulary as it relates to language. In describing Kernel 3, Teacher's Book, we read that, at the end,

> there is a language summary and wordlist

and of Kernel Lessons Intermediate workbook, we read,

> The aim is to consolidate the lexis and language content...

which together give us a fair idea of how outside of language, Longman regard lexis to be.

The frequency, or infrequency, of references to lexical items and activities, can be seen from the following table.

Table 11 Vocabulary References

Course	Vocabulary	Wordlists	Vocabulary practice/exercises	Dictionary work	Other
Cambeng	1	-	-	-	-
Meanword	-	-	crosswords in workbooks	-	-
Ontheway	-	1	-	-	-
Foundeng	-	1	1	-	-
Express	-*	-	-	-	-
Mainco	1	-	-	-	-
Contact	-	-	-	-	-
Journeys	-	1	-	-	-
Strategies	5	-	1	1	-
Kernel	-	2*	1	-	-
Mainline	-	-	-	-	"better contextual-isation"
Follme	-	-	-	-	-
Challenges	-	1*		-	-
Esseng.	-	-	-	-	-
ACE	2	-	-	-	-
Conteng.	-	vocabulary areas	-	-	American Eng equivalents
Newincen.	-	-	-	-	-
Function.	-	-	-	-	-
Access	-	1*	word-game in work-bks.	-	-
Stream.	1	-	-	-	-
Quartet	-	-	-	-	-
Network	-	-	-	-	-
Engforad.	-	-	-	-	-

* References starred are not actually to be found in the course description as a whole or in references to the student's book in particular. In the case of the Collins' course Express, references to vocabulary and lexis are found in the Introduction at Page 4. In the case of Kernel, Challenges and Access the wordlists are mentioned as belonging to the Teacher's books, NOT (surprisingly enough) in the student's one.

14.2.1 Summary

As can be seen from the table, references to vocabulary and word-exercises of any kind are few and far between, even in those courses (like Mainco) where special efforts have been made (as we learn from sources other than the catalogue itself) to introduce the learner to vocabulary work, or where the course-author, like Cambeng's Michael Swan, has expressed concern in articles about the neglect of vocabulary in courses and classrooms. Indeed considering the interest in the use of language, in functions, in communication, together with the growing concern of a number of writers like Milne and Swan, McCarthy, Judd and Raimes, including several who are themselves engaged in producing courses, it could be thought surprising how little vocabulary, in course-books, and classrooms, has benefitted. However, to all those who have written over the last three decades on vocabulary and its neglect, and the need for more, focussed work on vocabulary, it will come as no surprise that it is still such a low priority item in courses.

14.2.2 Recommendations

It could be, as McCarthy and others point out, that lexical items and lexical activities are a low priority in the courses and because they are so regarded, coming in CUP's list for Cambeng well behind grammar, functions and notions, and just ahead of pronunciation, they are therefore also a low priority item in the catalogues and evaluation checklists.

It might therefore be recommended to publishers that the courses themselves need improving in this respect before any catalogue entry about the role of vocabulary in the course can be improved upon.

Like Judd, McCarthy and Mainco's authors, I would recommend more attention being paid to vocabulary teaching and if it is already part of the course, as in the case of Mainco, the catalogue should draw more attention to it.

In the meantime, it is to be hoped that authors and publishers and other writers in the EFL field

> will establish vocabulary teaching as a very early priority in language teaching, will bring it out of neglect, and...give us coursebooks better and less one-sided than those we have now....The more the learner can see the practical applications in language comprehension and production of notions such as collocation .... then the more vocabulary learning will move away from its hidebound entrenchment in word-and-definition and the receptacle of the sentence. (42)

or as Judd puts it:

> Massive vocabulary instruction begun at the early stages of the ESL curriculum adds greater flexibility to a classroom and increases performance by the students because the material appears meaningful to them and useful in their daily lives....
> ...Instead of spending excessive time in perfecting the syntactical performance of our students, we should begin to work on our ESL students' vocabulary. (43)

And in his article, A Critical Look at the Communicative Approach (44), Michael Swan, co-author of CUP's Cambeng course, makes the following points:

> the discussion of appropriacy (in the communication approach) often obscures a perfectly valid point about the need for increased attention to the teaching of lexis....
> The "structurally competent but communicatively incompetent student"... certainly has a problem, but it is quite unnecessary to invoke nebulous abstractions such as appropriacy or rules of use to account for it. (The) student doesn't know enough vocabulary. He may be structurally competent, but he has not been taught enough lexis...and the Communicative Approach can hardly take credit for the insight that language contains words and phrases as well as structures...
> ...in general there is not the least need to teach our students "the interpretive and expressive strategies of making sense amid a negotiable reality", even assuming that we were able to define what this involves. And to talk in these terms contributes nothing whatever to our understanding of how to teach foreign languages.....
> They need lexical items, not skills.... (44)

Unfortunately, the catalogue entry for his Cambeng course does not make the same point and it is to be hoped that both courses and catalogues will draw more attention to actual lexical work, rather than vaguely worded references to negotiating meaning strategies, or improving the learner's "communicative performance".

14.3 Pronunciation

One might assume that where a course is described as being primarily an oral course or an audio-visual one, compared, say, to one which emphasises reading and writing skills, the course-description in the catalogue would be bound to feature pronunciation and speechwork in general. It is therefore rather surprising to find in the entries for the courses that purport to emphasise oral work, like Heinemann's Contact, "a mainly oral course", or Macmillan's ACE, "an audio-visual course", hardly any reference at all on how oral work is introduced or practised and no specific reference to pronunciation, stress and intonation. Where there are cassettes mentioned in the description, there is sometimes a reference to speechwork done in them, though generally nothing detailed and there are only rare mentions in the text on how oral work is built into the student's programme.

One interesting point to note is that although it is extremely unlikely nowadays to come across any reference to the term drills in vocabulary or grammar work, the in-terms being practice or exercises or activities, it is not at all uncommon to find references to drills, in speechwork or on cassettes.

The following table shows what sort of reference there is in the text about speechwork in the course, or about the cassettes used on the course, and how frequently these references occur.

Table 12 Oral/aural work and Cassettes

	Pronunciation (Stress & Intonation)	Oral/aural practice listening comprehension	Cassette-work for class and individual students
Cambeng	Pronunciation and Intonation		Class-cassette + Student-cassette
Meanword		free oral practice + listening materials.	Student's Bk cass. + Drills cassette
Ontheway		emphasis first on listen. + speaking	2 cassettes : dialogues, comprehension texts.
Foundeng	Pronunciation and Intonation	partic. listening activities	2 per level; listening activities, dial. + drills
Express			cassette includes dialogue and pronunciation work
Mainco	Pronunciation		6 per level + 1 dialogue/songs recorded material for listening
Contact			3 per level; with dialogues, drills and oral texts.
Journeys			1 per level; texts, dialogues, and listen. activities.
Strategies		practice in speaking and listening	16 + cass. dial.s listen. texts, oral exercises/tests.
Kernel		oral production+ listening	14 cass: situations/dialogues, drills, work; for lab or pron. work; for lab. or self-study.
Mainline			50 cass. with texts/dial.s + songs
Follme		listening and speaking	2 per level: dialogues + listening material
Chall.		Listening, free discussion	6, with wide range of audio-mat. for practice
Esseng.			NONE
ACE		spoken practice, oral exercises	19, lang-lab. drills + tapes for each book
Conteng		partially guided conversation.	5 sets per 5 levels for listening activities
Newincen			2 per level; one each for dial/ conversation + drills
Function		listening comprehension dial.s/talks/conver.	1 per level
Access			4 sets per level + st. cassette drills + dialogues/texts
Stream		spoken exercises/drills/ listening practice.	21+, (3 levels)
Quartet			2 per level; unscripted recordings
Network		primary emphasis on speaking	1 commun. + 1 story cassette + 2 drills cassettes per level
Engforad			2 each for the 3 levels.

14.3.1 Recommendations

In view of so many courses concentrating on improving students' communication skills, it could perhaps be recommended that some mention might be made in a course-entry on how the oral/aural side of communication is being catered for, in class-work, as well as through (expensive) cassettes.

14.4 Activities

The various activities offered by the difference courses are many, but they tend to group together under certain headings, as can be seen in Table 13, following. Generally, the catalogue entry just lists its course-activities without enlarging upon any of them, as in these examples taken at random:

- activities which adults feel happy with;
- wide variety of communicative practice material for use in pairs of groups;
- free practice and role-play;
- listening activities;
- progress tests;
- do-it-yourself sections;
- problem solving;
- crosswords;
- note-taking;
- listening and reading comprehensions;
- self-study;

Labels like these can give us but a slight idea of the activities being promoted by the different courses but there is doubt among many writers whether increased activity in the classroom has produced more learning and whether, in fact, activities that are billed as new and exciting are in fact any different from before.

As Roger Bell describes:

> the activities promoted to help in the learning of the content have changed but little. (Although) we see today a greater feeling of freedom to experiment and to give the learner himself more control over the classroom activities....it seems that we are now much more comfortable about the content of the syllabus -- what we are to teach - but still floundering about seeking satisfying activities for how we are to teach. (45)

Ann Raimes makes much the same point :

> The old familiar themes of patterns/drills/rules/accuracy/ sequence are being replaced by a new set: communcation/ functions/use/reality/affective approaches....
> Yet however much we learn about the value of interactive, communicative activities, however much we try to change our approach, it is interesting to note how tradition can still claim us in subtle ways...
> From data collected from the classes of experienced informed and eclectic teachers, it was found that "contrary to the recommendations of many writers on second language teaching methodology, communicative use of the target language makes up only a minor part of typical classroom activities." The researchers (Long and Sato 1983) concluded that "Is the clock on the wall?" and "Are you a student?" are still the staple diet, at least for beginners. (38)

Some writers believe classroom activities are inhibited by the format of the textbook itself, as Fish and Dudley-Evans explain:

> Unfortunately, the format of a textbook can inhibit the development of classroom activities that are suitable for a communicative approach. A glance at textbooks that claim to have a communicative dimension will be enough to realise that the format of the units and the exercises/activities contained in them to a large degree resemble those that are found in older, structural textbooks. This is not to say that such exercises are totally inappropriate. What we are suggesting is that they, too often, do not go far enough in enabling the student to communicate effectively in the foreign language. Worse perhaps, they can on occasion inhibit spontaneous interaction. (46)

A different argument put forward about the value of activities found in course-books is that of Ingrid Freebairn, herself co-author of the well-known series, Strategies:

> Most teachers will find that their classes consist of a mixed range of levels and learning abilities. Tasks described in course-books will not account for students of different backgrounds and levels. (13)

While writers like Candlin and Breen (22, 32) are strong advocates of communicative activities which

encourage learning to communicate in order to develop their own learning

a view shared by Alan Maley when he describes activities that do not focus on the language as the primary target, but which are in themselves interesting and meaningful to the students:

> Absorption in the activity takes over from obsessive concern with the langauge. Such activities may take the form of problem solving (in the broadest sense), drama work, simulations, or self-discovery. The claim is that, by losing themselves in the task, learners lose inhibitions when using the language... (47)

--writers like Raimes (38) and Richards (37) are more sceptical. As Richards says:

> no studies have been undertaken by those promoting this view to demonstrate that classrooms in which learners are encouraged to use the target language for problem-solving, communicative tasks, information exchange, and meaningful interaction are indeed more conducive to successful language learning than classrooms in which the teacher dominates much of the teaching time or where the primary focus of activities is on more controlled and less creative uses of language....
> ...The claims for the value of communicative classrooms, interactive games, and information-gap activities cannot be accepted without data on the types of language-learning that result from such activities. (37)

It could be argued that even though no tests as yet show that students learn more or better, through activities in the classroom, perhaps tasks and activities that seem interesting and useful to students may well be a factor in motivating them to learn, as Littlewood suggests:

> students learn better if they practise the foreign language through vocabulary and topics that are relevant to their interests. Such practice is not only more efficient in terms of their learning-goals, but also more motivating. (39)

Apart from exercises and activities which, it is hoped, will help to motivate students and enable them to communicate effectively, there are, too, the exercises and activities to help students consolidate what they have covered, if not yet learned, in the course. The presence, or absence, of such exercises, recycling, consolidating, revising and testing, shows how the different courses stand on the question of mastery v. coverage, or of accuracy v. fluency.

According to Dr. Johnson

> People require more often to be reminded than instructed

and several EFL writers agree on the truth of that. As Hill and Dobbyn say:

> After a new item has been presented, whether it is vocabulary or grammar, it must be repeated in a systematic manner in the lessons which follow. A complete block of revision is an alternative, but it is not as good as making sure that the item comes up again at regular intervals from lesson to lesson. (48)

Unfortunately, this is not the rule. In his review of textbooks, Frechette (14) commented:

> The problem of non-recurrence of grammar and vocabulary ..cannot be passed by unnoticed

-- and this was what McCarthy also found, examining best-selling courses like OUP's Streamline, Longman's Kernel and Strategies courses:

> the new lexical items are not reinforced or practised in vocabulary exercises (42)

Several courses do include revision units, or language follow-up and checkup sections, like Meanword, Mainco and Newincen. But as Hill and Dobbyn have pointed out:

> (revision) is not as good as making sure that the item comes up again at regular intervals from lesson to lesson (48)

- and writers like Marton:

> most linear syllabuses and materials based on them include "revision lessons" at certain points but this is quite different from and less effective than a course in which the principle of constant revision is built into the very arrangement of the learning material. (33)

- and Howatt would also agree:

> Revision should be both cumulative and recurrent. When a learning point has been introduced into the materials, it should be used again and again in the succeeding units... In contrast to the idea of cumulative recurrence, the common technique at the present time is to try to teach a new point thoroughly at the time it is introduced into the syllabus. It is presented, practised, drilled and tested, and then in the next lesson it is forgotten. (8)

The argument for re-cycling material, cumulative recurrence, in spiral or cyclic syllabuses rather than for revision units at fixed poitns in linear syllabuses is not simply a question of spiral syllabuses v. linear ones, but also one of mastery v. coverage, accuracy v. fluency, all affecting effective communication.

With emphasis shifting away these days from absolute accuracy, and error analyses, and more attention being directed to communicative competence, EFL teaches and writers are probably coming to agree with Alexander:

> the paramount aim in a communicative course is to enable students to communicate effectively. In traditional courses correctness is sometimes over-emphasised to the extent that errors in pronunciation and/or grammar are often considered a serious matter whether they interfere with communication or not...
> While we must always draw the line at wholly unacceptable utterances, the degree of error we are prepared to tolerate is bound to vary in accordance with the abilities of individual learners. "Defective but effective communication" may be a reasonable aim if it means our students are not to be discouraged by the demands of perfection. (49)

As can be seen from Table 13, following, 11 courses do offer units with revision or consolidation exercises and a further two, 13 in all, offer tests and check-ups, sometimes of the self-diagnostic/language-check-up variety, such as Mainco, but only one course, Kernel, criticised in the McCarthy article for not reinforcing, re-cycling lexical material, actually uses the term recycling. However, the way the term is used in Longman's catalogue leaves the reader in some doubt about its interpretation here:

> There are 16 units, each containing 6 pages, and they allow for recycling of new material as well as consolidation of previously learned material.

But apart from exercises to ensure students review, consolidate or revise previous material, there is also the question of difficulty.

One argument goes that to give students confidence, a feeling of mastering certain points, and motivation to continue the course, the material and exercises given should not be too difficult as the students

might then become discouraged. This is a view expressed by Romero:

> The books should be attractive and the overall presentation should suggest that the material is easy to learn...The use of pictures helps in this respect. Excessive use of diagrams, phonetic transcription and vocabulary lists tends to scare the student. (50)

Widdowson, himself, has expressed the view that students learn better when they are already familiar with the content:

> ....a course which prepares students for dealing with English use in scientific communication should present the language not as something in isolation from what the students already know, but as an aspect of something with which they are already familiar. (51)

But the opposing argument is that if the material <u>is</u> known or too easy, the students will become bored, bewildered and disinterested, as Huckin, among others, argues here:

> Having tried a number of exercises from this series (Widdowson's own <u>English in Focus</u> series) on my own first-year undergraduate studetns, with virtually no success, I cannot be persuaded that exercises of this type manifest any of the pedagogical principles described above, except perhaps for adolescents...the subject matter of these exercises is so elementary that only beginning students would find it at all interesting. (52)

According to Ross,

> the selection of texts (which are criticised by more than one critic for being much too elementary to engage the interest of adult learners) proceeds from the idea that we should use material (and rhetorical structures) to lead them to study basic English discourse, with which they are, presumably, unfamiliar.....
>
> What is utterly lacking is what Keith Johnson calls an "information gap" between the text and the student's existing knowlege, which would motivate the student to want to read the text and answer questions about it....An exercise in which all the information is provided beforehand to the student will fail to prompt the student to use the text for learning language. (53)

Not only should exercises confront learners with information-gaps, as Huckin, Ross and Johnson all suggest, they should also be the reverse of easy, according to Brumfit who recommends challenging materials instead:

> A communicative methodology, then, would start from communication, with exercises which constituted communication challenges for students. As they attempted the exercises,

> students would have to stretch their linguistic capabilities to perform the given tasks.... (54)

The following table gives some indication of the type of exercises and activities the various courses promote. The table also shows the proportion of courses that specify activities "an adult would feel happy with" and those courses that give attention to individual/self-study/D-I-Y, pair and group work.

Table 13 Activities

	Adult Activities	Self/Indiv/D-I-Y Study	Pair Work	Group/class Work	Student Participation	Language Practice	Controlled Practice	Open-ended/Free Practice	Note-taking	Organised Writing	Reading Comprehension	Role-Play	Communication Activities	Problem-Solving	Revision/Review/Consolodation	Tests/Check-ups	Homework
Cambeng	✓	✓				✓											
Meanword			✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Ontheway			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓		
Foundeng				✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓			✓	✓
Express		✓		✓		✓				✓	✓					✓	✓
Mainco		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Contact				✓		✓											
Journeys				✓		✓					✓		✓		✓		✓
Strategies				✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Kernel	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Mainline						✓				✓							
Follme		✓								✓	✓						
Challenges		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓				✓				
Esseng.																	
ACE						✓									✓		
Conteng.						✓	✓					✓			✓		✓
Newincen.					✓	✓							✓		✓	✓	
Function.						✓				✓	✓						
Access						✓							✓				
Stream.	✓	✓				✓				✓					✓	✓	
Quartet			✓	✓					✓			✓		✓			
Network			✓	✓		✓		✓					✓		✓		
Engforad.	✓			✓		✓											

14.4.1 Summary

Because so little information is actually given in the catalogue-descriptions about the activities listed, whether communicative or revision, or how demanding or easy these are, there is not much to go on, with regard to the quality of the information.

How much space, overall, is allocated to the different types of activities or what activities the course actually mentions, however briefly, can be seen from the table.

14.4.2 Recommendations

As with vocabulary, it might be here also the case that publishers need to examine the kind of exercise and revision activites there is in the courses themselves, in the light of such studies as are now coming out, before any more attention can be drawn to these in the catalogue-descriptions. Until there is seen to be a "demand for it", it is unlikely to be a high priority among publishers to go into detail about how they re-cycle material, as against merely inserting periodic review units into the course, nor about how demanding or challenging their exercise and activity material really is.

One stumbling block with classroom activities, especially where adults are concerned, is that they so often do not seem relevant or real or appropriate which is a problem that also concerns the next category, subject-matter: whether this is fact or fiction; with narrow or wide cultural appeal; and with emphasis on authenticity or not.

15. Subject-matter

15.1 Fact or Fiction

What is more appropriate for adult groups: fact or fiction? This

question arouses conflicting opinions, on whether or not to use the framework of a storyline or episodes/adventures in the lives of fictional characters on the one hand, or to concentrate on factual material from topical/historical/scientific sources on the other hand. Because the material presented to the students obviously has an enormous influence on the language they learn, as well as the classroom and communication exercises and activities they engage in, it is naturally a matter of concern that this material, fact or fiction, is relevant and appropriate to these adult students.

Spaventa would have it that

> The content of the language lesson is the student (55)

where the learning material is actually based on what is generated among the students.

V.J. Cook has also found that

> a major source of content in the classroom is the students themselves. They have had experiences of life; they have opinions and ideas of their own...To go back to the analysis of coursebooks, at beginners' level student-contributed content was catered for on four pages out of ten, and at intermediate level on five pages out of ten: it is already fairly popular. (56)

Of the 23 courses here studied, OUP's Engforad alone claims to be actually based on what is generated among the students:

> Appropriate Subject Matter: Adults bring their own experiences, thoughts and ideas to the class. English for Adults uses these as the subject matter for each lesson.

However, as Cook explains, while

> if the teaching goal is emotional and social development, it is hard to imagine a more useful type of content (56)

nevertheless, there are many other difficulties involved in this type of content for teaching a varied group of adults.

> ...there may be psychological difficulties. Many students are prepared to talk about themselves up to a point, but are not willing to commit themselves any deeper....
> Students may also not expect to have to talk about themselves

> in the English class....
> Finally this type of content relies on the students actually having ideas and experiences to share...
> Though in many ways student-contributed content can be very stimulating, it cannot be taken for granted that it is appropriate for all situations and all learners. (56)

OUP's course, Engforad, is the only one of the 23 here to use this type of content as their main source of subject matter. It is therefore not typical of these 23 courses. Again, according to Cook,

> one reason why content is not discussed more frequently is that the choice is taken for granted. A typical general course is about the lives and adventures of imaginary characters. The main advantage of this type of content is that it motivates and entertains the students, rather like a television soap opera such as Dallas. The fictional story-line arouses universal interest and sweetens the pill of language learning.

Examples of this sort here include the Kernel course, which, in Book 1, offers

> an exciting story line based on a kidnap plot

- and the OUP course, Access which is based on

> Arthur's entertaining adventures.

Alexander, author of several children's and adult courses, including the two Longman courses, Mainline and Follow Me, included in this survey, does not believe in these fictional lives and adventures, taking the opposite view:

> Storylines can be suitable for children beginners' (up to the age of 12+)..However, the storyline generally palls in the case of adult zero beginners' textbooks, the antics of the characters becoming increasingly irrelevant to the needs of the learner as the course progresses. The acute linguistic restrictions make it impossible to present anything but the most mundane situations; the development of the storyline is extremely slow and ponderous; few -- if any -- course designers have the necessary literary skills to create and sustain a storyline which will really appeal to an adult. (49)

However, Longman do not appear to agree with their author, Alexander, on this point. The Kernel series, described in their heading for the course as

> one of the most successful and well-established courses for teaching English in the world

also devotes

> the last page of each unit (in Book 2) to an episode of a serial called the Visitor, a thrilling story which demonstrates the unique writing talent of Robert O'Neill.

On the other hand, CUP, in their new adult course, Cambeng, would agree with Alexander. Their course is described as

> not dominated by fictional characters and story lines.

Apart from these two extremes, the students' own experiences on the one hand and, on the other, complete fiction, there are other choices. Several of the courses (eg Kernel 2 and 3, Strategies 1,2,3, Network etc) while not using a story as such, do use a unifying theme involving a set of fictional characters. These are first introduced at the beginning of a course and, through the episodes (or adventures) in their lives, certain topics or themes are aired. Though the characters are fictional, the setting may be real. Strategies is set in Manchester, for example, while Kernel's action

> is set mainly in a real area of London

As well as maintaining interest, and providing, as Cook tells us, motivation and entertainment for the students, the story and characters provide a background which will reinforce and illustrate the language of everyday use, providing opportunities for communicative activities of all kinds like Asking the Way, Ordering a Meal and so on.

Courses with a storyline or with fictional characters, in real settings, are opting

> for essentially imaginary content, invented by teacher or course-writer specially for teaching language, rather than content drawn from the real world. An analysis of three beginners' course-books, for example, shows that an average of nine pages out of ten make use of imaginary content. Three equivalent intermediate courses had similar proportion -- seven pages out of ten. (56)

But in contrast to the imaginary content, and different too from the ideas and experiences of the learners themselves is the so-called real content.

This is generally information

> about the real world outside the classroom, its events, problems, and places. Some examples are a map of Stratford-on-Avon, used as a basis for an activity text that describes Stonehenge, or instructions on how to deal with a nose-bleed....the coursebooks that were analysed had real content on two pages out of ten at beginners' level, and three out of ten at intermediate level. (56)

Several authors are, of course, aware of the requirement to find material that will interest adults and, like Alexander and those behind the Cambeng course, quite a few feel it is through presenting interesting facts rather than stories or fictionalised material that students will become motivated and entertained, as Ingrid Freebairn, co-author of Strategies, describes:

> If you ask students who have dropped out of their English classes why they did so, you often hear this sort of reply: "The book was boring" or "We never talked about anything interesting". It is never easy to find topics of common interest even in groups that share the same age and nationality. However, you can be fairly sure that teenagers will find topics such as house hunting, budgets, politics and history less interesting than those which relate to their age-group, environment and lifestyles. Catering for a global market always has its problems but we have found that some common denominator topics are:
> - people
> - places
> - health
> - sport
> - famous personalities (13)

-- and William Lee echoes this:

> What lies at the heart of successful language teaching is subject-matter matched to the learners' experience and interests...
> Of prime importance is interest at the time of learning. Only this can sustain or awaken a desire to use the communicative resources of the new language. (57)

Interesting and factual subject-matter is often dealt with in a course, under certain topic or theme headings such as those which Ingrid

Freebairn describes. Journeys is one such course, described by Longman as topic-based.

> Alternate units extend the topics of this adventure (Operation Drake) and introduce general themes of wide appeal to young people. These authentic and international themes provide lively, stimulating and convincing contexts for the presentation of language.

Challenges is another course built on themes, themes which are

> highly motivating, thought provoking and immediately transferable to the students' own experiences.

As most of these writers explain, the topics chosen, and the selection of interesting facts, are those seen to be relevant and of interest to that particular group, teenager or adult. But Cook feels there are other factors that have to be considered here.

> The choice of interesting facts can be made partly by considering which topics people actually talk about... and more importantly by considering the overall goals of the course. A cognitive goal probably suggests the use of problems, games, and puzzles; a goal of self-development suggests real-life biographies and human problems. As with other content-types, it is important to establish that the interesting facts selected are seen as relevant by the students. (56)

However there is another difficulty with using a theme-based course, other than the difficulty of finding the right sort of interesting facts; theme-based courses are very often held out to be courses which inspire and enable students to communicate.

Challenges, for example,

> stimulates students to use English for communication tasks which have a direct relation to their own ideas and needs....Starting from reading, listening and note-making, chains of language actitives develop the learners' communicative skills from controlled language practice through to free discussion, groupwork and individual projects.

However while various writers and courses like Challenges recommend the topic-based approach for developing these communicative skills, there are, nevertheless, others who fear that communication is not really likely to benefit, as Keith Johnson explains:

> The major potential shortcoming of the approach lies in its suitability for developing proficiency at communication in conversational interactions. A theme-based approach making

> extensive use of project work runs the risk of overemphasising the "Language of Reporting" (describing, narrating).... The interactive skills necessary for conversational proficiency -- the ability to respond quickly and appropriately... to utterances whose content and form are not known in advance -- involve elements not required for acts of reporting, describing, narrating, and a qualitatively different kind of practice is required. (58)

Some courses compromise, the earlier books using fiction or fictional characters with adventures and episodes taking place in real settings, and later books in the series involving more use of themes and those facts -

> chosen for their intrinsic interest to adults

Two other points related to the subject of content, in courses, are that of cultural appropriateness and authenticity.

15.2 Cultural Element/Cultural Appropriateness

Several writers, notably those like Jenks (61) and Frechette (14), who have carried out extensive surveys of F.L. materials, have commented on the use of "cultural information" in texts and it is noticeable too that checklists on evaluating textbooks are also including such references:

> relevance to socio-cultural environment (27)

> Is cultural material presented?...
> Is cultural material presented so that the teacher is able to concentrate on establishing cultural contrasts? (19)

But there are those, and they include spokesmen from the publishers that I interviewed, who criticise courses on the market for being culturally inappropriate or unacceptable for certain areas of the globe.

It could be argued, for example, that the lifestyle of a film-crew in Manchester, as in Longman's Strategies, a rock musician as in Longman's Kernel, or a reporter for a radio station in OUP's Network, not to mention the outside covers of the books or the text illustrations, could all be considered inappropriate, or even offensive "cultural material" to offer to, say, a Gulf Arab. As Peter Strevens points out:

> In some societies, for instance, the kind of boy-girl relationships commonly found in TEFL textbooks, illustrations of girls in short dresses, reference to alcoholic drinks, mention of dogs as domestic pets, even relaxed relations between teachers and students if they are of different sexes -- all these may be culturally unacceptable. (59)

Elizabeth Joiner, in her article Evaluating the Cultural Content of FL Texts, (60) describes unacceptable cultural information of another kind, and she warns against textbooks that perpetuate stereotypes of prejudice in both text and illustrations:

> The student begins his study of a foreign language not as a tabula rasa but as an individual with ideas about, and an attitude toward, the foreign culture. What he encounters in the language class may serve to correct his misconceptions, to increase his cultural understanding, or to confirm him in his prejudices. (60)

Examples cited in the article include illustrations and text that would reinforce a student's belief that all Mexicans were poor peasants and all French immoral. Even using historical rather than contemporary illustrations, showing Britain, for example, as a land of tourist attractions like the Tower of London, or cartoons ridiculing certain characteristics or customs, can contribute to reinforcing the wrong attitudes in the students, towards the target culture.

On the other hand, it requires only small details, from the life of the native speaker, for a book to set the record straight, as Jenks discovered in his survey, on foreign language materials:

> Small touches..such as better photographic representations of natives, inclusion of reprints of new items (for example, obituaries, marriage notices) as well as "human relations" units are attempts to portray the native speakers as real and equal partners in the global enterprise of living. (61)

However, he found that

> many textbooks continue to ignore or overlook the culture and everyday life of the target populations.

This is surprising when one considers that as far back as 20 years ago, in 1961, the MLA was offering guidelines, presumably for both authors and for teachers, on cultural content for recordings, texts and teacher course-guides, such as this:

Excellent: The dialogs, stories, and other activities are those typical of the foreign children.

Acceptable: Some of the situations and stories are typical of American rather than the foreign culture.

Unacceptable: There is very little material related to the foreign culture. (62)

It could be that courses are not quite clear about what the content for culture should actually be; more than one critic comments that courses do not always draw a clear distinction between civilisation on the one hand, and culture, on the other:

> In some student texts culture permeates every lesson; one might say that there appears to be a sincere concern on the part of the authors to deal with culture although civilisation is often mistaken for culture. (14)

> Although civilisation permeates most texts, there is an increasing concern for hearthstone culture. (61)

Longman's Modern English Dictionary defines "civilisation" as -

> the sum of qualities of a particular civilised society

as eg Greek civilisation, whereas "culture" is -

> the social and religious structures and intellectual and artistic manifestations etc that characterise a society

- so it is perhaps no surprise that the two terms are confused in practice.

For V.J. Cook "culture" includes not only literature but also

> any information about the life of the people whose language is being studied -- what they eat, how they dress, how their political systems work, what sports they take part in, and so on. (56)

As well as being transmitted through the literature or historical readings of "the people whose language is being studied", culture can be transmitted in several other ways:

> The main vehicles for presenting cultural information continue to be the dialogues, cultural notes, pictures, and reading selections. (61)

Tucker agrees:

> The contents of oral practices and dialogs and the situations discussed therein can contribute meaningfully to the general presentation of the culture of English-speaking peoples.... And since effective control of the language requires at least a minimum of knowledge of the cultural implications in formulas, idioms, etc., presentation of the culture is really inescapable. (16)

But he adds a proviso, that this depends on whether -

> the learners are likely to live in, or visit, an English-speaking country

Since publishers admit to figures showing that approximately 90% of sales of EFL textbooks go overseas, and it must be considered that a great proportion of these could be for students who will not be likely to visit or live in an English-speaking country, courses permeated with UK culture could be considered generally unaceptable.

> ..cultural content is irrelevant to several..goals. For instance, English is needed as an international language by people who are not interested in British or American culture or perhaps even dislike it. (56)

Tucker makes the same point:

> ..if the text is designed for an area where English is taught as a second language for use as a medium of instruction, the learner is likely to need and want considerably less of the target culture. Rather, the content will be more appropriate for him if it is developed from a contrastive analysis of the two cultures and gives considerable weight to his native culture. Also, if the text is designed for learners from a single language background, its contents should be carefully controlled to avoid situations which offend local sensitivities or violate cultural taboos. (16)

This comment highlights two main areas where providing "cultural information" about the target language population can cause problems. For example, avoiding "cultural taboos" could be easy enough provided that the material was aimed only at societies and regions which shared one's own culture or at any rate many features of it. Hence, EFL courses for a great proportion of the European market could well be those like the Strategies, Kernel or Network series. As the authors of Heinemann's Main Course English series explain:

> we assume that the students will be in their late teens or early twenties. They will live in a European tradition and will be reasonably aware of the world around them. These assumptions affected the choice of different characters in the Course who use that language, the choice of the different situations these characters find themselves in, and the selection of games, songs and other classroom activities. (4)

It would therefore be perfectly feasible for European students to study from such courses making use, as many of them do, (Strategies, Kernel, Main Course English etc), of the Council of Europe's lists of functions and notions. But courses based on, or deriving much of their teaching material from, these functions and notions may not be so suitable for countries in Africa, Asia, or the Middle East. As Fish and Dudley-Evans explain:

> it must be borne in mind that the Council of Europe work was the product of the perceived needs of a particular area at a particular time. Even if the needs identified can be substantiated for Europe this does not necessarily mean that they have a relevance elsewhere. (46)

Other writers have drawn attention to the same point. Florence Stratton for example, noting Widdownson's statement that

> communicative functions are culture-specific in the same way as linguistic forms are language-specific (63)

adds that this means

> that the conditions governing the appropriateness of a speech act in the learner's first language are not necessarily the same as the conditions governing the most similar speech act in English. For example, promising in Hindi may not be the same as promising in English; or as C.O. Frake (1972) notes, asking for a drink in Subanun is certainly not the same as asking for a drink in English. In countries where English is a second language (as in ex-British colonies which form the majority of these countries) further cultural clashes are also possible. In such situations, English is adapted to fit the new cultural setting....
> Cultural clashes of both kinds must be dealt with in the classroom. This means distinguishing between the conditions governing appropriateness in the learner's first language and those of one or more varieties of English. (64)

This brings us back to the second area highlighted by Tucker earlier: the question of involving the learner's own culture.

"Distinguishing -- in the classroom -- between the conditions governing appropriateness in the learner's first language and those of..English" will almost certainly have to be up to the individual teacher, for it will be most unlikely that the textbook can contribute anything on the learner's own culture.

Tucker has suggested that in cases where the target language culture is desired or required, the textbook content

> will be more appropriate if it is developed from a contrastive analysis of the two cultures and gives considerable weight to his native culture. (16)

But this is not possible with the kind of textbooks currently on the market, produced for world-wide distribution, because publishers will claim that on the one hand it is financially impossible to contrive courses for each and every country incorporating its own culture, and, on the other hand, equally impossible to devise a single textbook that could distinguish all the appropriate features of the different cultural systems, in each and every country world-wide, to which the course is sent.

That has led, in some cases, to companies like Collins, Macmillan and others being commissioned by countries as diverse as Italy, Spain, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia, to devise courses for that particular market area. And then, sometimes, these specifically devised courses are adapted for use in other countries. Collins' course Time for English was developed in Spain and published there under the name of English on Time. Nelson, on the other hand, offers Sprint, "a special adaptation of New Incentive for Italian students of English" and Moving Up/On your Own, "a special American adaptation of Functional English".

When it is inappropriate, even potentially offensive, to offer UK cultural content, and where it is impossible (except for specially-commissioned courses) for the culture of any one overseas country to become the cultural content of the course, with regional names, characters

and customs being adopted, authors and publishers, with their eyes on a global market, with a wider sales potential than any one region could supply, have introduced a new kind of culture, "international culture" in keeping perhaps with the argument that English does not "belong to England" but is now an international language.

> Young teachers need to be informed about the way that English is now widely regarded, abroad, as an international possession -- it is no longer the cultural property of the British, the Americans, the Australians and New Zealanders. Teachers need to realise that, in a growing number of countries -- eg India, Singapore, parts of Africa -- English is used by vast and growing populations of people (26 millions in India alone) who never meet us native speakers and who have no desire or need to model their English on ours. (60)

But while the writers of Heinemann's Main Course English course (4), like others in their position,

> accept that an EFL course should reflect English as the language of international culture..

there are also problems arising from this:

> We wanted very much to include some genuine content which would be informative, educational and stimulating. But once again the fact that we were writing a general course meant that we were faced with a host of problems in connection with content, and these problems, together with commercial pressures, push the writer towards the "international culture" of English. While this is logical, it has to be remembered that, for most learners, situations arising out of this "international culture" have very little cultural or social reality. They are largely a "cellophane secondary reality" created by magazines, records and film and TV. (4)

There is no mention in Heinemann's catalogue-description of Main Course English of either English or international culture; only that "lessons actively encourage learners to communicate both about themselves and the world around them".

Of the 23 courses in the study, only one, Strategies, specifically mentions "cultural information". Others describe themes, topics, situations, settings that are authentic and real and intended to convey background, but the catalogue reader is left to guess whether the topics,

settings, background are all specifically those of the UK or something wider like the international scene.

15.3 Authentic/Real

Labels like authentic and real are now increasingly found in EFL writings and in descriptions for EFL courses, applied to language, themes, settings, and so on.

Sometimes the contrast between fictional subject-matter and real content is confused with the contrast between authentic and non-authentic language, if, as Cook explains,

> by authentic language we mean language produced naturally by native speakers, rather than language specially designed for teaching...It is, for instance, possible to have real content treated in non-authentic language -- for example, a text about Stonehenge specially written for the classroom. Authentic language seems to imply real content, but the converse is not true. (56)

It is inevitable that, along with other in-labels like communicative or functional, the term authentic is increasingly being employed in EFL catalogues to describes their materials or the language in the courses, as described in the article, Using Authentic Materials, (65).

> One of the words that has been creeping into English teaching in the past few years is authentic. It has a kind of magic ring to it: who after all would want to be inauthentic? It sounds as if any committed teacher must try to be authentic, and that the students' development in their new language is bound to be handicapped if it does not give them authentic experiences.... (65)

and this has also been the experience of Anthony Lynch:

> ... the application in course descriptions and prospectuses of the term authentic has come to be regarded by many teachers as bestowing an a priori seal of approval on the materials in question. (66)

And this would appear true of half the courses studied here.

Authentic is used by them mostly in conjunction with material, item, sources:

wide use of authentic material	(Cambeng)
a large number of authentic items..	(Ontheway)
use of language in authentic settings	(Mainline)

-- but there are

other, strange combinations:

semi-authentic	(OUP)
authentically-based	(Longman)
authentic styles	(Longman)
authentic reading and listening practice	(Longman)

How authentic for example are materials which are semi-authentic or only authentically-based?

The use and misuse, of the terms is a complicating factor in any discussion of authentic materials in the classroom. Jo McDonough has made a collection:

> Genuine, authentic, real, natural, scripted, contrived, semi-authentic, semi-scripted, simulated, simulated-authentic -- we are in another terminological jungle in which it is all too easy to lose sight of learners. (40)

Anthony Lynch has collected a different set:

> From among writers on language-related topics, here is a selection of synonyms for authentic: realistic, real-life and native (Canale and Swain 1980, actual (McDonough 1978), natural (Crystal and Davy 1975), genuine (Dakin 1973) ...(66)

and he suggests:

> The evidence from my perusal of language teaching publishers' catalogues is that authentic and its fellows have begun to function within the domain of teaching as natural does in that of advertising, namely, as some sort of equivalent to Orwell's doubleplusgood. This promiscuity of use is not surprising, since the whole question of what is popularly understood as authenticity is a murky one. (66)

It is not in fact easy then to determine exactly what the catalogues are offering when they say they use authentic material or language in authentic settings. For example, if by authentic material the catalogues are referring to what Brian Tomlinson calls authentic materials in his definition

> materials such as newspaper articles, brochures, train tickets, letters, advertisements, recordings of the news, airport announcements, etc, which were originally used in real situations and were not designed for use in language teaching (67)

- then, it could be said there is nothing new or revolutionary about any of this. Teachers have been using realia, such materials as these, in EFL classrooms, for years.

Where there has been most debate, however, is not so much with authentic material as with authentic language. This expression is deceptive implying as it does that there is an alternative, inauthentic or artificial language, that is being offered by teachers who are not abreast of the latest developments.

What authentic is most usually in contrast with, however, can either be simplified language (language derived from another text and adapted to suit a lower level of language comprehension or ability, from that of the original audience) or language written for the classroom, made-up texts especially designed to illustrate language-teaching points, and often criticised for concentrating on usage rather than use. And, as Morrow describes,

> at the moment.. most of the texts we find in general language teaching books are of the second sort made up by the textbook writer. (68)

Opinion is divided on whether it is wise to give absolute beginners spoken and written texts which are authentic, ungraded and unsimplified:

> We do not begin with authenticity; authenticity is what the learners should ultimately achieve: it represents their terminal behaviour.
> ...it makes no sense simply to expose learners to genuine language use unless they know the conventions which would enable them to realise it as authentic... (69).

> One could say, collect and use real honest-to-goodness speech, caught and recorded as people acually talk. But unfortunately real speech samples can be inefficient and confusing....No, we must have realistic samples, not real ones. (70).

> I am not at all sure that the most efficient or desirable way to learn..rules (of use) in a foreign language is through random exposure to authentic texts. For it seems to me that in such texts things that are useful and generalisable run the risk of being hidden by a cloud of things which are particular and thus trivial.... despite the attractions of using real language in the clasroom, mere exposure to such language is an inefficient way of acquiring general competence.(68)

> Too much insistence on contextual appropriateness... manifests the victory of a specific linguistic naturalism over sound didactic principles, since the materials writer is more concerned about how to present a given structure in a proper context than how to teach it. (33)

And there is qualified support for authentic material from Michael Swan (44) and Alan Cunningsworth (71):

> .. it is obviously desirable to use both scripted and authentic material at different points in a language course for different reasons. Scripted material is useful for presenting specific language items economically and effectively .. Authentic material on the other hand, gives students a taste of real language in use. (44)

> Clearly all teaching material, particularly at the earlier stages of learning, cannot and should not be composed of authentic language. It is, however, beneficial to the learner's confidence and motivation, and therefore to his overall learning performance, to be able to cope with a limited amount of authentic language.... It is not essential for the student to understand everything in order to identify and assimilate the essential information. (71).

Several of the courses are described in their catalogues as having authentic materials right from the earliest levels. Launching Book 1 of their new course, the CUP catalogue describes it as making

> wide use of authentic material

Longman in their Starting Strategies, uses Manchester-

> as a setting for the introduction of authentic language.

In the course itself,

> the emphasis is placed on authenticity... and spoken and written language is introduced by means of authentic reading and listening practice from the very beginning.

While half the courses in the catalogues boast of authentic language or authentic settings or items, none of the rest actually promotes the non-authentic, the simplified or made-up text. The publishers, probably, share the feeling of guilt at using unnatural materials with the teachers that Michael Swan describes:

> Many teachers nowadays probably feel, in a vague kind of way, that there is something basically unsatisfactory, or even wrong, about using scripted dialogues or specially written teaching texts. These are (we have been told) unnatural, and contrived... Often, of course, this is all too true, and the general quality of published EFL dialogues and prose texts is a

> powerful argument for the increased use of authentic materials....
> (However), this is an argument against bad scripted material, not against the use of scripted material in general (44).

Some writers, like Widdowson, actually prefer their students being given simple texts, to being given simplified ones, derived from original, short stories or other text:

> a simple account is a genuine instance of discourse, designed to meet a communicative purpose... A simplified version, on the other hand, is not genuine discourse, it is a contrivance for teaching language. (72)

With other writers, however, simplified versions are generally justified as bringing before students, versions of texts that in the original could have been too difficult for them to comprehend. And, because

> there is no absolute linguistic index of simplicity. Simplification of texts must be related to audience comprehension...(73)

how much simplification is required, will be determined by the needs of the students.

And simplified texts are also justified as preparing students for eventually being able to cope with un-modified, authentic language. Writers like Davies (73) Madsen and Brown (70) and Leslie Hill (74) for example, all make a case for non-authentic or, in other words, graded, simplified or made-up texts, at certain levels and with certain learners:

> It is no good pouring a lot of new language items over a student all at the same time in the hope that some of it will stick. It may amuse the teacher to rush on to interesting things, but it is quite useless to do so if the students are unable to follow. Unfortunately, many teachers find carefully graded material boring to themselves, and communicate this feeling to their students instead of encouraging them to enjoy their work. (74).

There is, however, not just one debate about the use of authentic language in the classroom: whether or not to use real texts rather than graded, simplified or made-up text.

There is another, different debate about whether any of the so-called authentic texts can really be considered authentic at all. The debate focuses on the interpretation of the term authentic in the context

of the classroom. Can, for example, menus and railway timetables used as "reading practice material", be justifiably labelled authentic, when they are not being used authentically, in their "authentic settings"?

Morrow, for one, would be very cautious about using the term authentic for any language material taken out of its original context and given to an audience very different from its intended one. To him, a text can be described as authentic only if it is a text which represents -

> language appropriate to all the aspects of one particular situation... In other words the topic, function, channel and audience of the text will all affect the language which is used. (68).

But this, as we know, is very seldom the case, in the classroom situation.

> If the situation changes in the slightest way the language used will also change, and this fact ultimately makes the concept of authentic in language teaching terms unattainable. For the language we present as authentic is authentic only to the very particular situation in which it was first used. By using it in a classroom for teaching purposes, we are destroying this authenticity. (68)

Widdowson makes the same point:

> ..it makes no sense simply to expose learners to genuine language use... confronted with a class of physics students wanting to learn English so as to read textbooks in their subject, I might be tempted to select passages of discourse which are thematically relevant from a whole range of sources on the assumption that I am thereby furthering the communicative purpose for which the learners need the language.. But if I then exploit these passages for the traditional kind of comprehension question, structure exercise and so on, their authentic potential remains unrealised. I might just as well have selected an extract from the Highway Code or Winnie the Pooh. The fact that the data is genuine is irrelevant. (69).

Where these writers see the classroom as a situation where authenticity can be destroyed, other writers see the classroom as the setting in which language, any language, graded, simplified, real or realistic, can be authenticated.

> It is no more the teacher's business to consider authenticity than it is the learner's to simplify. Authenticity.. is a matter of the involvement of the audience. It is not that a text is understood because it is authentic but that it is

> authentic because it is understood. In teaching our concern is with simplification, not with authenticity. Everything the learner understands is authentic for him. It is the teacher who simplifies, the learner who authenticates. (73)

Breen shares this view:

> Perhaps all other questions of authenticity in language teaching may be resolved if the potential of the class-room is fully exploited. Language learning involves a working towards a range of appropriate interpretations and judgements -- even of the same text...
> We should be willing to welcome into the classroom any text which will serve the primary purpose of helping the learner to develop authentic interpretations. That is, any text which engages the learner's effort to communicate with it, thereby drawing out of the learner the use and discovery of those conventions of communication which the text exploits...
> The learner may authenticate or give authenticity to a text from his own state of knowledge and frame of reference. If we focus upon learner interpretation of a text, then we may regard texts as potential means for the learner towards authentic communication in the target language. (75).

Opinion, then, is very divided on how valuable authentic material or authentic language really is, in the classroom. Many convincing arguments have been put forward for not using authentic, ungraded material andfor using materials which are simplified or specially prepared for the learner.

But in general, writers do feel that authentic materials, "communication by and for native speakers, writers or readers" (32), properly introduced and appropriately exploited in the classroom, can play an important part in the learning process, if only by motivating the learner:

> I shall not attempt to argue that authentic texts never have value... I want to mention one more area where they seem to be of great use - that is in the area of motivation. (68).

> ..why should you use (authentic materials) and how can they fit into your classroom? Let us first look at some of the reasons for using them. Perhaps, the most important is the students' motivation and interest. (65).

Several of the catalogues tie in their use of authentic material to stimulating and motivating the learner.

In Longman's description for Journeys, we read:

> These authentic and international themes provide lively, stimulating and convincing contexts for the presentation and practice of language.

Similarly, in their description of

Starting Strategies, they write:

> The material in Starting Strategies, is highly motivating. ..Throughout.. the emphasis is placed on authenticity...

- while OUP

describe their task-based course:

> Quartet involves learners in a wide range of motivating activities that require them to understand and produce authentic language.

In the following table the various kinds of subject-matter: fact, fiction, or both; student-oriented or student-contributed; culturally-appropriate; authentic or not, are set out and it can be seen just how these are distributed between all the courses of the study.

Table 14 Subject-Matter: Fact/Fiction; Culturally-appropriate; Authentic

	Storyline	Fictional Characters	Real Setting/ Background	Reinforced by Photographs	Topics/themes	Student-Contributions	Student-Oriented	Fact + Fiction	Not Specified	UK Culture	"Culturally Appropriate"	International Appeal	Authentic Materials	Authentic Language	Other Synonyms used	Other Combinations	No mention of "authentic" or synonyms
Cambeng					✓		✓						✓				
Meanword									✓								None
Ontheway									✓				✓	✓	everyday natural		
Foundeng							✓										None
Express							✓	✓									None
Mainco					✓							✓	✓	✓		authentic tasks	
Contact									✓								None
Journeys				✓	✓		✓					✓	✓		original (photos)	Authentic themes	
Strategies		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	real-life	auth.-based	
Kernel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		everyday	auth. cult. b.gr. / authentic styles	
Mainline			✓		✓							✓			real-life		
Follme					✓												None
Chall.s					✓	✓	✓										None
Esseng									✓								None
ACE									✓								None
Conteng												✓					None
Newincen				✓	✓	✓	✓								realistic,natural	everyday English	
Function					✓								✓			authentic sources	
Access	✓	✓															None
Stream					✓		✓								realistic		
Quartet				✓	✓								✓	✓		semi-authentic	
Network		✓		✓		✓											None
Engforad						✓	✓										None

15.4 Summary

Opinion is divided not only on the use of fact or fiction with adults, but also on whether to use authentic material or not (especially with beginners). Finding a subject-matter that is appropriate for adults as a group, as well as interesting and motivating to them as individuals, is also is also complicated by the problem of devising or finding material that is also culturally appropriate. The catalogues do not always make it clear what sort of subject-matter has been chosen (5 of the course-descriptions make no mention of fact or fiction) nor whether the material is slanted towards the visitor to the UK, with UK culture emphasised, or whether a bland "international culture" is promoted.

15.5 Recommendations.

Because the influence of the subject-matter is so crucial in both motivating and sustaining the interest of the students, perhaps it could be made clearer in the course-entries just what sort of subject-matter is being adopted. If all copy-editors could, for example, describe whether the course is based on fact(s) rather than fiction, right from the beginning; whether the material is particularly slanted towards the presentation of a UK culture, or more of an international one; and whether by authentic materials, they mean realia such as maps, diagrams, puzzles and so on, or texts not specifically written for the classroom, then the reader will have a much clearer idea of the course.

16. Course Package.

While most of the information about the course is, in the main, given in general paragraphs about the course as a whole, or in paragraphs about the student's book in particular, more information about the course can be gleaned from what is said (or left out) about other items in the course-package. Increasingly, nowadays, there are sets of cassettes for aural/oral work, typescripts for the Teacher and student, test-packs, wall-pictures and a range of other items. However, the main component, these days, of any course-package, apart from the student's book itself, is the Teachers's book.

16.1 Teacher's Guides.

Apart from a student's book, the course-book, nowadays it is the teacher's book which is probably the next most important ingredient in any course-package. All 23 courses in this study have a teacher's guide: in fact, even though several of the courses extend over 4,5 or more levels, there is a separate teacher's book for every student's book, except in the case of Longman's long-running course Essential English, which has no teacher's book for their last level, level 4 and the two courses from Macmillan, where ACE has no separate teacher's books for the upper 2 levels and where Contemporary English has 1 teacher's book only for levels 1 and 2.

As far back as 1973, in his survey of elementary and intermediate French books between 1968-73, Frechette was surprised by the growing number of courses which did not rely, as before, simply on a preface or introduction in the student's book for setting out the aims and content of the course, but which had produced separate manuals or guides for the teacher.

> The manuals discuss philosophy, rationale, scope, and organisation; they give explanations and instruction for presentation of materials, illustrate unit or lesson plans, and offer numerous suggestions and source materials. .. the teacher's manuals include a breathtaking amount of information, suggestions, or instructions and an abundance of activities, techniques and valuable notes for classroom use. (14)

Similarly, in his survey of Foreign Language Materials, Jenks notes how teacher's guidelines were becoming "more useful" including as they did,

> sample lesson plans, suggested teaching techniques, charts, chapter summaries of grammatical objectives, suggested realia for culture, lists of useful classroom expressions, proposals for planning short- and long-term goals, and optional activities....
> Teachers's guides are better, bigger and more precise than they have been in the past,. Quizzes and tests are provided.. thereby freeing the teacher from the task of constructing all evaluative instruments independently. (61).

Though Frechette was surprised, in 1973, to find separate teacher's guides coming on the market, in 1961 the MLA (62) in their list of criteria for the evaluation of language materials, included a section on Teachers' Course Guides with 7 different categories under which to assess the guides, such as Provision for Classroom Activities, Provision for Evaluation of Progress and so on.

In his Preface for the Teacher's book of his course First Things First (11), first issued in 1967, Alexander describes what he had in mind for the ideal teacher's book:

> ..books which attempt to address both the teacher and the student at the same time are unattractive in appearance (and) the pages are cluttered with information.
> It should be recognised that the students' book is not a vehicle for conveying information but an aid for practising the language... A teacher's handbook.. should be in every way complementary to the students' book and should contain practical information and material which will be used in each lesson -- not merely hints and suggestions.... Ideally the students' book should be interleaved in the teacher's book as this relieves the teacher of the tedious task of having to work from two different books (often with different page numbering) at the same time. The material should be laid out on facing pages for easy reference. (11).

And there are several other writers who have suggestions of their own on what these new teacher's guides should contain.

Hill and Dobbyn list at least 8 ingredients for a teacher's book and only 3 for the student's one:

> The teacher's book should contain much more...
> What is needed is a book which will show the average teacher how to present and drill each new point orally before he goes on to the reading lesson based on it...
> The teacher who can stand up and do interesting, useful oral work without preparation is a rare person: the average teacher, like the average actor, does best when he is part of a team -- in his case, the expert textbook writers being his partners. (48)

Josie Levine makes a similar point:

> It is the role of materials to support teachers in this (EFL) demanding form of teaching .... they will have as their core a teacher's book which not only suggests activities and teaching steps for utilising an activity for language learning, but will also demonstrate how to do it, how to operate guidance and control, when to release it, how to select function and structures and how to contextualise learning ... the materials act as a model; they are part of an in-service training course. (76).

Heinemann would seem to have provided such a materials package in their course, Contact English, which they describe:

> It's comprehensive: it contains all the material needed for a complete intensive course which need not be supplemented by any other material...
> As the basis of the classwork is in the teacher's material and not in the student's book, the teacher can use as little or as much material as necessary.
> The clear layout enables the teacher to follow the detailed lesson plans at a glance, thereby reducing the time needed for preparation.

Here, the catalogue, like Hill, Dobbyn and Josie Levine, points to the advantages of a comprehensive package where the teacher need look no further for material, and where he is provided with detailed lesson plans --

thereby reducing the time needed for preparation

But there are disadvantages too if the teacher sees himself as bound to, or controlled too rigidly, by a detailed and demanding master-plan.

It could be argued that this is the sort of book which has more advantages as a prop for the non-native or inexperienced teacher, but is to be avoided by the experienced teachers who might feel it constrains both them and their classes.

Lado is one writer who seems to have foreseen that such a manual

could be thought too prescriptive:

> In order to facilitate the professional work of the teacher, which is very complex, the materials should supply a teacher's manual, not to prescribe every step of the teaching, but to explain the lexical, grammatical, pronunciation, and cultural problems that are likely to be encountered by the students, to provide supplementary material that the teacher might use as needed, to suggest successful techniques for particular problems, and to describe games and other activities that will enhance motivation and contribute to good classroom management. (77).

O'Neill is very critical of language institutes or textbooks which -

> issue very elaborate materials to their teachers with carefully detailed goals and sub-goals for each lesson. Each lesson moves from carefully planned input stages to equally carefully planned output phases (the computer terms are no accident), such as preplanned drill or exercise. Such lesson plans may even allow for free stages, but usually strict time limits are set and these outputs are free only in the sense that they are slightly less pre-planned than the other phases of the lesson. (17).

Ideally perhaps, the teacher's book could provide suggestions and information for each lesson, without constraining the teacher to follow rigid step-by-step lesson plans.

Among the 23 courses described here, it is difficult to tell how full and informative the teacher's guide is relative to the student's one (several writers like Hill and Dobbyn, having suggested that the best guides include more material than the student-book), because 3 firms, CUP, Longman's and OUP, with 14 courses between them, do not give page numbers (hence size of book), though sometimes there are clues in the text, showing for example, that the teachers's book includes all the student material and more besides, as in the case of CUP's Cambeng, Longman's Kernel and OUP's Streamline courses.

It cannot even be inferred that it is likely to be the older, old-fashioned courses that offer the smaller guides; while teacher's guides for ACE, one of the older courses, are larger than their student-books, the relatively new Collins' Express course has a smaller teacher's guide than its student-book. Even in those cases where prices were available,

it could not be inferred that the higher prices indicated a bigger book.

Express for example, retails its 80-page student-book for £3.25

its 64-page teacher-book for £3.50

Ontheway, similarly, retails its 145-page student-book for £3.95

and its 76-page teacher-book for £4.50

Table 15, following, sets out a list of items culled from the catalogue-description of the 23 courses. How much of the information, which has been described by Frechette, Jenks, Hill and Dobbyn, and Levine as being a necessary part of today's teacher-guide, matches that listed for each course can also be derived from the table.

Table 15 Teachers' Book/Guide

	Number of Teacher-Book pages compared to Student-book pages	Price of Teacher-book compared to price of Student-Book	Amount of description Student-Book	Features mentioned/ space in cat.
Cambeng	More than st-bk *	Double the price	One paragraph	a,bii,d,fii,r, s,t.u
Meanword	Not given	More: £5.95 for T-bk £3.50 for S-bk	Two paragraphs	bi,fi,gi/gii
Ontheway	Half or less	More: £4.95 : £3.95	One paragraph	bii,e,ki,u
Foundeng	Much less(eg.96:128pp)	More: £3.95 : £2.75	One para. x 3	bii,e,ki/kii
Express	Less: 64: 80pp	More: £3.50 : £3.25	None	None
Mainco	More: 224:192pp	More: £5.95 : £3.50	One paragraph	a,bi,d,v.
Contact	More: 272:208pp	More: £5.50 : £2.75	Two paragraphs	c,fii,kv,v
Journeys	Not given	More: £4.10 : £3.20	One paragraph	bi,gii,i,ki,nii p,r,u.
Strat.s	Not given	More: £4.20 : £3.60	One para. x 6	bi/iv,d,gi,kii m,o,q,r,t,u.
Kernel	More than st-bk *	More: £5.60 : £3.20	One para. x 3	a,bi,kii,i,ni/ ii,o,p,r.
Mainline	Not given	More: £13.60 : £7.80	None	None
Follme	Not given	More: £3.90 : £3.20	One paragraph	c,e
Challs	Not given	More: £6.10 : £3.70	One paragraph	bi,d,fii,o,r,
Esseng	Not given	More: £2.70 : £2.20	One sentence	None
ACE	More: 224: 160pp	More: £3.50 : £3.15	None	None
Conteng	Not given for T-bk.	Same price: £2.95	less than one sentence	None
Newincen	More: 144: 96pp	More: £4.15 : £3.25	One paragraph	a,j,ki,x,y
Function	Less: 64: 128pp	Less: £2.95 : £3.95	None	None
Access	Not given	More: £5.00 : £2.85	One column	bii,d,h,ni,p,u.
Stream	More than st-bk *	More: £5.50 : £3.35	One paragraph	a,bii,ki/iv/v/w
Quartet	Not given	More: £4.50 : £3.30	One column	bi/ii,d,r,u,y,
Network	Not given	More: £5.50 : £3.25	One sentence	c
Engforad	Not given	More: £5.00 : £3.75	None	None

Features of Teacher's Book mentioned/described in catalogue

a. St-bk pp. interleaved/ incorporated in T-Book
bi. Step-by-step/unit-by-unit notes;
bii. Notes on each section/chapter.
biii. Lesson plans for sample units;
biv. Models for stud. performance
c. Comprehensive/detailed guidance
d. Introductions on methodology/ theory/principles.
e. Overview of course aims and learning goals.
fi. Syllabus and methodology;
fii. Alternative teaching strategies
gi. General teaching advice,
gii. Background.
h. Detailed explanations of teaching
i. Tips/help/suggestions on method-ology/technique
j. Problem areas/difficult language points discussed.
ki. Suggestions for further practice
kii. Suggestions for activities.
kiii. Suggestions for homework/prep-aration; kiv. Wide variety of activities
kv. Imaginative ideas for introducing/practising structures.
l. Guide/Suggestions on pronun.
m. Breakdown of language used in each unit.
ni. Unit summaries/reviews;
nii. Language summaries.
o. Indexes of functions, structures, etc.p. Wordlists.
q. Cultural information.
r. Tapescript/print-out of cassette/oral materials.
s. Tests: t.Key to tests; u.Key to exercises in st-bk and workbook.
v. Clear lay-out; w. Spirally-bound for ease of use.
x. Presentation times; y. Other.

* Text indicates Teacher's book includes student's material, plus.

16.1.1. Summary.

Suggestions and recommendations for the Teacher's guide over the previous 20 years can be seen from Table 15 to have been taken up by many of the courses, in their own guides. However, over a third of the courses do not mention any features of their teacher's guide at all. The arguments for a detailed guide, including as Frechette describes -

> a breathtaking amount of information, suggestions, or instructions and an abundance of activities, techniques and valuable notes for classroom use. (14)

-- are put forward by writers like Alexander (11), Hill and Dobbyn (48) Jenks (61) and Levine (76) who believe the teacher in the classroom, and in preparation beforehand, needs all the help he can get. The book is seen as a valuable aid not simply for the non-native and inexperienced teacher, but also as Hill and Dobbyn describe, for the average teacher too:

> the average teacher, like the average actor, does best when he is part of a team -- in his case, the expert textbook writers being his partners. (48).

However, it could be thought that if lesson plans are too detailed and specific, they could rob the teacher of any initiative, and the teacher (or the more experienced ones) might feel constrained as writers like O'Neill (17) and Lado (77) suggest:

> ..a teacher's manual (is) not to prescribe every step of the teaching, but to explain the lexical, grammatical, pronunciation, and cultural problems...(77)

16.1.2. Recommendations.

It would be helpful to the catalogue reader if the catalogues were to give clearer indications of how detailed and how comprehensive their teacher-guides actually were, by giving the number of pages, saying whether the students' pages were interleaved, and whether help for the teacher was provided in the form of tips, hints and suggestions or detailed lesson plans or lists of activities and exercises, as well as teaching techniques.

16.2 Supplementary materials/course components

Courses vary. There are some, generally the older courses, which depend mainly on nothing more than a student's book and a teacher's guide, for every level; others offer a multi-media package which can contain dozens of different items.

Crystal-ball gazing, back in 1973, about the course-books of the future, Florence Steiner made several predictions, including these:

> a. Books probably will appear in segments to promote greater flexibility. They may appear in workbook or paperback form.
>
> b. There will be greater use of learning activity packets -- adaptable materials with several possible performance objectives.
>
> c. There will be some self-teaching materials -- books, tapes filmstrips -- that will not require the presence of the teacher at all times.
>
> d. More attention will be given to the ways in which students learn a foreign language. Sections of texts or books will be devoted to this topic for student use.
>
> e. More attention will be paid to "phasing" students into foreign language study... some may abandon it for a period of time and may then choose to re-enter the field. Materials for review and "phase-in" will be needed.
>
> f. Textbook writers will give greater consideration to the interests of students than they have in the past ... Students therefore will play a more important role in the development of their study materials.
>
> g. Publishers will offer a variety of materials at one level. ... These publishers will, moreover, offer criterion - referenced tests that measure each of the published objectives and prove that their texts will be best help the student achieve the desired objectives. (79)

As a study of the courses now on the market will show, a great many of Steiner's predictions have already come about.

For example, taking the first prediction listed here, several of the courses in this survey are published in part editions, segments A and B, as well as in complete editions. Henemann's Main Course English, Longman's Kernel and OUP's Access and Streamline all come out in segments or part editions, (at least for the first 1 or 2 levels) as well as a complete edition, and Longman's Mainline comes out only in segments.

There are also examples among the courses examined here, of those self-study materials she predicts. Longman's Follow Me is promoted in their catalogue as a course with two sets of material, one for institutional use, the other for self-study, but other courses cater too for some self-study among students. Challenges, for example, with its cassettes and videos offers a viewer's handbook -

> specially designed for those not using Challenges in the classroom, but who follow the series at home on TV

- and CUP describe their Cambridge English course as one that

> often allows students to make choices about their learning

- and they provide a student's cassette -

> for students who wish to have their own selection of the recorded material for reference and practice.

More attention is being given to the way in which students learn and several courses, in the catalogue-description, refer to this. The Cambridge English Course, for example -

> allows for a range of different learning styles and has a highly varied teaching approach

- while OUP describe their special adult course English for Adults as being based on what adults want:

> Many adults expect to learn a foreign language structurally English for Adults is structurally based....

And similarly, because publishers are aware that many students have tried to learn English and abandonned the attempt only to try again later, materials are nowadays on the market catering for this false beginner, as for example, The Cambridge English Course and Longman's Strategies.

Publishers are also offering "a variety of materials at one level", with courses like Strategies and Kernel, both from Longman's offering alternative routes, within one course.

And more and more publishers are offering to bring out test packages for their own courses. Among the 23 in this survey, 7 offer separate tests with a key for the teacher (OUP's Streamline promote theirs under the heading FREE TESTS) and Heinemann promise that they have test packs in preparation for their levels 1 and 2, with level 3, Advances, already offering language check-up tests.

Frechette commenting on language textbooks between 1968-1973 feels that not enough has yet been done about testing:

> Increasing attention to the evaluative process has produced some noteworthy advances in the form of teachers' test manuals, student test booklets, progress quizzes, self-tests, and testing tapes, but too little has been done in this area. Textbook type tests undoubtedly test material learned in the classroom, but how well would the results compare with those with unfamiliar situations. It would appear that the student might get a false sense of achievement. One basic weakness encountered in the tests is their lack of information on validity and reliability. (14)

Frechette, writing in 1974, just after Steiner's article was published, describes how, even then, several courses had diversified away from the basic student/teacher book type of course.

> (Supplementary materials) is the area in which the authors have made the greatest advances. Although some textbooks make no pretense in this direction, most have a significant and very useful number of varia, realia, all types of audio-visuals, etc... tapes, records, films, filmstrips, transparencies; pictures, drawings, charts, posters, flash cards, maps, songs; flannel boards, figurines; and workbooks, some with detachable sheets and others on ditto masters ....(14).

Out of the enormous variety of supplementary aids available now, choosing what would suit the requirements of a specific class or course is not easy. According to Josie Levine (76) many factors have to be taken into account including the students' abilities, aptitudes and interests as well as the teacher's attitude and experience. And to help the teacher make the best possible choice, the MLA as far back as 1961 brought out a list of criteria for the evaluation of materials, with sections on discs and tapes, tapescripts, readers, films, filmstrips and slides, pictures and wall-charts, offering clear basic guidelines such as

these relating to the size of wallcharts:

> Excellent: The details of the scene are large enough to be seen easily in class.
> Acceptable: The major features of the scene are large enough to be seen by each pupil.
> Unacceptable: Even major details of the scene are too small or indistinct to be seen by all of the class. (62)

While individual teachers might, on occasion, choose to introduce supplementary materials like wallcharts, slides and cassettes into the lesson, the use of some aids, in other cases, might be as C. Allen Tucker suggests, advisable. In cases where, for example,

> available teachers are not adequate models for spoken English -

or there is

> -- the problem of sufficient guidance for the non-native teacher

or where

> the teachers are unlikely to have native competency in English (16).

- then it would appear that aids like audio-cassettes, if not videos, could be considered essential, rather than optional extras.

This raises another point, not made clear in any of the catalogue descriptions: how can the prospective buyer tell whether course components such as cassettes or wallcharts, are essential or optional. Only one catalogue entry, for Access, actually uses the word optional about any of its course components. But not all course-components can be considered as essential as, say, the student's book or the workbook or teacher's handbook.

It is also interesting that, 20 years or so ago, it would have sufficed for every member of the class to have had only the one book, incorporating an introduction for the teacher and exercises and practice for the student. Now it is common (only 6 out of 23 courses surveyed here offered no separate workbook) for there to be 3 books for every level of a course: the student's, the workbook, and the teacher's guide.

For the publisher this must be considered a profitable move; three books are now being sold (more if issued in segments) where only one sold before. Tucker feels:

> other things being equal, the text whose publisher offers (cassettes, tapes) and similar supplementary aids may offer some advantages over competing volumes. (16)

It would be interesting to see whether other EFL teachers thought this was so. It would also be interesting to compare sales figures, from publishers, showing whether this was the case. Do courses which offer a variety of supplementary aids sell better than similar courses offering none? Or is it the case that even when a course such as Longman's Strategies or OUP's Access offers filmstrips and wallcharts, cassettes and songsheets, it is generally the basic items in the package, the student's book, the workbook, the teacher's guide, which are regularly ordered?

Cost, obviously, must be considered a factor. Writing in 1955, Schramm described how this affected sales and use of films in schools:

> An average elementary school textbook costs a little over a dollar net ... a teaching film will probably cost in the neighbourhood of $50 a reel ...
> From the standpoint of the school, the film represents a comparatively large expenditure for a teaching tool that will be used only a few times a year ....
> Perhaps the most economical of the visual aids is the filmstrip which is now being produced by many publishers to go with their textbooks. But ... it is still relatively expensive to base a semester's work on text materials other than common textbooks for the whole class. (18).

Today it is still the case that whereas the basic items of the course, the books, are relatively cheap, the supplementary items like cassettes and films are much more expensive.

For example, taking Collins' Express course, all three books, student's workbook and teacher's, come to £9.00, while their one cassette costs £7.00 + Vat. Similarly, in the first part of Heinemann's Main Course English, Encounters, while the student's book costs £3.50, the teacher's

one, £5.95 and the workbooks (A+B) £1.25 each, the set of cassettes costs £28.00 + Vat.

Whatever the cost, though, if it can be shown that there are distinct advantages for the learner in having a multi-media package of aids, there would then be no justification for not having and using them. But the evidence on such aids is mixed, as Schramm describes:

> In the few cases where one medium was compared directly with another, they found no measurable quantitative difference in amount of learning .. (they also found) if one medium is reinforced with another (e.g. print with a lecture or film, a lecture with slides or a pamphlet, a film with discussion) there is a possibility of achieving considerably more learning than could be from either medium alone. But it must be a real supplementation. There is no automatic gain from using three senses instead of two, two instead of one, unless the added channel gives added interpretation. (18).

One argument that is put forward on behalf of these supplementary aids, videos and cassettes, is that they do aid the learner, in that they motivate and interest him. Especially in the current debates on communicative courses and on using authentic materials, it can be understood why cassettes using radio material like weather forecasts and news bulletins, for example, are promoted by publishers, with writers like V. J. Cook endorsing their use, writing that the most important reason for using such items -

is the student's motivation and interest (65)

But as Jack Richards (37) has pointed out, no studies have yet been undertaken to demonstrate that classrooms using communicative aids have proved more conducive to successful language learning than traditional classrooms where obviously the focus has been on the textbook, mainly. What Schramm wrote 30 years ago still seems to apply:

> .. our present knowledge of the differential use of teaching media is somewhere above the level of an old wives' tale and somewhat below the level of adequacy....
> If we could say with confidence just what the peculiar strength of each medium and combination of media in the teaching process is, then we should know better how to make each kind of text and also how to go about solving the economic problems that stand in the way of a wide use of these non-book texts. (18).

While we may not know for certain, how much these aids contribute to the learning process, publishers are increasingly making them available for every new course, especially increasing the variety of cassettes on offer. Of the 23 courses studied here, for example, only 1, Eckersley's Essential English from Longman, first produced in the 1930s, does not have a single cassette (or tape, as is the case with courses from the 60s or early 70s).

If we are to assume there is justification for using supplementary materials like videos and cassettes, in the absence as yet of any evidence about the contribution each could make or the optimum amount of time to be allocated to the different media or combination of media, the question that must concern teachers and publishers is how best to relate the textbook to these aids; how best to interrelate the material from all these sources.

While Schramm argues

> Theoretically, every textbook should have its accompanying teaching aids (18).

- he recognises that -

> The problem has economic and technological sides (18).

Jenks, also, would agree that, by and large, materials packages are not as integrated as they might be:

> The term diffuse best describes the status of nonprint materials for teaching foreign languages. The fact that large publishing and production companies have shied away from creating long-term, multi-media, integrative programs has not stunted the growth of short-term, multi-media, nonintegrative materials. The wider selection of items coordinates well with the growing belief among teachers that media variations enhance instruction. (61)

How wide a selection of supplementary aids (in addition to student-, teacher- and work-books) is available these days in course-packages can be seen from this list of items culled from the various course-descriptions.

Student's cassette

Class Cassette Set

Set of cassettes/tapes

Tapes for book

Dialogue tapes/cassettes

Drills tapes/cassettes

Story tape/cassette

Communication tape/cassette

Dialogues and songs cassette

Tapescript

Songsheet

Testbook a) Student's
b) Teachers's Key

Test Pack

Roleplay and cue cards

Wall pictures/charts

Flipcharts

Readers

Slides

Filmstrips

OHP transparencies

Videos

Film & self-study material
(available from the BBC)

Viewer's Handbook

What each individual course offers can be seen from Table 16, following.

The terms used for the table may not be those used in the course-description, as, in some cases, these differed. Student's book, as used here, is the most commonly used term but pupil's book (Macmillan's ACE, and Longman's Esseng) are noted; similarly, workbook, being the most widely used term, is used here in the table but practice book (as in

Cambeng, and Newincen.) or progress book (as in Engforad) are also found; and instead of teacher's book, which is the most widely used term, Course Leader's Handbook (Engforad) is also found, and Teacher's Guide (Challenges)

Table 16 Course Components

Course	No of Stud. Books	No of Teach. Books	No. of Workbooks	Tests for Students	Key	Dial.+/Commun. Tapes/cassettes	Drills + Tapes/cassettes	Story/Book Tape/cassettes	Tapescript	Wallcharts/ Overhead Tr.s	Other
Cambeng a.	4	4	4	4	*	--	--	--	*		1 x Stud.cassette (per 1 x Class cassette (level)
Meanword	2	2	2	2	--	--	2	2	--	--	
Ontheway	3	3	3	--	--	✓	--	--	--	--	cassettes wd include the other texts etc. + Role play/cue cards.
Foundeng	4	4	4	--	--	4	4	--	*	--	
Express a.	2	2	2	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	
Mainco b.	3(+4	2(+2	(4)	--a.	--	2	--	--	--	--	+ ther sets of cass/tapes 6;3+3;1.
Contact	2	2	--	--	--	✓	✓	--	-	set of 10 (w-charts)	Set of 3 cass. per level incl. drills/dialogues
Journeys	2	2	2	--	--	✓	--	--	*	--	1 cass. per level.
Strategies c	4	4	4	2	*	✓	--	--	*	set of 10 (in both)	Sets of 1,2,3,4 & 6 cass. + set of video modules.
Kernel b,c	3(+2	3	3	3	3	2+2+2	4 +2+2	1	3	set of both	
Mainline b, c.	A+B A+B A/B	5	--	1 set	2 sets	1 +1+1	--	--	3	--	cassette sets: 7,1,8,1, 4,4,5.
Follme	2	2	2	--	--	✓	--	--	--	--	1 set x 2, per book. (+ films)
Chall.s	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	set of 72 slides	(set of 6 cassettes) + 6 Films/Videos
Esseng	4	3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	NIL
ACE	5	3	3	--	2	✓	10	1x4 1x3	1	1 set (W)	other tapes (1+1) + 5 readers
Conteng	6	5	4	--	--	--	--	1 set x5	--	3sets (W)	
Newincen	3	3	3	--	--	3	3	--	3	--	
Function	2	2	--	--	--	✓	--	--	--	--	
Access b.	4(+4	4	2,2, 1,1	4(+2) sets	--	2	2	--	--	4 sets of both	Filmstrips, Songs cassettes Stud.cass, + other sets.
Stream.a,b.	3(+4	3	2,2, 2	Free set	--	--	✓	--	3	--	3 sets x 5 cassettes.
Quartet	2	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	--	2 sets x 2 cassettes.
Network	3	3	3	--	--	com.) x 6)	6	3	--	--	
Engforad	3	3	3								3 sets x 2 cassettes

* Included in teacher's book. a. Not all items available at the time.
b Available also in parts (no.s in brackets)
c Alternative coursebooks available.
✓ Some of this content (dial or drill) on cass/tape - but not an entire cas.or set devoted to it.

In studying the various course-packages, it can not escape notice that there is considerable variation between them both on what kind of items are included as well as on how many items go into each course. It can not even be assumed that it is always the older courses that have the fewest parts and the later courses that offer most.

In fact it is extremely difficult to make any real comparisons between the various course-packages for a number of reasons:

a) The courses vary from 1 or 2 to 5 or 6 years in duration.

b) Some courses offer alternatives: cassettes or tapes, (e.g. ACE Access, Network); wallcharts or OHP Transparencies, (e.g. Access, Kernel) alternative routes (e.g. Kernel and Strategies, both with alternative course-books).

c) Some courses offer complete editions or alternatively, segments/part editions and some offer both, as shown on the previous table.

d) Some offer components which if bought in the early years can be used right through the course, (e.g Contact's wallcharts) or for more than one stage, (e.g. Conteng's Teacher Book 1, for use with stages 1 and 2, or its tapes for Books 5 and 6); whereas other courses (e.g. Access have 2 sets of wall-charts/transparencies for each of their first 2 years or different sets of cassettes/tapes for every year (e.g. Access, Streamline, Kernel, Strategies etc).

e) There is no guidance in the text to suggest which items (books or cassettes or wallcharts) are part of the course-requirements, and therefore should be bought or are optional extras.

f) In the absence of page numbers (and prices) for all student and teacher books, it would be difficult to make true comparisons between courses. Some student books have as few pages as 80pp (Express), 88pp (Conteng) 90pp (Newincen) while others have as many as 192pp (Mainco, Contact), or 208pp (Contact). CUP, OUP and Longman

give no page-numbers so direct comparisons cannot be made with any of their courses.

Teacher's books show the same disparity, where there is evidence of size, because again CUP, OUP and Longman do not give numbers, though sometimes (as with Cambeng, Streamline etc) there might be clues in the text as to how many units of how many pages each there are, or whether the teacher's book has all the student pages interleaved with teacher-notes.

The teacher's books with the least pages, on the evidence available, include Foundation English's one with only 56pp or those from Express and Functional English, with 64pp only. By contrast, Heinemann's Main Course English has a teacher's book of 224 pages while their Contact English course has a teacher's book with 272 pages.

g) Some courses are happy to make do with only a handful of components, while others offer dozens. Journeys, for example, offers 3 books + 1 cassette, for each of its 2 years; similarly, Contact English, offers 2 books + 2 sets of cassettes for each of its 2 years, + 1 set of wallcharts. In its catalogue, Heinemann's,it is described as comprehensive:

> It contains all the material needed for a complete intensive course which need not be supplemented by any other material.

On the other hand, courses like Access, Ace, Strategies, Kernel Network, list dozens of components. And a course like Longman's from the 1930s, Essential English, is happy with no supplementary aids at all.

The following table shows how the courses compare, in a rough-and-ready comparison of the components used in the first year of each course:

Table 17 Number of Course-Components used in 1st year.

Less than 5 items		6 items used		More than 6 items.	
Esseng.	(2)	Cambeng.		Streamline	(7)
Function	(3)	Meanwords		Mainline	(8)
Quartet	(3)	Strategies		ACE	(8)
Contact	(3/4)	Challenges		Kernel	(9)
Foundeng.	(4)	Newincen.		Access	(13)
Express	(4)	Network			
Journeys	(4)	Mainco	(6/7)		
Follme	(4)				
Engforad	(4)				
Ontheway	(5)				
Conteng.	(5)				

16.3. Cost Evaluation of Course-Packages.

Because of all the factors listed above and because there must be a considerable difference in price between courses which rely mainly on course-books rather than on expensive aids like sets of cassettes (some of 7 or 8 in a set) or films and videos, it would appear to be impossible to carry out a cost-evaluation exercise on all 23 courses. [Price lists are in fact included in only 2 catalogues, Collins and Heinemann, and only after considerable difficulty were pricelists sent by the other firms, all except Cassell and Longman.]

However, in Table 18, following, compiled to show items and costs for the first year of each course only, the considerable spread in prices for both the sets of books and sets of cassettes used can be seen. Where books are offered in both part editions and complete editions, the price for the complete one is taken, as part editions are always more

expensive. This is why book prices for Mainline are so high; there are no complete editions, only parts.

The books are split in to two groups, teacher's book and the set of student books (including workbook) because, obviously, only one teacher's book will be bought however many are in the class.

Table 18 Cost of items for 1st year only

	St.bk+Wk-bk	T's bk	St./Class cassettes	Other	
Cambeng	£5.50	£6.50	£6.50 + £29.50 (c1)	Test bk.	.95p
Meanword	£5.75	£5.95	£7.50 x 2 (stud)	Test bk.	£1.50p
Ontheway	£5.45	£4.95	£7.00*x 2	Role-play/ cue-cards	£7.95p
Foundeng	£3.85	£3.95	£7.00*x 2		
Express	£5.50	£3.50	£7.00 + Vat		
Mainco	£6.00	£5.95	£38.00 + Vat £6.50 + Vat		
Contact	£2.40	£5.00	£18.50 + Vat	W. charts	£13.00
Journeys	£4.30	£4.10	£7.00*		
Strats	£4.40	£4.20	£21.00*	Tests	?
Kernel	£4.30	£5.60	£42.00*	Tests + pictures	?
Mainline	£7.80	£13.60	£112.00* (for 16)		
Follme	£4.40	£3.90	£14.00*		
Chall	£3.70	£6.10	£42.00*	6 Films/videos 72 slides Viewer's h.bk	? £2.60
Esseng	£2.20	£2.70	Nil	Nil	
ACE	£3.95	£3.50	£80.00 (for 10) + £17.00 (for 3)	(tapescript (flipcharts reader	£4.00 £2.20 .95
Conteng	£4.60	£2.95	£10.00		
Newincen	£5.00	£4.15	£7.00 x 2	tapescript	£1.50
Function	£3.95	£2.95	£7.00		
Access	£5.55	£5.00	£13.00 + £14.00	Filmstrips (2) OHP-tr.s (sets) Test pack +	£130.00 £ 90.00 £ 4.10
Stream	£6.25	£5.50	£6.50 + £35.00(5)	tapescript	£ 3.00
Quartet	£3.30	£4.50	£13.00		
Network	£6.00	£5.00	£6.50 + £6.50+ £13.00		
Engforad	£6.00	£5.00	£14.00		

* estimated, because of no price list, by comparison with other cassettes. (Despite repeated requests, both at booksellers and to the company direct, no price list was received from Longman. Some prices were obtained on microfilm.)

From the table, it can be shown that the average student-books package is £4.75. Where courses like Essential English use only a student book, and no workbook, the cost is, of course, much less: £2.20 for Esseng, £2.40 for Contact.

11 courses come below this average price.

12 courses have student-packages higher than the average: the highest being Mainline, in 2 parts, at £7.80, and, in one complete edition, Streamline, at £6.50.

The average price for a teacher's book comes out at £5.00.

8 courses have books costing more.

3 courses have books costing the £5.00 average.

12 courses have books costing less.

When further comparisons are made, combining the number of pages per book, (where this is known), with the cost per book, there are some interesting revelations, as the following tables showing books with the least and most pages and their prices, will show:

Table 19a Student Book

Course	No. of pp	Cost
Express	80	£3.25
Conteng	88	£2.95
Newincen.	96	£3.25
Mainco	192	£3.50
Contact	208	£2.75
Mainline	--- (2 parts)	£3.90 x 2

Table 19b Teacher's Book

Course	No. of pp.	Cost
Foundeng.	56	£3.95
Express	64	£3.50
Function.	64	£2.95
Mainco	224	£5.95
Contact	272	£5.50
Mainline	--- (2 parts)	£7.30 + £6.30

One wonders how firms can justify charging for books with as few pages as 56 or 64, prices higher than for books of 192 and 108 pages.

The most glaring examples come when books from different companies are compared, but even in one company, Heinemann, there are odd discrepancies. Heinemann publishes both Mainco and Contact, and Mainco's book of 192 pages is costed at more than 1 1/2 x the price of the Contact book, of 208 pages.

Similary, Mainco's teacher's book has 224 pages and costs £5.95:

Contact's teacher's book has 272 pages and costs £5.50, less.

It is therefore not just a matter of going by the size or number of pages; even with less pages, by far, some books cost a great deal more.

It could be argued, as Mauck Brammer reminds us, that the publishers of the expensive items are trying to recover their costs in designing a successful package

> pleasing enough to stimulate the potential customer to examine it with what a schoolman might call buying readiness. (26)

With increased attention to book-production techniques, typography, visual and overall design, publishers' costs have risen enormously.

> It is quite obvious that the increase in the price of textbooks has not kept up with the increase in cost. The shift to color ... introduced a staggering engraving cost into the competitive textbook picture.. Publishing textbooks took on the character of horseracing, with profit only for the winners....
> This steadily increasing cost of replacing popular titles was further complicated by the fact that full-color was expected by the customer in all areas and all levels equally. What was possible at one price level in the great potential market of elementary reading was expected at the same price in the field of elementary science, which had perhaps less than one-tenth as great a sales potential. (26).

Where, then, colour has been introduced, late into a series, as in the later volumes and editions of Longman's Strategies and Heinemann's Mainco, or when a whole series is re-issued with colour, as in the case of Nelson's Newincen., it becomes understandable that the new volumes will cost more.

However, this is not exactly the point at issue here. The books which have the highest prices are not necessarily those using colour or most colour, while the cheaper texts are cheap simply because there is no colour, or less than the competition.

For example, even without colour, as in many teacher's books, e.g. Express and Mainco, there is an enormous discrepancy in the price, especially when note is taken of the page size (larger in the case of Mainco) as well as the number of pages.

Obviously cost is a factor to those evaluating course-materials and several writers (Tucker (16), Williams (27), McDonough (40), Jenks (61) et al.) have mentioned it as something that must be taken into account in the evaluation process. Candlin and Breen (22), for example, pose such questions as:

> What other resources are assumed by the (new) materials? Do they call for special classrooms and special timetables? Do they require media resources, beyond the capacity of the institution to provide? What is the relative cost of the materials compared to its actual cost to the student? What is their cost relative to their life in cost-benefit and survival terms? There may be greater benefit in smaller quantities of varied materials than in classroom sets of one particular course (22).

Alexander sees cost from a slighly different point of view:

> When discussing methodology, our main concern must be cost-effectiveness ... (Whatever) the constraints imposed by page layout and design .. the likely cost of the end product to the consumer may seriously affect methodological decisions (determining questions as e.g. the number of tapes to be made available) and may take priority over everything else. (40)

The difficulties of weighing cost along with other factors in the evaluation process is described by Tucker:

> Price is often an extremely significant criterion. Frequently, choices must be made within certain price limits. Sometimes, unfortunately, such limits may remove from consideration one or more of the best available texts. If so, then the matter of price and value comes down to the question: Is this the best for the price within our limits? Making such a decision involves consideration of the evaluator's cumulative judgements about the suitability of the text for its intended use, its promise of durability and its price. Then, a judgement should be made about the relationship of its value to its price: in other words, "How much of what we hoped for are we getting for

our money?" Comparison of several books in this way should help to reveal the best bargain among them. (16).

16.3.1 Summary

Unfortunately, the consumer, the reader of the EFL catalogues, is rarely in possession of all the information he requires to enable him to make a satisfactory evaluation of competing courses. With CUP, Longman and OUP for example, not providing page numbers, it makes it rather difficult for the catalogue readers to estimate how much they are actually getting in the student's book, workbook or teacher's book. Books like these can vary between 56 and 272 pages and even prices, where these are available (which is rare as only Collins and Heinemann in their catalogues provide a price-guide) are no sure indication of size, as some higher-priced books contain fewer pages than others costing often much less, as can be confirmed by the figures in Tables 19a and 19b. Moreover, the information gleaned from the course-descriptions in the catalogues does not make it at all clear why this should be so.

It is also not the case that the consumer is told which, of several items in a course-package he has to have, and which are merely recommended as desirable, but which are optional. Where slides or cassettes (such as Story or Book cassettes) are as much a part of the course as the written text in the student's book and are in fact required, in order to complement it, this has not been made clear.

16.3.2 Recommendations

The more information made available to the catalogue-browsers the better, if they are to make an adequate evaluation of competing packages and justify the choice of one rather than another. Without even a price list (only 2 catalogues include those) or information on the size of the book, the number of pages/units/lessons and on which items are required, rather than optional extras, the reader is not really equipped to make valid comparisons, nor answer Tucker's question:

How much of what we hope for are we getting for our money? Until all the catalogues provide us with price-lists, numbers of pages and lessons, and so on, publishers would appear to be denying their potential customers useful information. In their own interests, publishers are recommended to provide this.

17. Conclusion

Eric Broudy has suggested that it is questionable whether customers really do know what they want or that "what the publisher offers is responsive to that desire".

There is no reason to doubt that EFL customers are as varied as customers for lawnmowers or motor-cars, and what each sees as a basic requirement in an EFL Course may be very different from the next man's choice. Equally, what one may see as the basic requirements for a catalogue-entry about a course, may not match those suggested by colleagues. It may, therefore, be very difficult, not to say impossible, for a publisher, in his catalogue, to satisfy every would-be buyer of an EFL course.

However, this study of the 23 course-entries in 8 different catalogues does show a fair consensus across the catalogues themselves. Where the catalogues devote most space, to new or major courses, there is a great deal of information offered and most of this is offered in categories common to all the publishers. Where shorter entries are made, usually because that particular course has been on the lists longer and fuller details can possibly be found in older catalogues, there might be less agreement between them, on what they omit and what they retain.

The data that is offered by the publishers is verifiable mostly, and pertinent, according to one's interests and needs. Non-content information covers such topics as intended audience (adults only, secondary school students + adults, etc); market-area (usually very little information here); type of course (General, Major, Adult); number

of lessons/units/teaching-hours; levels and charts provided; authors (and editors); reviews; trialling; age of course (whether brand-new or revised); and its appearance (use of colour, photographs and so on).

On the content side, course-entries provide information on aims and objectives, as well as provision for student needs and motivation; the method of approach (framework or syllabus) used in the course; the skills emphasised or catered for; language content (in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation work, together with exercises and activities); subject-matter, whether fact or fiction, culturally appropriate or not, authentic or not; course-components with Teacher's guides in particular, together with cassettes, slides and other aids.

Obviously, across catalogues, and indeed across entries in the same catalogue, the quantity and the quality (specificity or appropriateness) of all this information can vary considerably. In the 20 tables provided, how the different catalogues and course-entries do compare, can be studied.

Of course, where a particular publisher, or a particular entry, seems to miss out on a point, covered by all the others, it is easy to offer a recommendation that this be included next time. It is, however, less easy to recommend just how much more information should be provided in each entry for each of the topics, when there are obvious constraints of space and money.

And since consumers vary too in what they want to know, as much possibly as they need to know, recommendations for information on this or that topic may not equate with what others would suggest. This is, of course, another argument for publishers to conduct a survey of their own, among their various outlets, just to confirm that what they are providing is what their own customers really do want.

Meanwhile, in the absence of some specific information from CUP, Longman and OUP, on number of pages, (easily enough provided), and price

lists from all publishers but Collins and Heinemann, customers are being handicapped in any evaluation they might be carrying out, despite the wealth of other data, because without such information, there is no way of telling what or how much we are, actually, getting for our money.

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CHAPTER 6

PRESENTATION IN THE CATALOGUES

Introduction

According to the old maxim, "people judge a book by its covers". And a comparison of today's educational texts with those of 2 or 3 generations ago, would certainly seem to show that publishers have nowadays been taking this seriously.

How a text appears, how attractive, colourful or well laid-out it is, is these days considered very important; not only from the sales point of view -- whether it will look good enough to attract the buyer's attention, but also from the learner's point of view -- whether it will motivate the students and sustain their interest.

However, while publishers seem to have understood the importance of appearance in a book, for the book-buying public, and realised that the public do judge a book by its covers, do prefer to buy, and read, what is visually attractive and readable, publishers have not yet carried this over into the preparation of their book-catalogues, or at any rate not many of them.

1. Presentation

It would appear, sadly, that book-catalogues are being produced, at considerable expense, filled with a great number of facts and references, which are unread or ignored, their potential reference or evaluative role being overlooked by critics, reviewers and academics, possibly because their appearance, or the presentation of their content, is so unappealing, even downright discouraging. As Poulton points out:

> At a time when far more is printed than can possibly be read by people for whom it is intended, publishers and typographers are only too far aware of the importance of attracting and holding the attention of potential readers. To do this adequately it is necessary to use styles of type and layout which are both

attractive at a casual glance and also efficient methods of transmitting information. (1).

Every guideline that applies to making text visually appealing as well as readable and understandable, should be applied, one would have thought, to the catalogues which advertise the books themselves. Indeed, even greater efforts should be made, in the case of advertising pamphlets and catalogues, to attract and hold the attention of the browsing public. For if such pamphlets and catalogues are seen to be unattractive, badly presented, even illegible, it is extremely unlikely that the readers (and potential buyers) at whom the catalogues are directed, will be encouraged to expect any more of the books they promote. As Hartley and Trueman (2) have found, readers' preferences for certain layouts with better-designed text and greater readability affect not only their initial reaction to text, but also determine

whether or not that text will be purchased or even read.

A cursory examination of the 8 catalogues here (see sample pages in Appendix II) first showed the variety in presentation, as well as in legibility or readibility of each, but a more detailed examination was considered necessary in order to pinpoint the specific areas of presentation in which these catalogues, felt to be least attractive and readable, appeared to be in need of improvement.

Some of these specific areas of presentation are accounted for in a checklist reproduced in Hartley's book, Designing Instructional Text (3). The checklist assesses textbooks with the items originally following a 5-point rating scale from very good to very bad, with one section, devoted to Format:

1. General Appearance
2. Practicality of size and colour for classroom use
3. Readability of type
4. Durability and flexibility of binding
5. Appeal of page layout
6. Appropriateness of the illustrations
7. Usefulness of chapter headings
8. Usability of index
9. Quality of the paper

- but most of these topics can relate just as well to presentation in book-catalogues.

In addition, however, to these rather general labels, general appearance, readability of type, appropriateness of the illustrations, there are other more particular features sometimes sub-sumed by the general heading, book or page layout, that function in the presentation of text.

Waller (4) describes these as access functions:

About the book	overviews	(contents list, abstract)
	definitives	(glossary, index)
	identifiers	(title, author, style)
Within the book	locators	(topical headings, typographical signalling)
	descriptors	(functional headings, captions)

Until recently, with the work of writers like Hartley and Waller, typographical features of language have been neglected. They do not have the attention which is accorded to the phonological features of language, nor even the amount of attention given to graphic features in the 17th or 18th centuries.

And yet, because the organisation and presentation of written text can facilitate (or retard) the comprehension of the language, it is perhaps, surprising what little agreement there is on typographic conventions and how little research or coverage these attract among general linguists.

In making out his case for "including typographic and spatial factors in the linguistic analysis of complext text," (4) Waller distinguishes two kinds of punctuation, micro- and macro-punctuation, with four main functions:

delineation: for indicating the beginning and end of text segments;

interpolation: for inserting a short segment into a longer one;

serialisation: for organising segments into clear structures, sets, or series,

stylisation: for indicating a different mode of discourse from the main body of the text. (4)

Set out in Waller's table (4), these typographic and spatial factors can be arranged to show correspondences:

Table 20 Punctuation Features and Functions

	Micro-level	Macro-level
Delineation	initial capital full point comma semi-colon colon	headings title pages space rules
Interpolation	parentheses dashes commas	footnotes boxed inserts marginalia indentation
Serialisation	commas semi-colons oblique strokes bullets numerals	headings, numerals tabular format regular spacing/styling
Stylisation	quotation marks exclamation marks question marks	size variation style variation layout variation

As far as I am aware, no close analysis of presentation in book catalogues has been carried out before, though other studies into, for example, indexes in academic journals, layout in college prospectuses and presentation in all manner of instructional text, have produced useful guidelines.

The analysis of these 8 EFL book catalogues, in terms of their typographic and spatial features, has been conducted, however, by one who is very much aware of not being an expert in either printing techniques or publishing problems. It is, therefore, very much a study from the layman's point of view, though one which hopes to make its case by setting out "reliable and verifiable data".

Under the various headings, page size, column width and so on, the catalogues have been examined first individually and then through comparisons and contrasts. Sometimes, in the light of these, obvious recommendations could be made.

2. General Information about the Catalogues

The catalogues vary a great deal in size, number of pages and general appearance. No two catalogues, for example, have been found here to be precisely the same size and there is similar variety in the use of colour for the covers and the number of pages devoted to EFL courses.

2.1 Covers

Each of the catalogues tends to use one solid colour for the front cover (and usually the back too), with titling in white or black (though yellow, red and turquoise are also used here), as well as touches of 2 or 3 other colours.

CUP The catalogue has a dark red cover and its main titling is in white bold lettering against the red or a black flash in the bottom right corner. Black lettering is also used for a subtitle. In front, there is also the black motif of a lion and stripes of black, white and pink.

CAS This uses a multi-coloured box-layout on a grey background, with green its next main colour and red, yellow and blue. All lettering is in black.

COL A strong blue is its main colour and the main titles are in bold white lettering. 4 sizes of capitals are used for ELT, picked out in red and yellow with strong yellow flashes.

HEIN The cover uses green, either for its main bands (for the headings) or as a background overprinted with the small white capitals, ELT, repeated in dozens of rows all over the cover. In the centre front ELT is again picked out in large capitals this time, and featuring small yellow capitals for ELT, repeated as before. Blue is used to rule off bands and a boxed motif. Lettering is yellow on green with white lettering used only for the name, Heinemann.

LON Its predominant colour is black and all lettering is in white, including large bold capitals for ELT. The centre of the front cover is brightened with a rainbow effect from 3 broad stripes of yellow, red and blue.

MAC The cover here too is predominantly black, with all its lettering also in white. But its main colouring comes in the lower half of the front cover with the representation of a glowing golden sun sinking behind part of the globe (in black) picked out in yellow, with the large capitals ELT curved on the globe in yellow letters outlined in red.

NEL Nelson's is the only catalogue to use plain white. The name Nelson and the year 1984 are in turquoise lettering; English Language Teaching is in red. Lines of yellow are used to frame the layout.

OUP This has a shaded grey background with black lettering. The cover is criss-crossed wiht 4 lines, red, yellow, green and blue.

2.2 Size

While no two catalogues are the same size, measured in mm, three of them -

Cassell's	145 x 210
Macmillan's	147 x 207
Nelson's	150 x 210

- approximate to the size, 148 x 210, designated A5 of the ISO series (International Standard Organisation). This series describes trimmed paper sizes which have the ratio $1:\sqrt{2}$, as can be seen in the table below.

Table 21 ISO Series of Trimmed Paper Sizes

A-Series		B-Series	
Designation	Size (mm)	Designation	Size (mm)
A0	841 x 1189	B0	1000 x 1414
A1	594 x 841	B1	707 x 1000
A2	420 x 594	B2	500 x 707
A3	297 x 420	B3	353 x 500
A4	210 x 297	B4	250 x 353
A5	148 x 210	B5	176 x 250
A6	105 x 148	B6	125 x 176
A7	74 x 105	B7	88 x 125
A8	52 x 74	B8	62 x 88
A9	37 x 52	B9	44 x 62
A10	26 x 37	B10	31 x 44

The CUP catalogue, 210 x 300, is itself a close approximation to the standard size, A4 (210 x 297). A4 and A5 are the most commonly used sizes.

The remaining 4 catalogues:

Collins	195 x 250
Heinemann	155 x 232
Longman	195 x 235
CUP	145 x 230

- do not fit the standard A series like the first-mentioned four. And as it is extremely unlikely that the page size in these catalogues was trimmed to these formats from the standard A4 and A5 sizes, publishers being exceedingly cost-conscious about the use of paper, the unusual sizes could therefore be attributed to the folding of a much larger standard size sheet (A0 or A1, say) into different

formats (thirds, perhaps) instead of the usual halves or quarters.

Generally, paper size is governed by the purpose of the written material. A telephone directory, for example, could make use of A4 paper but not, generally, A5, and far less A6, but a diary (pocket-sized) could use A6 and a desk-diary, A4.

Possibly what has governed the choice of paper-size (or catalogue size) here has been not so much the general purpose of the catalogue (catalogues for all sorts of commodities from foreign holidays to rose-bushes varying hugely), as the amount of information and display each publisher offers. Longman, for example, provides 160 pages with over 1223 authors and titles listed in its index, as compared to Cassell's which runs to 24 pages only, and lists only 56 items.

Over the years there has been considerable debate about the variation in page sizes both at home and internationally. In a survey published in 1940 by Paterson and Tinker, cited by Spencer in The Visible Word (5), 1000 books and 500 American and foreign journals were studied and results showed that 90% of the textbooks were 8 x 5 inches (210 x 130mm approx) or smaller, but that journals were produced in a wide range of sizes from 7 x 4 inches (104 x 180mm) up to 14 x 11 inches (280 x 355). To Paterson and Tinker, "it almost looks as though the size of the page is a matter of whim" and they recommended that printers, publishers and paper makers should agree on standard page sizes "that would minimise the waste of paper stock that must now occur". According to Spencer, writing in 1968:

> It is probable that a survey similar to Paterson and Tinker's, if conducted today, would reveal larger than average page sizes, and perhaps still wider diversity in both text books and journals than in 1940. However, the gradual adoption of International Paper Sizes (ISO) by publishers and industries in many countries during recent years is at last beginning to bring discipline to the size of publications. (5)

The argument for standardising page sizes is based on the principle that a rectangle with sides in the ratio of $1:\sqrt{2}$ can be halved or doubled in area without changing the ratio of width to depth. And since this is the ratio also recommended for formats associated with overhead transparencies, slides and microfiches, it would seem to make economic sense, for design, production, storage and use, as well as making it possible to interchange material from one system to another.

In interviews and discussions with representatives from various publishers the view was expressed more than once that catalogue size was something of a problem: while both publishers and readers apparently favoured the larger, A4 format, booksellers, possibly for reasons of space, much preferred the smaller sizes. And some firms, like Macmillan, had therefore experimented with different catalogue-sizes in recent years.

2.3 Number of Pages

One reason often cited for the size of page is the amount of information that is required to be on it. And obviously the number of pages in a catalogue is determined by this. Longman which has the largest number of entries has also, by far, the largest number of pages, 160. The OUP catalogue the next largest in number of pages, has 96. The remaining 6 all have less than half the pages of the Longman catalogue:

Longman	160 pages
OUP	96
Macmillan	79
Nelson	72
Heinemann	56
Collins	40
CUP	35
Cassell	24

Interestingly enough, the two catalogues displaying the widest variation in page size (CUP with the biggest, 210 x 300, and Cassell the smallest, with 145 x 210) share the fewest pages of all 8 catalogues, but in fact there are no straightforward correlations with page-size and page-numbers. There is, however, a problem in comparing the different catalogues with regard to the number of pages in each. For example, the catalogues vary in how they treat the inside (CUP also the outside) covers.

While only OUP prints nothing at all on either of its inside covers, all the others make use of these covers (one or both) to print different kinds of catalogue information. CUP, in fact, goes so far as to number the front cover, outside and inside, as its first two pages and the inside back cover as its last. Cassell does not number its covers among its pages, but prints its contents and index in the inside covers. Collins similarly prints editorial and marketing information in both inside covers as does Heinemann, while Longman does this on the inside back cover only. In their 1984 catalogue, Macmillan print only colour photos (the only ones in the catalogue) of some of their titles though in their later, 1985, catalogue, their inside back cover not only contains a page of their index, it is also numbered as one of the pages. Nelson uses the inside front cover for Publisher's Notes on Orders, Customer Services and so on, while the back inside cover is given over to a map displaying agents and representatives worldwide.

2.3.1 Number of Pages Allocated to Courses

As explained in an earlier section, the catalogues vary a great deal in how they treat courses, either grouping all courses together as Longman does under Courses, or separating them under different systems such as Macmillan's, with Major and Short courses, or Collins' with Secondary Courses and Adult Courses, or Cassell's with General Courses and Short Courses, or else mixing a whole variety of courses (those for

secondary students only, or for adults only, as well as courses for both) under the one heading Secondary/Adult, as Heinemann, Nelson and OUP do.

As a result, it is difficult to make specific comparisons on how many pages in each catalogue are actually allocated to major courses suitable for adult learners.

Longman appears to have most with 19 pages for main courses for secondary/adult groups; Macmillan with least, 2 pages and CUP and Cassell again having something in common, each with 3 pages for their main courses.

How the different catalogues compare in their cover designs, page size and number, can be seen from the following table, Table 22.

Table 22 Catalogue Size and Appearance

	Catalogue Cover	Page-Size	No. of Pages	No of Pages: Courses
CUP	Predominantly red Lettering white(+black) Black/white/pink stripes	210 x 300 mm approx.	35(incl. covers)	3 for main courses
CAS	Grey background + multi-coloured shapes Black lettering.	145 x 210 mm approx.	24(plus inside covers)	3 for General courses
COL	Predominantly blue Lettering white, with red and yellow touches	195 x 250 mm approx.	40(plus inside covers)	5 for sec/adult/ general courses
HEIN	Predominantly green Lettering yellow (+white) + blue ruling	155 x 232 mm approx.	56 (plus inside covers)	6 for sec/adult courses
LON	Predominantly black White lettering Yellow/red/blue bands	195 x 235 mm approx	161 (incl. inside back cover)	19 for main sec/adult courses
MAC	Predominantly black White lettering Yellow / red design.	147 x 207 mm approx.	79 (plus illustrations in inside covers)	2 for major, adult courses.
NEL	Predominantly white Lettering turquoise + red + yellow ruling.	150 x 210 mm approx.	72 (plus inside covers)	9 for sec/adult (mixed) (6 for adult/special)
OUP	Predominantly grey Black lettering + stripes in red/yellow/green/blue	145 x 230 mm approx	96 (no use made of inside covers)	18 for sec/adult (mixed) (10 for adult groups)

2.4 Recommendations

Since both publishers and readers appear to favour the larger-sized catalogue, perhaps booksellers could overcome their reluctance to stock it and display it, if publishers were to make this easier for them, by agreeing to use the standard ISO A4 and A5 sizes.

3. Paper Quality

Another factor contibuting to the catalogue's appearance and usability is the quality of paper used. Obviously this is far more important in the case of books, than in (free) catalogues, but since the quality of the paper does affect the printing process and therefore affects the readability of the material, it must be considered.

Generally, the quality of the paper used in catalogues does not attract the reader's attention unless the quality is so poor as to affect the reader's use of the catalogue. Where, for example, very cheap, thin paper is used, such that the reverse side (illustrations and print) can show through, this can cause the reader annoyance, if not actual difficulty. Of all the catalogues, Longman's alone is an unfortunate example of this "show-through"; both print and illustrations show through from the reverse side of the flimsy sheets even when held flat. In fact it is often easier to read the type from the reverse side than the light type used by Longman in displaying, for example, authors' names.

It has also been a matter of debate whether the use of glossy white paper produces glare and thereby reduces legibility. In his article, Ergonomics in Journal design, Poulton describes how -

> matt paper was chosen because it reduces the glare from reflected light sources. (6).

However, in his article, Typography and Readability, Burtt is of a different opinion:

> There is little difference in readability when using a glossy paper versus an unfinished paper. The reader evidently adapts himself to any possible reflections from the glossy surface.(7).

This is also what Spencer reports, some 20 years later, in The Visible Word, when he cites the work of various researchers in this field. One of these, Prince,

> has stated that ... maximum paper reflectance promotes maximum reading efficiency .... opacity is important ... the reflectance of a paper can, for example, be reduced from 82% when stacked, to 76% when printed on both sides of the sheets.(5).

-- while two experiments by Paterson and Tinker showed --

> with well-diffused illumination text printed on a high gloss paper (measuring approximately 86% glare) was read as fast as on paper with less than 23% glare. (5)

and that

> with text printed in black ink all paper surfaces whether white or tinted with a reflectance of 70% or more are equally legible. In the normal reading situation, black print on a white ground is over 10% more efficient than white on black...Because brightness contrast is reduced, black ink on colour paper or colour inks on white are also less legible than black on white. (5).

Half of the catalogues make some use of tinted paper.

Heinemann use a blue sheet for their Contents page, and three other pages use a darker blue for a background to photographs.

Longman similarly use a tinted grey paper, to mark their 10 Contents pages.

Macmillan use their salmon pink colour for each of the 13 tinted pages that introduces a new section.

OUP have 17 tinted pages of a shaded blue-grey throughout their American English section of their catalogue.

3.1. Recommendations

Whether matt or glossy paper is used, the main criterion has to be whether the paper is legible and causes the reader no annoyance or difficulty. However, the quality of paper used in the Longman's catalogue is such as to allow considerable "show-through" from both print and illustrations, definitely interfering with legibility. A better or

heavier quality of paper is therefore recommended. While one can understand Longman's not wanting to increase any further the costs of producing a catalogue of around 160 pages, it might pay to divide their English material into 2 catalogues, one of which could take their EFL material.

A good quality glossy paper is also recommended by printers for reproducing pictures and using colour.

4. The Page

Typographic researchers are finding it increasingly necessary to take account of the page as a whole, before making any other typographic decisions, as Hartley and Burnhill explain:

> Decisions about page-size are crucial because they form the baseline from which the remaining typographic decisions are made. Once the size of the page is determined, it is possible to decide upon the layout of the page, the interline spacing and line-lengths of the text. Following these decisions come ones about the positioning of illustrations and so on. In other words, page-size is to typographic planning as site-size is to the design of buildings: it constrains what can be done.(7).

But page-size is not simply a matter of concern for the designers alone; it is something that obviously affects the readers:

> The size of the page determines the size of the overall visual display to the reader. The reader needs to be able to scan and read this display easily be it large (e.g. an atlas) or small (e.g. a pocket dictionary). Readers need to be able to read, to scan and to focus on both gross and fine details. The size of the page determines the decisions the designer must make to convey these details to the reader. (7).

But who these readers are concerns other researchers. In his article, The Design and Presentation of Informational Material: A Review of UK Research Trends (8), Ennis describes how informational material (such as academic journals, textbooks, pamphlets and catalogues) can affect two different kinds of readers: the uncommitted reader who is simply browsing and the reader who knows exactly what he is looking for.

> In contrast to the reader who knows that he wants to read a particular article, by a particular author, in a particular journal, and will make the effort to find the information he

> requires at all costs, the browsing, or uncommitted, reader will be strongly affected by various signalling devices within journals. (8)

And the same is obviously true of the reader or consumer browsing among book catalogues.

> This is not to suggest that the committed reader will be unaffected by the design of a journal: he will get more information more quickly out of an article he aims to read if it is legible, and the language easy to understand. But the browsing reader may well not use the journal at all if, for example, the contents page is not readily accessible, or if it is badly designed .....
> Unless this distinction is made between different reading purposes, research on the design of a journal's component parts may prove to be of little practical value. (8)

To aid legibility and improve the usability to the reader of such informational material, research in recent years has begun to consider, more and more, the relation of content to page size and how these together determine the design of component parts, like columns, paragraphs and lines.

> Typographic designers typically ask first of a piece of text "How is this text to be used?"
> The answer to this question determines the first major decision of designers: on what size page to print it.
> The choice of page size and the content of the text together determine other interrelated decisions, e.g. line length, type size, interline spacing, and where to position tables, figures, captions, and even page numbers. (8)

4.1. Page-size

Pages come in many shapes and sizes and unless a book or journal is conforming to the pattern of a series, authors, designers and publishers can virtually choose whatever size of page they prefer. There are no rules or guidelines on what makes one size of page more suitable than any other for content of a certain kind, or for different kinds of readers and, so far, research has not provided any answers. No authority on typographic research features page-size.

Yet the dimensions of a page, in much the same way as those of a building-site, determine all the page components and their place in the overall layout.

These dimensions result from the folding (as economically as possible) of the original manufacturer's sheet of paper. According to Hartley and Burnhill,

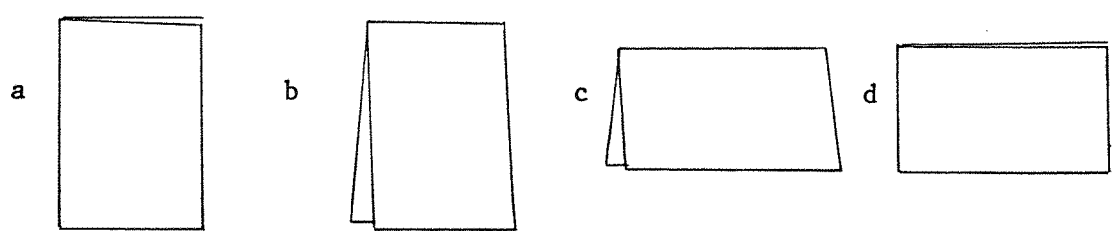
> The present-day variety in page-sizes reflects an equally unprincipled variety in the current manufacture of printing paper sheet sizes. Such an approach, of course, is quite uneconomical, and requires simplification. (7)

In Europe, page-sizes, as explained earlier, now generally conform to the ISO recommended range of sizes. This determines that one rectangle can be halved or doubled to produce a series of rectangles, all with the proportions of the original. For example, when A4, the size of this sheet, is halved, the result is A5. A4 and A5 are probably the most commonly used sizes and, as a result of these standards, designers and publishers can work with a certain number of specific formats. A page, for example, may be oriented with either the long or short side of the rectangle parallel to the reader and the page can be bound on its left or top edge.

4.2. Page layout

The layout of the page is affected not only because of these four basic formats (see Fig. 1 below):

Fig.1



- but also because of variations that result from the use of illustrations and tables, and the arrangement of the text in one, two or more columns, or columns of varying widths.

Ideally, the content should determine the typography, with the most appropriate format for the purpose being chosen by the designer and publisher. And because readers have certain expectations of layout and

content, the end result should not disturb or distract the reader.

However, as Hartley and Burnhill have described, there are

> long-standing and persistent practices in page layout and display. Amongst these are: the centring of headings and other textual components; the practice of changing arbitrarily the internal spacing of the material in order to force the text to fill out a fixed width and depth (justification); inconsistency in the sequencing of the grouping of parts .....
> These and other commonly seen features of printed and typewritten information stem from the tendency to apply the bilateral mode of symmetry to layout: that is, to balance the parts about the central axis of the page .....
> It could justifiably be termed illiterate for, clearly, the component parts of a text are not mere objects of varying shapes and sizes to be displayed like ornaments on a mantlepiece or pictures on a wall.....
> the reader cannot maintain his focus on the sense whilst at the same time having to sort out the arrangement of the material. (7)

However, before discussing the arrangement of the text material itself, the message or content, let us first consider the proportions and layout of the whole page, showing how space is allocated for margins, illustrations, text and so on. Throughout the book or pamphlet, the layout should remain clear and consistent, not change from page to page. And, as Hartley contends:

> ... given a particular text and a particular page size, one can manipulate the spatial arrangement of text on that page so as to enhance clarity, retrieval and

4.3 Space: Margins and other empty page-areas.

Hartley has contended elsewhere

> that what affects most the ease of comprehension and retrieval from printed text is the use that is made of the space on a page size of known dimensions -- rather than the print.
> ....I want to draw attention here to how one can capitalise on the space to convey the structure of instructional text perhaps more easily -- and with more effectiveness -- than one can capitalise on the print. (10)

In this section, I shall concentrate on the use of space, in the page as a whole, and leave the discussion of space within text (interline spacing, spacing between paragraphs, columns, sections and so on) until the section on text.

People most notice space on the page in the margin area, but they usually underestimate the amount of space margins take up. In fact in one test, reported by Spencer (5), where 300 subjects were asked to estimate the proportion of text area to margins, the size of the centre-area was over-estimated by an average of 18%. As Burtt describes (11) while it is very seldom that every square inch of the page will be given over to type, it is a moot question what percentage of the area should be allocated to the margins. According to Burtt, "Current practice is around 50%", but there is an enormous amount of variation. In a study by Paterson and Tinker of 400 textbooks, cited by Spencer,

> while the area devoted to margins varied from as much as 71% in some books to as little as 24% in others, margins occupied more than 44% of the total page in 77.5% of the books examined, and .. the average area devoted to text was 52.8% .. Economy regulations introduced in Britain during the second world war required that the type area should fill at least 58% of the page. (5).

Margin areas of this amount, so printers and book designers argue, are required not only on aesthetic grounds but because they help prevent the reader's eye from being distracted by peripheral stimuli and straying off the page. But, as Spencer describes, there is no evidence that books with excessively narrow margins are more apt to produce visual fatigue. Burtt would also agree that in using up to 50% of page area on margins

> Conceivably we may be wasting a good bit of paper in this manner. (11)

and he describes an experiment in which reading speed was tested with material printed on a sheet with either no margins or with a margin of only 22 millimeters. The speed was found to be hardly (i.e. not statistically) different. And while he considers the possibility of distraction "from things beyond the margin", his feeling is that the reader is most unlikely to be distracted

> at least when the possible distraction is merely more printing.
> It might be a different story if the adjacent page carried an interesting picture or a coloured display or something that had high attention value. It is doubtful, however, if any

reasonably sized margin would take care of such a factor as this. (11).

Traditional margins in normal books are in the ratio of 1 (inner margin), 1 1/2 (head), 2 (fore-edge), 1 1/2 (foot), or 1 1/2, 2, 3, 4, (5). Table 23 below shows how each catalogue allocates space to the different margins.

Table 23 Margins in the Catalogues

	Inner-Margin	Head-Margin	Fore-edge Margin	Foot-Margin	Other Information
CUP	10mm	16mm *	10mm	10mm **	* Whole margin is colour band+title ** Variable
CAS	5mm	5mm	10mm	7.5mm **	** Variable
COL	10mm	6mm *	10mm	15mm **	* Below h-margin, 15mm blue band ** Variable
HEIN	10mm	5mm *	10mm	9mm **	* Below h-margin, 15mm band+title ** variable
LON	5mm	7.5mm	7.5mm	12mm **	** Variable
MAC	12.5mm	9mm *	15mm	10mm **	* Below h-margin, 9mm band+title ** Variable
NEL	7.5mm	9mm *	7.5mm	10mm **	* Below h-margin, 11mm band+title ** Variable
OUP	7.5mm	10mm *	7.5mm	12mm **	* Whole margin is colour band+title ** Variable

Measuring margin-areas for these catalogues is not as straightforward as it is for normal books, where there is generally consistency in the depth allocated to top and bottom margins and to the width of inner and fore-edge margins. The catalogues, by comparison, vary a great deal, though, generally, the proportion of margin-area to the page as a whole, is approximately 1/6th rather than the 50% found in books. Longman's margins accounted for less than 1/7th of the total page area;

Macmillan's for more than 1/4, with the rest varying between 1/5-1/6th. (See Appendix II, Sample pages).

If margin is understood to mean that area of "empty space" enclosing and framing the text area, the catalogues very a great deal, both individually and in comparison with the others, in how much of this "empty space" is allocated to the different margins and in how consistently these margin areas are kept "empty".

4.3.1 Head-margin

The catalogues vary in this head-margin area not only in the amount of space allocated to it, but also in how this margin area is used.

CUP The head-margin throughout the catalogue is a red border right across the page, on which the section heading and pagination are carried in white extra bold print. (On 6 of its 34 catalogue pages a similar band appears in the page, as a heading for a new section).

CAS The head-margin carries no colour bands, headings nor page numbers.

COL The head-margin is followed by a broad band-area in blue, 15mm wide, ruled off in stronger blue. This blue band carries the section heading in large bold black capitals.

HEIN Similarly, under a head-margin of 5mm, there is a much broader band 14mm wide, this time in black, with a white line running through the centre or carrying the section heading in white script, usually only on the left hand page.

LON Only 20 of Longman's 160 pages carry a top border, under its head-margin, running across the page from outer to inner margins. 15 of these 20 are in solid 10mm black bands, with large bold white print on the left, denoting the section heading.

The remaining 5 have borders of white space, again 10mm wide, ruled off in black, carrying headings of large bold black type.

15 solid black borders appear to coincide with the 15 major headings listed on the main Contents page, while the white borders,

headings listed on the main Contents page, while the white borders, apparently, are intended to correspond to sub-divisions of the section.

MAC Every page including the inner covers carries a pink border, 8mm wide, from outer edge to the edge of the inner margin. This border carries the section heading in bold black type, left on left-hand pages, right on right-hand ones, beside the page numbers.
On pink pages, this border area is grey.

NEL There is a border design taking up 2/3rds of the page-width, in which a solid block of colour, 68 x 11mm, is flanked by a pattern of alternating colour lines and white space. This colour area carries the section heading and page numbers in white.

OUP The head-margin, as in CUP's, is itself the coloured border, but here the border is colour-coded (as in the case of Nelson) and carries the section heading, usually on the left-hand page only, with numbers only on the right, in extra bold black print. (Only 4 right-hand pages carry headings, one being the Contents page, while on 12 pages, the headings announcing new titles are in red).

Since in 2 cases, CUP and OUP, there is no "empty space", in the head-margin area, this being taken up with colour-bands carrying headings and numbers, it could be argued that neither CUP nor OUP has a head-margin. If, however, the colour-band is regarded as a head-margin, then in the case of Collins, Heinemann, Macmillan and Nelson, perhaps the head-margin area should include not only the white "empty space" but also the colour band immediately below it.

7 of the catalogues with the sole exception of Longman, use one basic scheme sticking to it throughout. Longman varies its head-margin area, with 15 of its 160 pages using black borders, 5 using white ruled with black, and the remaining 140 none, though 29 of these have their head-margin ruled off.

- Cassell uses no border at all;
- CUP and OUP use the head-margin as their border;
- CUP, Collins, Heinemann and Macmillan use the head-margin area to carry a single colour throughout;
- OUP and Nelson use their border in the margin-area to carry a variety of colours, each coded to a different section; OUP use 11 colours for 12 sections and Nelson use 3, Turquoise, Yellow and Pink, alternating in that order to mark off 18 sections.

4.3.2 Side- and Foot-Margins

With the inner-margin as base, the outer, fore-edge margin traditionally should be twice its width, and the foot-margins two and a half times. None of the catalogues appears to have used the ratio. Only Cassell doubles the width of its inner-margin on its fore-edge but its foot-margin is only one and a half times the inner one.

Where it is difficult to judge just how much space each catalogue exactly allocates to the head-margin, because this area is used by some for colour-borders and headings, so also are there difficulties in assessing the side- and foot-margins.

For example, with the sole exception of Cassell's, all the catalogues have illustrations, even a footnote, encroaching into the margin-area of the side- or foot-margins (or both), in a few of their pages. And, by contrast, all of the catalogues, including Cassell's, have pages with far more space in the bottom half, than the average 12mm, for the foot-margin alone.

CUP In 5 of its 34 pages the foot-margins are encroached upon by illustrations irregularly angled on to the page, while a third of their pages have "empty space" on the bottom part of the page far deeper than their normal foot-margin. All the pages except the inside front cover have the top red border extending the whole width of the page from outer to inner edge across the side-margins. In addition, 6 of the pages have another red stripe extending the whole width of the page, and 3 others have a diagonal stripe from the outer edge to the bottom edge.

CAS While the side- and foot-margins are not encroached upon, at least 4 of their pages have more than average "empty space" on their lower edge.

COL In over half of their 40 pages, illustrations are angled to intrude into foot- or side-margins, often both together, while a quarter of their pages have more than their average "empty space".

HEIN 15 of the 56 pages use layouts with illustrations overlapping into side- and foot-margins while 6 of the pages show "empty space" exceeding their usual foot-margin area.

LON 22 pages out of 160 have illustrations overlapping side- and/or foot-margins. Approximately 20 more pages have a horizontal rule completely or partially separating off their foot-margin area while vertical rules in over 120 pages extend downwards to the edge of their usual foot-margin.

MAC 80 pages adhere strictly to the area within the margins, with only 3 examples showing overlap, each one involving an illustration in the centre of a 2-page spread, obviously therefore overlapping the inner margins. But there are no examples of overlapping in the foot or fore-edge margins. While the pages adhere to the area within the margins, at least half of the pages do not use the full text area for text and illustration, leaving much "empty space".

NEL In 18 of the 72 pages (exactly a quarter), illustrations and underlining overlap into the foot-margin especially. And like Macmillan's catalogue, nearly half of the pages do not have text right down to the foot-margin, leaving a great deal of "empty space".

OUP In 14 of the 96 pages illustrative material overlaps into the margins, most usually the inner-margins because of the number of 2-page spreads. And over one-third of the pages leave a great deal of the text-area down to the foot-margin, "empty".

There are difficulties, with the catalogues, in defining the margin-area framing the text or information area. In a normal case, with books and journals, the margin area is a consistent width and depth of white empty space, occupying up to 50% of the page. Hartley describes the margins in terms of the text area: "the information area is that area of the page outside which no printed matter appears" (12).

In the catalogues, however, this division of the page into margin (empty space) and text or information area is blurred in two different ways: either the margin area, such as the head-margin, is filled with a colour (-coded) border and section headings, or it is encroached upon by overlapping illustrations, with the result that the margin area is not left as clear space around the text; or, alternatively, there is no defined foot-margin to the page, because there is extra clear space extending well into the text area, thanks to the use of a "floating baseline".

As Hartley describes it:

> In some kinds of book design, the information area appears as a sharply defined rectangle of print surrounded by wide margins. (12)

In the catalogues this is often not the case. Overall the margins are much smaller than in regular books; illustrations, bands and headings intrude into the margins and the text area has often large areas of unused space.

4.3.3 Space Within the Margins

Conventionally, we have certain expectancies of the printed page, both in the relation of text area to margins and, within the text area, of text, illustration and spacing.

According to Hartley, writing in 1976,

> Although past practices, still tend to influence thinking about what constitutes the appearance of the page in a book, today's typographic designer will be more interested in using the space provided by the whole of the page than in forcing the print to fit into a tight

> rectangle near the centre of the page...thought must be given to intervals of space within the setting and display of the information where the function of the space is syntactic. Space is used to convey to the learner the structure and organisation of the text. (12)

But while more designers, in publishing textbooks, appear to have taken into account the importance of the setting-out and display of information, the use of spatial relations, even at the risk of being accused of "wasting" paper" or "increasing costs", it is sad to see how ineffective a lot of typographical layout still is, as some of these catalogues testify.

It would appear that in many cases designers have not managed to strike the right balance in using illustration and space to display text information. And Burnhill and Hartley suggest:

> a shift of emphasis is needed in typographical research to take into account not only the response of the reader to printed information but also the rationality of the design of the stimulus material (13)

because they believe we tend to be inhibited -

> by the notion that <u>display</u> is something we add to an otherwise adequate statement in order to produce an <u>interesting</u> or <u>artistic</u> effect(13)

Certainly this does seem to be the case with some of the catalogue pages where the reader might well have the feeling that empty spaces have been left or the occasional illustration added, not because these help "to convey to the reader the structure and organisation of the text" but because the designers want to add something other than text to the page, in order to set it off, display it and "produce an interesting or artistic effect".

Although as Hartley and Truemann point out:

> A considerable literature now documents how typographical layout can be manipulated to improve the comprehension of instructional text. The evidence shows that readers can search well-designed text more quickly than standard text, that readers prefer well-spaced text to standard text, and that spacing can be used to convey the underlying structure of the text to the reader (2)

-- one has the feeling that with certain of the catalogues, notably Longman's, they are guilty of filling the text area quite arbitrarily, either packing it with print or else, inexplicably, leaving large empty spaces, without regard for "structure and organisation of the text" or even, in the case of Longman, to the structure of the sentence. In several cases Longman interrupts a sentence, often in mid-phrase, and even in the middle of a hyphenated word, to fill the remainder of the column with inches of empty space, continuing the word, phrase, sentence, in another column altogether.

While it is difficult to generalise about the use of space over all the catalogues, in fact difficult to generalise about the relative use of space and text over the different courses in the same catalogue, it is nevertheless possible to see a certain "catalogue-style". The following table sets out just how much of the page-space is given over to text, leaving the rest for space (margins and other) and illustration.

Table 24 Page-area Used for Text

CUP	CAS	COL	HEIN	LON	MAC	NEL	OUP
Less than 1/3 total	Just over 1/3 total	Just over 1/12 total	Just over 1/5 total	Just under 1/4 on average	Just over 1/5	1/4	Just over 1/8

What can be deduced from these figures is that a great deal of the page not used by text is being given over to space, especially in the case of CUP, Collins, Longman and OUP (in particular with Quartet). In most of these cases, (CUP, Collins and OUP), there seems to be a balance struck between text, space and illustration. However, this is not the case with the Longman catalogue, where it often appears there is no apparent reason why there is "empty space". For example, while it is clear that in certain cases, space has been left at the end of a column

because it is not considered enough to cover the next unit, in many other cases, this cannot be offered as a reason. Indeed, in one example, a column has been left half-empty, ending on the word with, the phrase being completed in the next column, and worse, in the text describing Starting Strategies, with nearly 40mm of column space left empty, the text ends on a hyphenated break --

"available separately on cas-"

- with

the word not being completed until the next column on the next page. (Compare also Longman sample page, in Appendix II).

Among recommendations from Hartley, Trueman and Burnhill on producing and measuring readable writing are the following:

- End each line at a sensible place syntactically (eg at the ends of clauses). Avoid word breaks (hyphenation) at line ends.
- End each page at a sensible place (eg do not have the first line of a new paragraph as the last line of the page).(14)

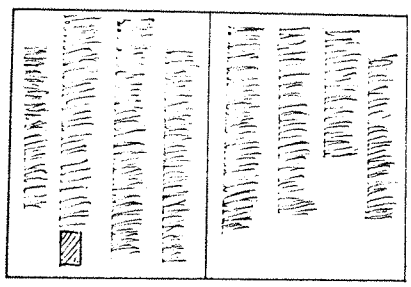
In addition to these recommendations which Longman's catalogue designers need to heed, Hartley et al. have others, aimed at guiding page-designers on the use of space "to convey to the reader the structure and organisation of the text":

> Use units of line feed in proportion to separate out and to groups units of texts. (For example, separate headings from the text by using half a line space below the heading and one line space above it; separate paragraphs from each other by half a line space; start new sentences on a new line.) (14)

Hartley and his co-writers frequently offer recommendations for the use of space within text, between lines, between columns, between headings and text and so on. However, it is difficult to make recommendations on the allocation of space to text and illustration over the whole page-area, as obviously this must depend a great deal on the kind of text as well as the kind of reader and the kind of publication. Hartley and Burnhill do offer page desginers recommendations for the design of page-layouts, based on the preparation of a grid and grid modules (12).

However, it is obviously up to the individual designers to decide on what proportion of page area is to be given over to space (as distinct from the space required for margins or interline spacing, inter-column spacing, etc) and to illustration and text. And designers allocating a great deal of page area to space, outside the print area on the page, should be able to account for its being there. For example, it would be interesting to learn how Longman's designers justify their use of empty column space in the layout for Starting Strategies or for their Kernel courses. In their second two-page spread for the Kernel course, all 8 columns carry text, accounting for just under 40% of the total page area, with only one small (40 x 50mm) illustration, the rest of the page area being left empty, as can be seen from Figure 2, following:

Fig.2



4.4 Illustration

Burnhill and Hartley have argued that we tend to be inhibited -

> by the notion that display is something we add to an otherwise adequate statement in order to produce an interesting or artistic effect. (13)

And with much of the illustrative material used in these catalogues it is difficult to argue against this.

In 6 out of 8 catalogues, illustrated in black and white (bl/wh) only, the illustrations used can hardly be described as "interesting" or "artistic", depicting as they do, in the majority of cases, only the course-book covers, and only in black and white. Only Heinemann use

illustrations of inside (sample) pages oftener than illustrations of book covers, as the table below shows.

Table 25 Illustrations on the EFL Courses

	In Colour or Bl/Wh.	Depicting Book-covers	Sample/ inside pages	Other
CUP	Bl/Wh.	2	1	2
CAS	Bl/Wh.	6	-	-
COL	Bl/Wh.	1	-	-
HEIN	Bl/Wh.	2	5	3
LON	Bl/Wh.	10	3	3
MAC	None	-	-	-
NEL	Colour	2	-	-
OUP	Colour	10	1	1
Total		33	10	9

As the table sets out, the majority of all the illustrations used for EFL courses in the catalogues is of bookcovers and the majority of these (21 out of 33) are in black and white.

The overall impression therefore is that designers are using these illustrations, in the main black and white photographs of coloured textbook covers quite arbitrarily, to break up the text area. This seems to be the case, for example, with the use of the tiny illustration, in black and white, of a book cover in Longman's two-page spread for Kernel, shown in Fig.2.

Duchastel considers that illustrations in text can fulfil one of three roles: the attentional, the explicative, and the retentional.

> Illustrations fulfilling an attentional role are meant to motivate the reader, no more. They make the text more interesting to pick up, more interesting to browse through, and

> more interesting to read....
> The explicative role of illustrations is the one for which we generally think illustrations to be particularly apt. They explain a given aspect of the topic being presented or they add something which is not clearly expressible in words...
> The (retentional) role is derived from theory and remains to be supported by instructional research.
> ...The basis of this role is that iconic or pictorial memory is less resistant to forgetting than is verbal memory...
> Illustrations in this role are presumed to act somewhat as do section headings, that is to say, they form a conceptual plan of the subject-matter for the learner, although an iconic plan rather than a verbal one. It is through this plan that memory is facilitated. (15)

It is unlikely that the illustrations in the catalogues are intended "to motivate the reader" nor explicate what is not clearly expressible in words, as the vast majority are used to depict colour covers in black and white only. To fulfil the third remaining role, these illustrations would have to be "memorable", facilitating retrieval from memory, more strongly than any text could. And this may be the case; it is certainly what has been claimed for them by company representatives. Even in the absence of colour (except in the case of Nelson and OUP) illustrations of book covers, I was told, were likely to be remembered rather than their titles. For my part, I find it hard to believe that an illustration of the kind used by Longman for Kernel (see Fig.2), which has the drawbacks of being much reduced in size as well as being in black and white only, can serve any useful purpose at all.

Other research, cited by Fleming (16), which was carried out to show the usefulness of pictures in text, found that in studies of educational texts, with children, some combination of words and pictures was to be preferred to either alone, but in these studies the pictures were carrying additional information or "instructional cues", acting the explicative role. In the catalogues the text could have supplemented these black and white illustrations adding, in words, what colour the covers used, but the text fails to do this. It could therefore be argued that with the 6 non-colour using catalogues there is no strong reason, not even on aesthetic grounds for the bulk of what passes for illustrative

material on the EFL courses. OUP alone (Nelson unfortunately using 2 small illustrations of largely white book covers, in their colour pictures) stands out for its use, on every single page, of vivid, colour photographs, which at least have the merit of showing the book covers as they really are, in all their colourfulness. There needs to be some research into the role or usefulness of such photography or illustration (black and white or colour) in texts such as catalogues or prospectuses.

If indeed "a picture is worth a thousand words", it could be argued that far more useful than pictures of colour covers, in such catalogues as these, would be illustrations of sample pages. A clear illustration of a lesson or unit could reveal the style of the course more than any thousands of words. However, almost to a man, spokesmen for the different publishers, to whom I spoke on the subject, argued against using these in the catalogues: illustrations of sample pages did not reproduce well; such illustrations, when reduced were unreadable; and illustrations of book covers had at least the merit of identifying their range of books, while illustrations of pages did not.

However, where sample pages have been used in the catalogues, notably in Heinemann's catalogue, these are both "interesting" and informative, even though greatly reduced. In fact, in Heinemann's case, 2 illustrations of sample pages are used on 2 different pages, but even though greatly reduced, the reproductions are clear enough to show details of layout and illustrations, even the sort of story and exercises that are used in the lessons.

A picture can be worth a thousand words; it obviously depends on the picture. And to a reader browsing through these catalogues, of those illustrations that show only black and white reproductions of coloured textbook covers or those that show, however reduced, sample pages from inside the textbooks, it is likely that those depicting sample pages will have most appeal.

The other illustrations show neither outside covers nor inside pages; of these, some promote the course name (as in Collins' Express) or (as with the CUP Meanword course) are photographs, possibly (but not obviously) from the textbooks, both types being used, one suspects, for display purposes "to produce an interesting or artistic effect" rather than for any of the reasons put forward by Duchastel.

Whatever role the illustrative material is intended to carry out in the catalogues, the addition of colour does make an impact.

4.5 Colour

Of the 8 catalogues, only 2, Nelson and OUP, use colour throughout in their illustrations, though all the catalogues except Longman's, make use of colour in other ways. (See Appendix II, sample pages).

Current research into colour distinguishes between colour that attracts or directs attention, and colour that is an essential feature of the subject-matter. In the catalogues both uses are served: colour to attract and direct attention, by means of colour-coding units, headings or pages; and colour to depict, in colour illustrations, features of the textbooks like the covers or sample lessons and units.

However, it appears that research has not shown that the use of colour either to depict or to attract attention has any real significance. Dooley and Harkins, describing experiments with colour at Xerox's research laboratories, in their article Functional and Attention Getting Effects of Colour on Graphic Comminications, make the following points:

> It is commonly assumed that the use of color in visual communciations has an over-all positive effect on learning and motivation. Educational materials, for example, are somehow judged more effective and interesting if they are in color even though there is little evidence to support these beliefs.. It is also noteworthy that advertisers spend substantial amounts of money to use color even though there is some evidence that the cost is not justified. (17)

While only two of the catalogues use colour in their illustrations, all of them, with the exception of Longman's, use colour in various ways to attract attention and to code different items in the catalogue.

4.5.1 Uses of Colour in the Catalogues

While Nelson and OUP alone use colour throughout their catalogues to code or mark out specific sections, the other catalogues make use of colour, as in tinted pages, to mark sections too. OUP use 11 different colours in their head-margin to mark off 12 different sections in their catalogue; Nelson use 3 colours, turquoise, yellow and pink, in that order, alternating, to mark the introduction of one of their 19 sections. Macmillan mark a new section by using a tinted page, in one of the shades of their colour, salmon pink, before each of their 13 sections. Longman also make use of a tinted paper, though not in colour. Their 10 Contents pages are in grey-tinted paper. In addition to their colour-coded head-bands, OUP also use blue tinted paper throughout their 17-page American section, with its colour-coded, violet head-band.

While Nelson and OUP regularly make use of their colour band to colour-code specific sections, other catalogues use a colour-band on every page. CUP, Collins, Heinemann and Macmillan all use one colour throughout, as a top border; red for CUP, pale blue for Collins, black for Heinemann, and pink for Macmillan. And into this border the section heading is set.

Headings are either set into the main top border or else set off in colour elsewhere on the page. Collins and Macmillan use the basic colour for their Section and Course headings, but CUP do not. Their colour, red, with white type, is used throughout only as the top border for the new section, or occasionally, (6 times) also added as an extra band to the page drawing attention to something new. Cassell's use their only colour, red, sparingly for capitals when the item is new.

Highlighting an item is another occasion for using colour. Cassell

again uses its red colour, sparingly, mainly as rules, to box in certain features like a contents list, or to rule off a heading. CUP uses its red (with white type) to highlight a new item (32 times) in a red box with NEW in white type, inset. Red stars are also used for items set in lists.

Collins similarly use their colour, blue, to box in (37 times) NEW, also in blue.

Heinemann use their colour blue in 2 shades, with the pale blue used as backing for heading formats and their deeper blue to signal a NEW item (with white type). Grey is also used as a backing for their list of components.

Writing about this application of colour, Dooley and Harkins say:

> Many applications of color do not use color as an information code but use the color to attract attention and increase the approach tendencies of the user. While the color is functional in the sense that it has utility, the information it carries is redundant and the color could be removed without degrading the basic information content of the communication. Examples of this application of color are abundant, including most of the color used in advertising. (17)

And while they agree that many applications of colour serve both functional and attention-getting purposes

> For example, colored highlighting (such as red underlining) is functionally useful because it may indicate a certain type of information and it also has an attention-getting effect on the reader

- their conclusions were that colour's chief effect appeared to be motivational; black and white being equally effective as an information transmitter.

Burnhill et al. in their article, The Typography of College Prospectuses, (18) describe how they decided to drop colour-coding in their revised prospectus. Instead of coloured pages to code 9 sections, there would be only white paper used throughout and running heads set over departmental pages to replace the previous function of the colours.

Although, altogether, there were over a dozen changes made in the revision, they were surprised to learn from the secretaries using the new prospectus -

> the loss of colour coding was the change that affected them most.

Whether or not to use, or dispense with, colour as a typographic cue should therefore be carefully considered. On the one hand, it is argued that "multiple cueing can be confusing". And as Dooley and Harkins point out if there is already printed information, say, on new sections, then colour coding is redundant. Hartley argues:

> There is no need to use colour on every page simply because it is technically possible to do so. Colour should be used sparingly and consistently, and if necessary, its function should be explained to the reader. (12)

Similarly, Szlichcinski agrees that

> Colour can be an aid to picking out a particular symbol in a complex display, and serve as a means of distinguishing categories of information. When the display is relatively simple, however, colour may not improve performance, although users may prefer the coloured picture for aesthetic reasons. The more colours are used, the less the impact of each will be... Colour has been found to increase time spent looking at the irrelevant graphic stimuli...and to improve recall of unimportant elements in relevant material ....it did not affect recall of important material....and did not affect recognition accuracy. Its function appears to be simply to attract attention to part of a display...It follows that if colour highlights an unimportant element it may hinder comprehension by diverting attention from important ones. (19)

Other researchers, Katzman and Nyenhuis (20), endorse these findings. In their 1982 article, they describe testing three hypotheses:

(i) Color presentation will increase recall only of peripheral material;

(ii) Color presentation will result in material being rated better, more interesting, and more active than black and white presentation;

(iii) More time will be spent attending to color material than black and white material.

Their evidence for the first hypothesis indicated that

> the color variable increases recall of peripheral material... while it does not increase recall of central material of any sort.

Evidence for the second hypothesis indicated -

> a general tendency toward higher judgement of color material, although the effects of color on a simple positive-negative distinction were negligible.

- though no clear support for the third. Their conclusion was, therefore,that while the addition of colour to an audiovisual presentation did appear to improve pictorial material, considered peripheral and irrelevant, colour did not improve learning of the central material.

Using colour in catalogues, it would therefore appear, does not bring as many advantages as might have been thought. While it appears to serve some motivational purpose (browsing readers are perhaps more likely to pick up and read through a coloured catalogue), it does not enhance memory and may even distract from the text information. At present while only 2 catalogues use colour for illustrations (OUP, practically on every page except Contents and Index pages and Nelson for over three-quarters of their pages) most catalogues use colour mainly for high-lighting items or signalling new sections. However, while it appears that much colour-coding of this type is redundant, colour does have aesthetic and motivational appeal. Researchers, though, recommend its sparing use, for maximum impact.

4.6 Page Numbering

The catalogues vary in how and where they place their page-numbers. In the survey of 51 different college prospectuses, Burnhill et al. (18) changed the position of page numbers in 50 out of the 51. In these prospectuses, the page numbering had either been omitted (3 cases), been placed in the top centre (1 case), bottom centre (16 cases), bottom left and right corners (20) or bottom left and left (10 examples), with only one following the system they themselves adopted for their revised prospectus. This had the numbers positioned on the top edge, left on the left-hand page and right on the right hand page.

As can be seen from Table 26, following, only three of the catalogues here, CUP, Macmillan and Nelson opt for Burnhill's choice.

Table 26 Numbering in the Catalogues

	TOP of the Page R. on right l. on left	BOTTOM of Page R. on right l. on left	TOP of Page Right only	Bold/Normal Type in numbers
CUP	Yes			Large,white,bold
CAS		Yes		Normal size type
COL		Yes		Normal size type
HEIN		Yes		Normal size type
LON		Yes		Slightly larger and bolder than text type
MAC	Yes			Larger and bolder than text type
NEL	Yes			Colour of top-band + larger and bolder than text
OUP			Only right pages used	Large,bold,black

Among writers on typographic design, there is little written on page numbering. Burnhill found in his survey of 51 college prospectuses (18) that the vast majority (46 out of 51) placed the numbers at the bottom of the page. Only one placed the numbers as he preferred them, at the top of the page, in the right corner for the right page, left for the left. Hartley also recommends placing the page numbers "near the fore-edge of the book so that it is easy to see them when flicking through" (8) but he does not specify here whether they should be in the top or bottom margin.

Half the catalogues use the top margin, OUP using only the right-hand pages. And of those 4 using the bottom margin, 3 use numbers no bigger than the text type. Only Longman use type slightly larger and bolder. But of those using the top margin, all use larger and bolder type than the text. In the case of CUP, it is very large and bold, white against the red border. OUP uses large bold numbers in black type against their various colour-bands. Nelson uses the same colour for their numbers as they use for that section. Unfortunately when the colour happens to be yellow, the contrast of the yellow number on white background is not good. As Burtt says:

> There have been numerous experiments with variations of color of type and background but the principles involved seem pretty clear. It all comes down to a matter of brightness contrast between the letter and the background. It does not make so much difference whether it is a red letter on a blue ground or a blue letter on a red ground but if one is light and one is dark that is the principal consideration from the standpoint of legibility. (11)

Nelson's use of yellow on white is a case of light on light and there is not enough contrast to make those pages entirely legible. While typographers have not made a point of commenting on the use of bolder or larger type for the page numbers, concentrating on the placing of the numbers on the fore-edge, it would make sense for these to be larger and bolder than the normal text type, to make it "easy to see them when flicking through", as Hartley puts it.

4.7 Recommendations

Writers on typography seem generally agreed in their recommendations on page sizes and layout, the use of space, illustrations, colour and numbers.

- Standard (ISO) page sizes are to be preferred;
- A page size appropriate to the material and purpose is preferable;
- Layout, taking into account total page dimensions, should be fundamental, not something added for display;

- Choice of layout should be guided by the fact that "clarity in layout leads to clarity in content";
- Effective use of space can convey the structure and organisation of the text material;
- Illustrations should be chosen for their usefulness in motivating or informing the reader, not merely added to fill a space;
- Colour is to be used sparingly, to preserve its impact;
- Numbers should be easily seen, so contrast and placing are important.

5. Text

Understandably, perhaps, most typography is concerned with "spatial relations" as these affect the text material on the page. To Hartley for example:

> The choice of page size and the content of the text together determine other interrelated decisions, eg line length, type size, interline spacing, and where to position tables, figures, captions and even page numbers.
> .....
> Clarity in text is largely a function of the layout, or how the material is spaced. Spacing may be considered in terms of the spaces between elements in the text: lines, words, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections. (8)

5.1 Print

The way in which text is presented to the reader, in print, has attracted a great deal of research. However, to some writers like Spencer (5) and Hartley (12) much of this research is of dubious value as it has tended to concentrate on the relation of typefaces and typesizes to space on the line, rather than, for example, on how print is perceived by the readers themselves.

> Perhaps the most confusing aspect of past research in this field has been the tendency to suggest typesizes without proper regard for the fact that the specified size of a typesize (say 12-point) does not refer to the dimensions of the image of the printed characters as seen by the reader but to the depth of space required by a line of characters when set with minimum line-to-line space. (12)
>
> In their pursuit of optimal type size many researchers seem to have disregarded the influence of reading distance: a 12 point

type read at 18 inches is the equivalent of a 10 point type at 15 inches. (5)

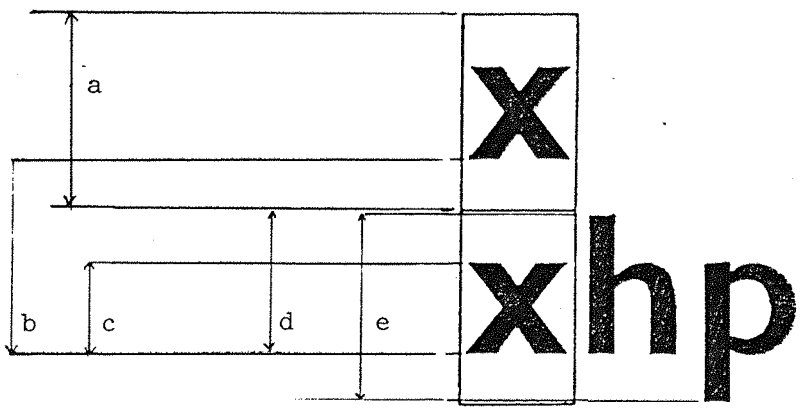
Choice of typesize and typeface is further complicated by other factors variously described under headings like visibility, distinctiveness, legibility and readability. But over and above all these problems and difficulties, there is the difficulty in describing, and choosing from, the enormous number of sizes and varieties of type. This difficulty can be estimated when it is known that one encyclopaedia of typefaces lists over 2,350 typefaces, 19 of which are considered by Zachrisson (21) to be in common use in Western Europe. Describing and choosing a particular size and variety of type is further complicated by the fact that there are at least four, conflicting, measurement systems: the inch, the metric, the Anglo-American point and the Didot point systems. The complexity of typographic research in this field can be further complicated by the possibility of infinitesimally increasing or decreasing sizes through photo-setting. Added to all that, both the boldness of the type and the choice of typeface can affect how readers perceive typesize. Figure 3 below shows how three words printed in the same typesize but differing in degrees of boldness, can appear of different sizes to the reader.

Figure 3

psychology
psychology
psychology

Again, according to which dimensions we use to describe the vertical dimensions of a particular typeface, different results can be obtained. Figure 4 shows how measurements will vary if we base our judgement on one dimension, say (a), rather than on dimension (c).

Figure 4



(a) Height of metal
(b) Line to line distance.
(c) Height of x, (x-height)
(d) Height of ascender, (h-height)
(e) Height including ascenders (eg h), and descenders (eg p).

In the catalogues, there is a great deal of variety both in typeface and typesize. And because of the multiplicity of typefaces and sizes, as well as the variety of measuring systems, for the purposes of this thesis, a simplified measuring system has been adopted; that of counting, over running text of at least 20 lines, omitting headings, the number of letters to the mm and the number of lines of type to the mm.

CUP Their Cambeng course uses 11 varieties of print. Apart from different size headings in bold, and a large display heading with type in WHITE, BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS, there are 4 different sizes of print in the text material.

Meanword uses 12 varieties, some of these differing from those in the Cambeng course. There are, for example 4 different sizes of italics and a different display heading.

Text print: Letters to the cm (10mm): 7 (max. 7.5; min. 6)

No. of lines to the cm : 3 (6 over 2 cm)

CAS Ontheway has 7 varieties, including the use of italics, capitals and 4 sizes of print.

Foundeng. has 5.

Text print: Letters to the cm: 7 (max. 8; min. 6.5)

No. of lines to cm: 3+ (almost 7 per 2cm)

COL In their one course examined here, Express, there are 9 varieties, including italics in black and in blue, and 2 sets of capitals in bold black and extra bold blue.

Text print: Letters to the cm: 6.5 (max. 7.5; min. 5)

No. of lines to cm: 3 barely (almost 6 per 2cm)

HEIN

In the Mainco course, 14 varieties of type are used including script and 4 varieties of capitals in 2 colours, blue or black, together with 3 degrees of medium, bold or extra-bold.

Text print: Letters to the cm: 6 (max. 7; min. 5.5)

No. of lines to cm: 3 (6 per 2cm)

(which can be compared, later, to the print used in their index, where there are 9 letters to the cm, and 4 lines)

LON Their Kernel course uses 12 varieties including 5 sizes of type and 4 degrees of bold: light, standard, bold and extra-bold.

Text print: Letters to the cm: 7 (max. 7.5; min. 6)

No. of lines to cm: 3+ (6+ per 2cm)

MAC On their 2 courses 6 varieties were used, including 2 types of italics.

Text print: Letters to the cm: -7 (max. 8; min. 6)

No. of lines to cm: 3 (barely 6 per 2cm)

NEL In the Newincen course, there are 7 varieties of type used, including italics and 3 varieties of capitals.

Text print: Letters to the cm: 7 (max. 8; min. 6)

No. of lines to cm: 3 (barely 6 1/2 per 2cm)

OUP In their Access course, 10 varieties of type are used, including 3 sizes of capitals and 2 varieties of italics.

Text print: Letters to the cm: 7 (max. 8; min. 6)

No. of lines to cm: 3 (6 1/2 per 2cm)

4 of the 8 catalogues use at least 10 varieties of type in describing one book-series.

5 different sizes of print, in text, are used by Longman.

4 varieties of capitals are used by Heinemann.

4 varieties of italics are used by CUP.

4 degrees of bold are used by CUP, Longman and OUP.

6 of the 8 catalogues use a print size that produces (over 20 column-lines) 7 letters to the cm; Collins 6 1/2 and Heinemann 6, excepted. Measured over 2cm in a single column of text, and not including headings, all 8 catalogues produce roughly 3 lines to the cm, though Cassell, Longman, Nelson and OUP over 3cm or more would all, probably, on average, fit in an extra line.

Burnhill and Hartley (18) examining 51 different college prospectuses found that 22 of them used 3 or more typesizes, and in redesigning their own, they rejected the original design which had 2 type styles and 5 type sizes:

> Original: Two styles, including roman, bold and italic. Five sizes.
> Revised: One style. Two sizes. Roman and bold, no italic. (18)

They take the view that by a consistent use of space and functionally grouping parts, you dispense with the confusing variety of types and sizes both for text and headings. Both Hartley and Burnhill prefer using spatial cues to typographical ones because they feel these are, in the main far less confusing.

> Textbook writers sometimes use multiple cues...(In a text by Tukey) seven levels of typographical cueing are employed within three or four pages. Tukey uses words or phrases in capital letters; words or phrases in capital and lower-case italic; words or phrases in capital or lower-case bold; words or

> phrases isolated in the centre of a line; and words or phrases or sentences in boxes or traps.. (maintaining) that all of these variants have different functions and that these functions are clear to the reader. (22)

This multiple cueing that Hartley has found in Tukey's textbook is typical of the multiplicity of typefaces and sizes in the catalogues and it is probably not the case, as Tukey has claimed, that the variety of functions (to match the variety of type) is at all clear to the readers. As Hartley argues:

> There is a need, I feel, to see if these cues used by authors and printers, and their multiple combinations, are really needed, are confusing, or are even noticed by many readers. Certainly many instructional leaflets, advertisements, forms and lists use a variety of typesizes, weights and faces -- with resulting confusion. (22)

And Burtt makes the same point:

> ....in an arrangement which combines several type faces in a single page, difficulty does sometimes arise. This is more apt to occur in advertisements than in educational material. In one instance speed of reading tests showed that mixed type faces (with also some mixture of sizes) produced an 11 per cent loss in efficiency that was clearly significant. (11)

Each typeface has its own set of capitals, lower-case, italics and numbers.

Experiments with varieties of print using capitals or lower-case letters, bold or italics, have shown definite reader-preferences and differences in legibility and reading-speed, and reporting on this, in Typography and Readability (11), Burtt writes:

> All this suggests then the superiority under ordinary reading conditions of material printed in small letters.

Capitals in particular appear to have caused most difficulty.

> All-capital printing retards speed of reading to a greater extent than any other single typographic factor. Tests reported by Breland & Breland, Paterson & Tinker, and Starch all show that words set entirely in capitals are read considerably slower than words in lower case. (5)

Although capitals have been mainly used for headings and headlines, Poulton reports an experiment showing that --

> about 10% more lower-case headlines could be located in the time than headlines printed in capitals. Thus lower-case headlines do not lack distinctiveness when embedded in a page of newsprint. (1)

And increasingly, instead of capitals to mark out headings and headlines, Poulton reports:

> Many of the younger British typographers are moving away from capitals for headings towards the use of large, bold lower-case letters (1)

Spencer reports tests showing that this is what readers also prefer.

> Paterson and Tinker found that readers preferred faces "approaching the appearance of bold face type" and Burt advocates a semi-bold style face as being the most legible for children...(5)

While bold is favoured by typographers and readers, italics seem to be universally disliked.

> Italics are not to be recommended. (1)

> Starch in 1914 and Burt in 1959, found that the use of italics retards reading. Tinker's research, in 1955, showed that while italics slowed reading by only a small though statistically significant amount -- about 15.5 words per minute -- readers do not like italics. 96% of his adult subjects expressed the opinion that they could read roman lower case more easily than italics. (5)

Table 27 following illustrates some of this variety within the catalogues.

Table 27 Varieties of Print Used

	No. of varieties used	Capitals used	Italics used	Bold used	Colour-type used	Letters per cm	No. of lines per cm/2 cm
CUP	11 (Cambeng) 12 (Meanword)	Yes (rarely)	Yes	Yes (often)	Red White (on red)	7	3/6
CAS	7 (Ontheway) 5 (Foundeng)	Yes (rarely)	Yes	Yes (often)	Red (rarely)	7	3+/7
COL	9 (Express)	Yes (rarely)	Yes	Yes	Blue	6 1/2	3-/6-
HEIN	13 (Mainco) 10 (Contact)	Yes (often)	Yes (rarely)	Yes	Blue White (on blue)	6	3/6
LON	12 (Kernel)	Yes (rarely)	No	Yes (and light)	No	7	3+/6+
MAC	6	Yes	Yes (often)	Yes	Pink	-7	3/6-
NEL	7	Yes	Yes	Yes	White	7	3/6 1/2
OUP	10 (Access) 13 (Quartet)	Yes	Yes	Yes (often)	Red (on yellow)	7	3/6 1/2

5.2 Interline Spacing/Leading

When type is set solid, with each piece of type being set directly against the others, without any extra lead being inserted to keep the rows apart, the result might be printed text with lines too closely set for comfortable, effective reading. This can be demonstrated after comparing the same text with different interline spacing.

> If type is set solid, that is with the bases on which the type is cast placed directly in contact with each other, the printed lines may be a bit too close together for effective reading.

If type is set solid, that is with the bases on which the type is cast placed directly in contact with each other, the printed lines may be a bit too close together for effective reading.

Hartley and Young describe in their article, The Effects of Interline Space on Judgements of Typesize (23), how experiments showed that increasing interline spacing affected judgements on the size of print and that smaller sizes could be tolerated if the text were not set solid.

It is thus recommended to set a little extra lead in between the lines. In tests, too little lead resulted in no improvement; too much lead was wasteful and increased costs, without adding any improvement to readability. 2pt lead is considered adequate.

In their re-designing of college prospectuses, Burnhill et al switched from an 8-pt type set solid (line-feed 8-pt), to 8-pt, with a 2-pt interline space (line-feed 10-pt).

5.3 Line Length/Column Width

Apart from interline spacing, another factor that influences the effect of print on the reader, affecting as it does legibility and reading-speed, is the actual length of the line.

Some researchers have found that neither very short nor very long lines are helpful to the reader.

> Line length may be varied within the broad limits without diminishing legibility but research has shown that very short lines slow perception and increase the number and duration of fixation pauses, while very long lines greatly increase the number of regressions. The optimal line length seems to be one which accommodates about 10 to 12 words or 60 to 70 characters. Tinker found that..2-pt leading allowed the line length of 8 and 10-pt type to be extended without loss of legibility...(5)

Burtt also describes how -

> experiments by the speed of reading technique indicate an influence of the length of the line....
> What (all the experimenting) adds up to is that a line of moderate length somewhere in the vicinity of 80 millimetres is the most favorable from the standpoint of legibility....
> The experimenters...suggest between 75 and 90 as a range within which conditions are reasonably favorable. (11)

Later researchers like Hartley, Burnhill and Fraser, however, have discovered, in experiments, to test comprehension, reading speed and

scanning performance, that much longer lines than those recommended by Spencer and Burtt can be tolerated without readers' performance suffering, while other researchers, like Poulton and Foster, have produced other, conflicting results, as Ennis describes:

> The original version of Programmed Learning and Educational Technology was set in a two column format: the revised version (by Hartley et al.) in a single column format equal in width to the joint width of the original (138mm).....
> Hartley, Burnhill and Fraser found little difference in the performance of readers using the two formats...
> In contrast to these findings, Poulton (1959) found that a single column format (131mm) was superior in terms of comprehension to a variety of two column formats; while Foster (1970) observed that a two column format (2 x 71mm) was "scanned" more rapidly than a full width column of 152mm. (26)

As Ennis continues, Hartley and his co-authors were not aiming to discredit past researchers so much as to emphasise that piecemeal research on isolated features was not to be recommended:

> one must look at the wider issues of design, such as page size and the overall structure of text, before focussing on specific typographic features. (26)

Page-size, or rather the text-area within the margins, often allows for the possibility of lines longer than the "optimal line length". And as Burtt explains:

> the reader is handicapped if the printed line is too long so that he gets lost in finding the beginning of the following line and is unable to capitalize on the premonitions of meaning in subsequent lines. The obvious remedy if the page is too wide for effective reading is to set the material in columns. (11)

Writing in 1970 on how the design of the journal, Applied Ergonomics, was established, Poulton (6) describes how in a page 203mm (8in wide) ergonomics dictated

> lines should be 1.5 to 2.4 alphabets long (50 to 89mm, 2 to 3.5in)

while practical requirements and their design decision dictated -

> two equal columns for general articles,
> 84mm (3.3in) each

- which shows a change from his 1959 stance.

The line length favoured by the catalogues varies, as the line depends on

the number and width of columns on the page. And the number and width of these columns could have been decided by the page-size or text-area.

3 of the catalogues work with a page-size approximately 8 inches wide, CUP just over 8 inches and Collins and Longman just under 8 inches; the other 5 catalogues work with a page-width of approximately 6 inches, Heinemann just over 6 inches and Cassell, Macmillan, Nelson and OUP just under.

LON	use a 4-column layout; maximum width 42mm. 4 x 42mm.
CUP	use a 3-column layout; maximum width 55mm. 3 x 55mm.
CAS,	use a 3-column layout; maximum width 42mm. 3 x 42mm.
NEL	use a 3-column layout; maximum width 42mm. 3 x 42mm.
and OUP	use a 3-column layout; maximum width 42mm. 3 x 42mm.
COL	use a 3-column layout; maximum width 52mm. 3 x 52mm.
MAC	use a 2-column layout; maximum width 58mm. 2 x 58mm.
HEIN	use a 2-column layout; maximum width 60mm. 2 x 60mm.

It is interesting that while Longman prefer 4 columns of 42mm maximum, CUP with a slightly wider page prefer 3 columns, of 55mm maximum. And while there is variation among the catalogues in using 2, 3 or 4 columns with lines of varying lengths up to 60mm, there is also some considerable variation in how much space they leave between their columns.

The question of spacing columns on the page has concerned researchers investigating whether reading speed could be affected if readers become distracted by columns possibly set too close.

> If material is to be set in columns there is a further problem as to how to separate them. It is possible to leave considerable space between the columns or to put in a rule, that is a straight vertical line, or any combination of rule and space. An experiment varied the conditions from a rule with no space up to 8mm space. The results were entirely negative as far as speed of reading was concerned. Hence if one puts a single rule between the columns it is unnecessary to bother with any space at all. (11)

There does not therefore seem to be any advantage for Collins and Heinemann in using spaces of 10mm between columns, the maximum used in the catalogues, over Cassell and OUP who made do with only 3mm. However,

while tests on how reading speed was affected proved negative, it could be that tests on clarity of layout, ease of access and aesthetic pleasingness would not show a similarly negative result. Poulton (6) while indicating that ergonomic requirements dictated that a separation, between columns, of only 2.5mm would be adequate, preferred a separation of 5.0 to 7.5mm "on aesthetic grounds".

Table 28 below shows how the catalogues compare in their page-sizes, number and width of columns and inter-column spacing.

Table 28 Line Length/Column Width

	Approx page-width	No. of columns	Width of columns	Space between columns	Double column used	Width of double	Rule used
CUP	21cm	3	55mm	7mm	Yes	120mm	once only
CAS	-15	3	42	3	No	---	No
COL	-20	3	52	10	Yes	110	x3
HEIN	15+	2	60	10	Yes	124	Yes
LON	-20	4	42	5	Yes	88	Yes
MAC	-15	2	58	5	Once	107	No
NEL	-15	3	42	5	No	---	No
OUP	-15	3	42	3	No	---	x4

It can be seen from the table that none of the line-lengths used in the catalogues meet Spencer's suggested measurements. He suggests an optimal line-length accommodating about 10 or 12 words, or 60 to 70 characters. The most that can be fitted into a catalogue line are found in CUP, Collins,Heinemann and Macmillan, offering around 8 words to the line, with CUP and Macmillan fitting in up to 40 characters. The other catalogues fit in 4 to 6 words or between 20 and 30 characters.

By Burtt's standards

> a line of moderate length somewhere in the vicinity of 80mm is the most favorable from the standpoint of legibility. (11)

-- the catalogues also fall short. Nor do they fit into the range -

> between 75 and 90..within which conditions are reasonably favorable

As can be seen from the table, the line-length in a single column, (or single column width) varies between 42 and 60mm, so that even the longest line here, at 60mm, falls quite a way outside the range of 75-90mm. And the line length of the double-sized columns, when used, with the exception of Longman at 88mm, is similarly outside this optimal range of 75-90mm, with line-lengths here of 107, 110, 120 and 124mms.

One more factor can affect line-length: the use of justified or unjustified setting for lines of type. Spencer, in 1968, wrote:

> Lines of type are conventionally forced to a uniform length, or what the printer calls justified. Such squared-up columns of type can be achieved only by varying the space between words or letters from one line to the next and by breaking words frequently. A practical alternative to this arrangement is the use of unjustified setting, in which lines are evenly word-spaced but irregular in length with an uneven right-hand margin, as in this book. With unjustified setting it is unnecessary to break words, names or dimensions at the ends of lines. (5)

In 1968, lines were "conventionally forced to a uniform length" and therefore books like Spencer's with unjustified setting, using lines of irregular length, were unusual. Today while newspapers, books and academic journals do still tend to prefer justified setting, more and more publications including Poulton's journal, Applied Erognomics, and Burnhill et al's revised college prospectus, are turning to unjustified setting with its irregular lines.

Although unjustified setting has been around for quite a while, it has not found favour until comparatively recently. At the beginning of the century, in 1904, T.L. De Vinne, cited by Spencer (5), argued the case against unjustified setting:

> Lines of ragged outline may attract attention to an advertisement or an ephemeral pamphlet, but to this reader this raggedness seems slovenly.

But this "ragged outline" is no longer considered unusual or slovenly, and it is increasingly being used in a variety of publications, including some books and newspapers. All the catalogues in this study use unjustified setting.

It offers, in fact, many practical advantages as many writers, like Hartley and Burnhill are often pointing out:

- Unjustified text is much more cost-effective;
- It is easier and cheaper to type-set, and to allow proof-corrections;
- It does away with irregular word-spacing and awkward word-breaks;
- It is consistent, so that there are none of the so-called rivers of space running through text with the wide word-spacing that is found in justified setting;
- It is flexible in allowing, for example, no line to end after a preposition, or with the first word of a new sentence.

In other words, it is the content of the text which helps determine where the line ends; not some arbitrarily determined column-width. However, though all the catalogues make use of unjustified setting, with lines of irregular length, Longman's catalogue is, nevertheless, riddled with examples of hyphenated words or awkward word-breaks at line-ends, something that justified text is criticised for, and that unjustified text is intended to do away with. There are examples in Longman (see Appendix II) of columns ending on a preposition and pages ending on a hyphenated word-break, of which no other catalogue is guilty.

5.4 Floating Baseline

Just as unjustified text with its irregular lines and "ragged outline" is chosen so that the content can determine where the lines ends, so also is text with a "floating baseline" determined by the content.

> This means that the text does not stop at the same point on every page, irrespective of its content. The stopping point on each page is determined by the content rather than by the need to fill the page...It means that headings do not appear as the last item on a page, nor do paragraphs end on the top line of the next page. And unlike traditional printing practice, the internal spacing of the text is not squeezed or expanded in order to make the text fit into a prescribed rectangle. (3)

By allowing the page to end short of the foot-margin, with a "floating baseline", which all the catalogues exploit, the page-designer should be able to avoid awkward breaks and endings such as the columns ending on hyphenated word-breaks or prepositions, that we find in Longman.

It is in fact something of a puzzle why Longman, alone of the catalogues, does not appear to have benefited from the "floating baseline" and the "ragged outline" of unjustified text and is guilty of what Hartley would call "poor typographic practice" (7).

5.5 Paragraphing

Text at the same time as being arranged in columns, 2, 3 or 4 to the page, with justified or unjustified setting, and with or without a "floating baseline", can also be arranged in paragraphs. And these paragraphs can be distinguished by indentation, spacing, headings, marks, or any combination of these.

According to Hartley:

> Few researchers have commented on the effects of paragraph lengths. It would seem, other things being equal, that short, well-spaced paragraphs make a text look easier to read. (3)

However, while it is true that few writers appear to have views on paragraph-length, several have written on how the paragraph should be marked. In 1940, in the article How to Make Type Readable, Paterson and Tinker (cited in Spencer) could write:

> It is universal practice to separate "thought-units" mechanically by indenting the first line of every paragraph. (5)

Burtt also associates paragraphs with "thought-units" and he goes further than Hartley who believes "short well-spaced paragraphs make a

text look easier to read"; Burtt believes paragraphs do make the material more legible:

> Breaking material into paragraphs promotes legibility. (A) speed of reading test.. involved some 30 short paragraphs, each composed of about 30 words. These paragraphs were printed with the usual indentation. By way of variation, however, five paragraphs were thrown into one so that only every fifth one was indented. Under these circumstances legibility was less efficient by about 7%.
> Presumably the paragraphs corresponded somewhat to "thought-units" and when the arrangement was changed the transitions were less obvious and the reader had more difficulty. (11)

In the 30-40 years since Paterson and Tinker, along with Burtt, were describing indentation as "universal practice" for marking their paragraphs, there have been changes in practice and more and more use is now being made of spacing, with no indentation at all, to separate paragraphs or combinations of both.

In their article, Typographical Cues that Facilitate Comprehension, (24) Frase and Schwartz describe how they found that "meaningfully indented" text was searched more rapidly and was more easily understood than was the same text typed in the standard way.

A typical example of their scheme would be:

Conventional assignment procedures are applied
when subscriber service is assigned
to a spare physical circuit
that is providing
a working derived circuit.
Additional information related to the derived line
is entered in the remarks section
of the service order...

As they describe:

> Our results show that lines may be short or they may be long, a page may have neat margins or ragged margins. No matter. What is critical is whether the lines represent meaningful groups of information. It is this matching of visual design to the constraints of cognitive processing that makes for efficiency. (24)

Another complex system for spacing and presenting text has been devised by Jewett (25). He works on the premise that it is possible to classify paragraphs in terms of their importance and, by using different levels of indentation he can convey this to the reader. Basic materials; explanations of the main points (possibly with examples); and incidental materials are distinguished by having basic material set flush against the left margin; explanations and examples indented 7 spaces; and the incidental material indented a further 7 spaces. Additionally, Jewett uses three vertical rules alongside his basic material; two alongside the explanations; and one down the side of his incidental material.

By contrast, writers like Burnhill and Hartley have concentrated on the use of spacing rather than on variations of indentation. They describe how using vertical spacing in a consistent manner separates and groups related parts.

> In structured text, every line or so may be the start of a new statement. In this case the use of line space is preferable to the indenting of lines as a means of differentiation. In this way, space can be used not only to separate clearly one item from another but also to group items hierarchically by employing one, two or four units of line space as the content of the information dictates....As with all spacing de cisions the specification of functional groupings must be the responsibility of the author and the typographer designer. (12)

According to Hartley:

> Spacing the text in this way has been shown to enhance reader preferences as well as retrieval speed (8)

Poulton (6) describing the ergonomics of the journal, Applied Ergonomics, writes in his section on paragraphs that because of ergonomic requirements ("indenting first line of paragraphs increases speed of reading") their design decision would be to indent the first line. However, although the effect of vertical separation of paragraphs was described as "not known", he additionally took the decision to separate paragraphs by half a line height, "to emphasise paragraphing" saying this was "probably more ergonomic as well as more aesthetic".

Apart from indentations and spacing, sections and sub-sections can be marked out by the use of headings and sub-headings. Hartley suggests

> it is better to set headings and subheadings in lower-case letters (in bold face, if necessary) with initial capitals only

and recommends using -

> one line space between paragraphs,
> one line space below a secondary heading
> and two above, two below a main heading
> and four above, etc. (8)

Poulton (6) agrees with Hartley in preferring titles in lower-case to capitals or italics, and in separating the headings from the text by space above and below the heading.

Among the catalogues, typographic usage, as could be expected, differs both with regard to the spacing or indenting of paragraphs, and to the way headings are made to stand out from the text.

Although paragraphing is used in the catalogues, only Macmillan make use of the indentation method. The others all use spacing without indentation. Some also make use of a method that might be called "semi-paragraphing", characterised by no spacing between the sections nor any indentation at the start of the new section, but by leaving unused space at the end of the previous line. Heinemann, Longman and Macmillan all use this technique. While dividing the material into paragraphs is found in all catalogues, it is not clear what sort of guidelines are being followed. While typographers like Paterson and Tinker, Burnhill and Hartley all recommend short paragraphs (around 30 words) only CUP, Collins and Heinemann regularly make use of short paragraphs while Cassell and Longman frequently err on the long side, Cassell with paragraphs over 30 lines long and Longman over 40 (one even over 57 lines long in the course-description for Strategies).

Table 29 below shows how paragraphs are marked in the various catalogues.

Table 29 Paragraphs in the Catalogues

	Indenting	Spacing	"Semi-paragraph"	Longest
CUP	No	Yes	No	8 lines
CAS	No	Yes	No	32 lines
COL	No	Yes	No	9 lines
HEIN	No	Yes	Yes	8 lines
LON	No	Yes	Yes	Over 40
MAC	Yes	No	Yes	20-21
NEL	No	Yes	No	17
OUP	No	Yes	Yes	16

5.6 Headings

Apart from running headings to mark catalogue sections, across the top of the page (only Cassell and Longman did not use these) 3 using capitals and 3 not, headings are mainly used in the text to mark paragraphs or sections that describe features or components of the courses.

Headings are understood, here, to be the use of type which is different from the text type by being larger, or bolder (even lighter), in capitals or italics, or even in another colour.

Only Longman use type lighter than text-type regularly for sub-headings and for authors' names and it is difficult to distinguish these coupled with the poor quality of their see-through paper; OUP use light type very rarely. Collins, Heinemann and Macmillan all use colour for some headings. With Collins and Macmillan these are usually reserved for book-titles, blue for Collins, pink for Macmillan.

Table 30 following indicates the varieties of type used in headings for the different sections and paragraphs.

Table 30 Varieties of Headings Used

	Capitals Used	Italics Used	Lighter Type	Colour Used	Degrees of Bold
CUP	Section head only	Yes	No	No	Yes
CAS	Rarely, for NEW items	Not for headings	No	No	Yes
COL	Section head only	Not for headings	No	Yes	Yes
HEIN	Course headings	Script for section	No	Yes	Yes
LON	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
MAC	Not for page-heads	Not for headings	No	Yes	Yes
NEL	Yes, often	Not for headings	No	No	Yes
OUP	For word NEW only	Yes	Not for heading	No	Yes

Headings are used by the various catalogues in different ways. For example, not all of them use headings consistently for marking off separate sections, sub-sections, paragraphs and so on. Some catalogues appear to use their heading-system frequently. Catalogues like CUP, Cassell and Longman often have headings or titles for a dozen or more sections while others like Collins and Nelson use only 3 or 4.

Generally, headings precede their section and are identified by their place as much as by their bold or capital type. However, there seems to be a different type of heading in use for paragraphs, in some of the catalogues at least. This "heading", in bolder or coloured type, capitals or italics, is incorporated in the same line as text.

Catalogues like Heinemann, Longman and OUP often use this device to mark their paragraph topics, while continuing the line in standard type for the basic text, as in

The Students' Book comprises 17

- where the underlined items are printed in bold type. OUP use this device but only where the topic is a book title. Heinemann use the device too, but in addition to using bold type to signal their topic-heading, they also use their colour blue for it.

Sometimes the heading, while followed in the same line by text, is kept separate by a space or colon.

Nelson does this:

Book 2: Exploitation is written for

- where the items underlined here are in bold type. Cassell is another catalogue to use this method of signalling:

Methodology: In this course book

OUP make use of a variation on this, using italics instead of bold and a space (sometimes) instead of a colon:

Activities exercise and activity extra material for

- where the item underlined here represents an italicised item in the OUP catalogue.

Table 31 gives some idea of where, and how often, headings are found on the page, in different catalogues.

Table 31 How/How Often Headings are Used

	Section Heading	Sub-Section Heading	Course/ Book	Sub-Head-ing	Para Head-ing	Compon-ents Heading	Max. No. of styles	Max. No of Headings used on Page
CUP	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes *	Yes	5	over 12
CAS	1st col only	No	Yes	Yes	Yes *	Yes	4	over 12
COL	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	3
HEIN	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes *	Yes	6	11
LON	1st page only	1st page only	Yes	Occas.	Rarely	No	4	12
MAC	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	3	9
NEL	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes *	Yes	4	5
OUP	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes *	Yes	5	11

* Heading on same line as text used.

5.7 Lists.

Hartley records that:

> Research has indicated that readers prefer text that has lists or numbered sequences spaced out and separated rather than run-on in continuous text. (8)

Where sequences created problems for their readers because -

> they contained several meaningful components...one effective revision was to number the sentence components in the text. A significantly better revision was to number the components and to place them in a vertical list. (24)

This means that instead of having a piece of run-on text like "The tasks include problem solving, role play, group and pair work, note taking and map and diagram work," readers would prefer text arranged like:

The tasks include:

- problem solving
- role play
- group and pair work
- note taking
- map and diagram work

Instead of numbers alongside each item in the list, another choice could be the use of bullets as above, or stars or some other typographic marker.

Most of the catalogues use lists and the lists are, for the most part, used for the components of their course-package. The usual style involves separating the components list off from the main body of the text, with or without a heading (Macmillan, Nelson, OUP and, occasionally, Heinemann all use this), with items (or main items) in bolder type (for example, CUP and Cassell), or coloured type (as in Collins), set in a (tinted) box (as with Heinemann), or within rules (colour-coded in Nelson).

Longman alone use neither spacing off, nor heading, nor change of type, to consistently and clearly indicate where and what the course components are.

Table 32 below shows how the different catalogues emphasise their components list, by the use of bold or colour type, either in the heading or in the titles of books, or both.

Table 32 Lists

	Components listed	With heading	Individual items marked	Other lists	How marked
CUP	Yes	1 course, yes; 1,no	Topic item in bold	Course features	Heading + all items starred (red)
CAS	Yes	No	Topic item in bold	features of books	items preceded by dashes
COL	Yes	No	In blue	(elsewhere in catal.)	by bullets
HEIN	Yes	Yes	Listed items set in grey box	Key features	Blue heading + blue bullets
LON	Yes	Yes	No	Rarely	with asterisk in light type
MAC	Yes	Yes	No	Course features	by pink bullets
NEL	Yes	Yes	Between col-coded rules+ bold	No	-------
OUP	Yes	Yes	No	Special features	Heading + markers

Most of the catalogues make use of lists, both for components and for special features of the course. Lists for course-components are usually clearly set out, often spaced in a separate column, as with Nelson or separately, from the rest of the course-description, at the end of a column or page, as with CUP, Cassell, Collins, Macmillan and OUP. This makes it all the more obvious then, when another catalogue, namely Longman, fails to provide enough typographical devices -- enough space to separate lists from text, headings to draw attention to the list, bold or colour type to set off the list-ingredients or other markers like bold asterisks or stars. All this makes the lists in Longman difficult to spot, certainly by the browsing reader.

5.8 Recommendations

Because legibility-how readable text is - is a function of so many variables which include typeface, typesize, interline spacing and line length, amongst others, it is obviously not possible to advocate one clear -cut recommendation on each level, to designers of such book-catalogues.

In fact it is the view of Burnhill and Hartley (13) that it is inappropriate -

> to test the efficiency of different column widths and interline spaces without taking into account the page-size involved, the nature of the material, and whether or not the layout of the subject-matter is interrupted by tables, diagrams or graphs. (13)

And they condemn much of the early work summarized in Spencer because of its tendency -

> to examine isolated features of layout without reference to dimensional restraints.

In fact they feel they are the only researchers into typographical features that specify page-sizes.

However, certain recommendations do come from writers like Burnhill Hartley and others, after having regard first of all to the overall page-dimensions and page-layout:

(a) It is best to avoid too much variety in typefaces, typesizes and degrees of bold. By making consistent use of space and by functionally grouping parts, you can dispense with the confusing variety of type-styles in text and headings that are found at present in the catalogues;

(b) Reader-preferences, plus test-results for legibility and reading-speed, all are for lower-case print, with headings in large, bold lower-case rather than in capitals or italics;

(c) Increasing interline space allows for small print to be tolerated, and it is recommended that text is not set solid, but set with a 2-pt interline space;

(d) Lines that are too long or too short are not recommended: lines between 50-89mm are recommended, depending on column width and page-size;

(e) Experiments on reading-speed have not indicated any ideal space between columns of print on the page but, "on aesthetic grounds", researchers suggest a separation of 5.00 to 7.5mm;

(f) Unjustified setting is to be preferred to justified setting, as is a "floating baseline", for a number of reasons:

i. it is much more cost-effective;
ii. it is easier and cheaper to type-set, and to allow for proof-corrections;
iii. it does away with irregular word-spacing and awkward word-breaks;
iv. it is consistent, without rivers of space;
v. it is flexible in allowing, for example, no line to end after a preposition, or with the first word of a new sentence.

Content alone therefore should determine where the line and the column should end;

(g) Text should be arranged in paragraphs and lists that are clearly set out and identified by spacing or indenting (or both) and possibly also marked by a heading. While there are no recommendations on how long lists or paragraphs should be, it is felt "short well-spaced (ones) make a text look easier to read".

6. Contents/Index Listing

All the catalogues carry a list of contents in front of their catalogue, and an index at the back of the catalogue, but there is a surprising variety in the ways in which the information on courses, titles and authors is presented, making it either very easy or, by contrast, very difficult to find what you are looking for.

6.1 Contents Page

The main differences and similarities are set out in Table 33, following and there are photocopies (without colour) of the contents pages from all 8 catalogues, in Appendix III.

Table 33 Contents Page

	Where in catalogue	Amount of space	How Marked	How Arranged	Number of Entries
CUP	P.4	1 page 3 cols	3 varieties capital headings	Main sections + sub-divs. 20 items described in paragraphs between 2-7 lines each.	Main 25 + sub-s 6
CAS	Inside Cover	1 col=1/3 page	Boxed with red rules H.=Contents	Titles listed under main headings, numbers on right of column	Main 14 All book titles 21
COL	P.1	1 page	H.=CONTENTS in blue Other h.bold	Clearly laid out with only section headings and, on right, numbers	Sections only 20
HEIN	P.1	1 page (blue)	H.=Contents Sect.s rule off in blue	Only main sections and page numbers (on right); dark blue ruling	Sections only 18
LON	P.5	In all, 12 pages	White title in black all on right	Main sections only, given on right-side, numbers to the left of headings	Sections only 15
MAC	P.1	1 page	H.=Contents on col.band	Pink caps for headings of main sections, foll. by sub-sections. Rules.	Main 13 +Sub-s 19
NEL	P.1	1 page in 3 cols.	H.=CONTENTS All h.s caps bet. col. rule	Section headings bet. col. coded rules, foll. by every title. No.s, right	Main 19 + All titles 90
OUP	P.3	1 page	H.=Contents All sections col-coded	Each section ruled off each against own tinted background. No.s, right	Main 12 + Sub-s 17

Only 2 catalogues, Cassell's and OUP's list all their titles on their main Contents page, not just sections.

Only Longman devote more than 1 page to listing Contents, in an elaborate, complex arrangement over 12 pages in all.

Only Longman arrange their headings on the right and their page-numbers to the left of the headings.

Only CUP use their Contents page to describe, in paragraphs up to 7 lines

long, 20 items, including courses.

Only CUP do not use the word Contents on their Contents page.

They use A Guide to Our Books.

Cassell, Collins, Heinemann, Macmillan, Nelson and OUP all use colour in some way -- tinted page, colour-coded secitons, or colour rules -- to mark items, heading or the "Contents" as a whole. Longman of course, with no use of colour at all, do not use any such marking nor does CUP, although on every one of their pages, they have their normal top-margin in band in red.

Only Cassell use their inside cover for displaying their Contents; however only Collins, Heinemann, Macmillan and Nelson use Page 1 for theirs; OUP's is on Page 3, CUP's on Page 4 and Longman's main Contents page is Page 5, (with their last Contents page on page 15!)

None of the catalogues include authors' names in their Contents.

While there is some research on the layout of contents pages, this is mostly in connection with academic journals.

Ennis, in his article, The Design and Presentation of Informational Material: A Review of UK Research Trends (26), is mainly describing academic journals, but a great deal of his article can also apply to book-catalogues:

> the browsing reader may well not use the journal at all if, for example, the contents page is not readily accessible, or if it is badly designed.
> ...More attention has been paid to the layout of contents pages, which may well influence the uncommitted reader's decision to read an article in a journal. If the contents page is easy to assimilate, with the author and title of articles prominently displayed, then the reader is more likely to scan the contents in order to see if anything of interest is contained in the journal. (26)

Strangely enough, perhaps, the contents-pages of these book-catalogues do not include authors' names while, of course, journal contents-pages do. Therefore, much discussion revolves around how to distinguish authors from titles, through different typefaces, positions on the line and so on. But apart from this concern, and how best to locate page

numbers, (on the right or left of entries), there are other features of a contents page that concern Hartley:

> Other possibilities that need further research consideration are the colour of the print and the paper, the size of the page, the number of authors per entry, the length of the author's names, the length of the titles and the number of entries per page. Clearly, if a single contents page has to accommodate more than, say, twenty entries, then the design of such a page is of considerable importance. (27)

From research of this kind we can at least deduce that it is important for all readers (which includes readers of book-catalogues) to locate material easily and quickly, and any factors, such as layout - whether horizontal or vertical-typographical cueing, location of page numbers, as well as the location of the contents-page itself, that help the readers "retrieve information" are worth attention.

6.2 Index Pages

It is not always clear where the index is located in the catalogues. As one might assume with the contents-pages, that they come first in a book, journal or catalogue, (and be wrong), so one might expect the index pages to come right at the end of the book or catalogue, if only to register where all the items, all the contents, preceding the index, are to be found. However, this is not the case. In 5 out of the 8 catalogues, the index is not the last section, and finding it is one problem readers face. Readers also face considerable variety in how the different catalogues arrange and print their index material. (See Appendix IV)

6.2.1 Authors and Titles

The suggestions by some researchers, cited by Ennis (26), for the best format for contents pages could be advanced for index-pages:

> Garfield..believes that the best format for contents pages is a two-column arrangement -- one for titles, and the other for authors' names -- thus allowing the reader to scan down either column separately, or across both together. The title should precede the author's name, and should be distinguished by

> typographic cueing, which is the opposite viewpoint to Hartley...In Kallner et al's study, the subjective preference was for the title to precede the authors' names, but scanning speed was quicker if the author's name was listed first. (26)

This variety of advice is matched by the variety among the catalogues. Table 34 below gives some indication of how the different catalogues present their information on authors and titles.

6.2.2 Type Variety

Catalogues vary in the ways they use varieties of type in their index. Type-styles vary in 4 cases to distinguish between authors and titles and type-sizes vary in 6 cases, from the size used in the main text section. Table 34 below gives some indication of this variety.

Table 34 Index Pages

	Where index is located	No of Entries	Type-size	Alphabet marked	Page numbers	Authors sep from titles	How authors/titles are distinguished.
CUP	Inside back cover	213	Same size as text	Only by spacing	Embedded in text	No	Authors in Capitals; Titles in lower-case; Sub-divisions, italics.
CAS	Inside back cover	56	Same size as text	Only by spacing	Justified, on right.	No authors listed	------
COL	On 3rd + 4th last pages	130	Larger than text	Yes	Justified, on right.	No	Authors in Italics; Titles, lower-case;
HEIN	On 2nd + 3rd last pages	327	Smaller than text	Only by spacing	Justified, on right.	Yes	1 page, each; italics for authors; lower-case for titles
LON	Occupies 9 of last 11 pp	1223	Larger than text	Yes	Embedded in text	No	NOT dist inguished at all
MAC	On 4,5,6th last pages	249	Smaller than text	Yes	Justified, on right.	Yes	2 pages for titles; 1 page for authors.
NEL	On 4th+5th last pages	240	Smaller than text	Yes	Justified, on right.	No	Authors in Italics; Titles, lower-case.
OUP	On last 2 1/2	362	Smaller than text	Yes	Justified, on right.	Yes	1 1/2 pages for titles 1 page for authors.

The treatment given to the authors is generally poor. Their names are omitted altogether from Contents pages and also from the index page in Cassell's catalogue. Longman mix both authors' names and book-titles together without separating or distinguishing them in any way.

Poulton listing ergonomic requirements for reference lists like index pages includes:

(a) Authors names should be easily located;

(b) Full title should be given to tell the reader what the reference is about...(6)

and makes his "design decision":

(a) Authors printed bold on separate line:

(b) Full title given... (6)

How the catalogues have dealt with distinguishing authors' names from book-titles can be seen from Table 34.

For example, it can be seen that:

(a) Cassell do not list authors at all;

(b) Only 3 catalogues (Heinemann, Macmillan and OUP) separate authors from titles;

(c) Only Longman, of the 4 catalogues that do not separate authors from titles, do <u>not</u> distinguish them by different typestyles:

(d) Only Heinemann distinguish authors from titles by typestyles as well as separate pages;

(e) Only CUP use Capitals to distinguish between authors and titles;

(f) 4 catalogues (Heinemann, Macmillan, Nelson and OUP) use smaller print than their usual text-size, 4 lines to the cm, compared to the text-size of 3 to the cm;

(g) 2 catalogues (Collins and Longman) use larger print than the usual text-size;

(h) Only 2 catalogues (CUP and Cassell) use the same typesize as their text-type;

(i) Only CUP and Longman present their page numbers embedded in the text, making it difficult to find their references easily and quickly;

(j) Only 3 catalogues (CUP, Cassell and Heinemann) do not mark off alphabet sections, with the particular letter, relying only on spacing to separate sections.

6.3 Recommendations

Devices that help the reader, whether browsing or not, to find and retrieve information easily and quickly from the index or contents pages need to be investigated as these apply to catalogues such as these book-catalogues, and not just to academic journals. For example, we would need to know if it is as true for catalogues, as for journals, as Ennis describes:

> the ease with which readers search for entries in an alphabetical list "is maximised by devices which emphasise the alphabetically listed element of each entry, such as the indentation of the rest of the entry and/or the use of additional space between entries" (26)

Ennis gives as one of his own guidelines that:

> typographic cues should be used to distinguish between different kinds of item (26)

while Poulton recommends that "authors should be printed bold on separate lines".(6)

It is of course important, first of all, that contents and index pages are easily located: the contents page should come first (or as early as possible) in the book or journal or catalogue; the index pages should similarly, come last (or as near the end of the book or catalogue as possible). This is not always the case, as these catalogues demonstrate.

And to make the entries easy to locate within the lists several devices could be recommended:

- Authors and titles should be dinstinguished clearly, if it is not possible to arrange them in separate lists;
- There should be a good-size print used (not smaller than was regarded adequate for text) and adequate spacing between entries;
- The alphabetic groupings should be clearly marked;
- Page numbers should be kept separate and visible, and not embedded in the entry.

7. Conclusion

It is most important that the typographic features of a text are not underestimated. At the moment, though, linguistic textbooks and writers and speakers on language matters in general, and EFL in particular, have not awarded as much space and attention to these features as is awarded to, say, phonology. So it could be that little is known, outside of a small band of specialists, about the effects of line length, paragraph size, positioning of headings and so on, on the average reader, or on the reader of advertising material in particular. Indeed it might even be worth the while of the large publishing houses to conduct a few, controlled experiments through some of their outlets, with different layouts in order to elicit reader-preferences. For while texts can vary in subject-matter, the kind and amount of information, and fluency of style, presentation factors such as the uninterrupted length of a piece -

> may reduce people's willingness to start reading it at all (28)

Nowadays, it is not enough, therefore, for us to concentrate only on the content or linguistic qualities of a text. Readers must be tempted to pick it up in the first place.

> The function of motivation is always recognised in printed materials, but not at a level of psychological sophistication for the most part. Attractiveness, such that will entice the reader to pick up the book or pamphlet, is almost universal. (29)

While the importance of packaging and presentation has certainly been recognised by many a marketing man, such that customers will be enticed into picking up, and buying, an article, perhaps it is less well known that presentation in textual materials can also affect how a reader understands and uses the text.

> the reader's ability to use written material depends on the overall presentation and layout of the text as well...
> ...it is being recognised more and more that there must be an improvement in the design and thereby in the comprehensibility of many kinds of written factual information. (28)

In other words while there may be doubts on the particular usefulness of colour or illustration or on the relative merits of a

particular size of print, in helping to make text enticing to the potential reader, as well as readable and memorable, it is considered, by many writers, that a good, clear presentation does both motivate and hold the interest of, the reader.

With advertising material, such as these EFL catalogues, designed to present a product such as books, it would be natural to assume that research on such typographic features has been noted. Unfortunately, this does not always appear to be the case. While some catalogues such as Nelson's and OUP's, advertise their wares most strikingly through the use of print, colour and illustrations and photographs, others like Longman's seem to have taken no interest at all in the presentaiton of their material.

In fact, the surprising thing here in this analysis of eight leading EFL catalogues is that there is a great deal of variety in their different approaches to presentation, or, in other words, to the advertising of their product. They differ in how they choose and use print, columns, space, page size, illustrations, colour, indexing and so on. No two are alike. It would, therefore, be difficult to say there is such a thing as a "typical EFL catalogue", at least in presentation terms.

Apart from differences in how they choose and use certain typographic features such as print, colour and headings, catalogues also differ, it would appear, in the relative attention they give to content or its presentation. It could for example be argued that in certain cases, perhaps OUP, more attention has been paid to colourful, attractive packaging, with less to detailed information on content, whereas in the case of, say, Longman, the reverse is true; more attention has been devoted to packing in a lot of information while less has been awarded to a clear and attractive layout.

Obviously, ideally, there should be a balance struck between sufficient content and thoughtful presentation: we need the information but, to read it, we must be won over. As Poulton has described:

> At a time when far more is printed than can possibly be read by the people for whom it is intended, publishers and typographers are only too far aware of the importance of attracting and holding the attention of potential readers. To do this adequately, it is necessary to use styles of type and layout which are both attractive at a casual glance and also efficient methods of transmitting information (1)

Researchers like Burtt, Spencer, Poulton, Burnhill, Hartley and Wright can point to the problems of show-through paper, too small print, multiplicity of typefaces and sizes, justified text and crowded indexes, examples of which can sadly be found here and there throughout the 23 course-presentations. However, they can also suggest how improvements can be made, pointing out the "ergonomic and aesthetic" advantages of interline spacing, unjustified text, floating beaselines, paragraphs and lists, signalling devices and easily located contents and index pages, plus a sparing and intelligent use of colour and illustration. Incorporating these suggestions to improve the presentation of his text need not worry a cost-conscious publisher. The improvements not only should take up no more space than is already available, simply making better use of "empty space", illustrative material and text layout, they should lead to their readers deriving more from the text as writers like Poulton and Wright have described.

Apart, however, from recommendations to publishers on how to improve presentation for their readers and thereby improve the comprehensibility and readability of their catalogues, which surely they must welcome, there should, perhaps, also be recommendations to the linguistic analysts including those concerned with the writing and promotion of EFL materials, to show more concern than at present with the features of written (and printed) text and more interest in the experiments and findings of researchers like Burnhill, Hartley, Waller and Wright, on producing

readable text. Waller's macro-punctuation, for example, (as reproduced in Table 20) should be regarded as important to the chapter and page in the same way as micro-punctuation is at present at paragraph and sentence level. For as Wright suggests:

> writers sometimes lack the skills to provide adequate cues to the correct interpretation of their texts, just as they may be unaware of factors which can contribute to misunderstandings. One way to avoid miscommunications might be to develop an integrated approach to the study of reading and writing, focussing on the cognitive components of both. It may then be easier to apply the findings from research on comprehension to the practical problems of designing written communications for the many varieties of textual literacy (30)

When the linguists begin to discuss and apply more widely such research findings on clarity and readability, and publishers and advertisers follow suit, this can only be in the interests of the reading public.

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CHAPTER 7

THE PUBLISHERS: HOW THEY SEE THE CATALOGUES

Introduction

As the investigation proceeded into what the catalogues were offering and how they were presenting it all, it became apparent that to achieve a more balanced picture, it would be necessary to consult the publishing companies themselves to hear their case for the catalogues.

Because of the pressures of time and other commit-ments, it was decided to carry out the enquiry in the following way:

a) A letter (see Appendix 1) was drafted setting out the points on which I wanted information or clarification, and an identical copy was sent out to each of the 8 firms.

These points represented four main areas which, in the catalogue investigation, were appearing as crucial, in revealing whether the catalogues were fulfilling any significant purpose - either from the consumer's point of view, or the publisher's. A detailed study of the catalogues had not, in itself, made it clear that the information being provided could entirely satisfy a consumer evaluating available course materials. If the catalogue were not primarily intended to meet consumer-requirements, but publishing ones, I wanted to hear this from the publishers themselves.

The four areas I wanted to cover were the following:

i) Market:

> Who are the EFL catalogues prepared for? What audience has the marketing department, mainly, in mind?
> (It was not immediately clear from reading through the catalogues, for whom-or where-the catalogues were intended; the UK market or abroad, or both.
> I also wanted information on the numbers reached by means of the catalogue-lists).

ii) Role

> What function is the EFL catalogue regarded as fulfilling?

(It was equally unclear from simply reading the catalogues whether they were intended as a reference to what materials were in stock, or as advertising material to entice the reader-consumer to order inspection copies).

iii) Guide-lines

What guidelines are suggested to the editorial staff on the kind of copy (content) and amount (e.g. maximum number of words: column-inches) that go in to each entry? (as someone obviously had to decide what went in to the catalogue, I wanted to know who had the final say, how it was all decided, and whether there were specific guidelines for each firm).

iv) Research

How does the marketing department monitor the effectiveness of its EFL catalogue? Has there been any research on the effectiveness of the catalogue? (I was interested to see if the firms followed through their catalogue, evaluating its effectiveness either as advertising material, as a reference aid, or both, on the basis of customer feedback.

In other letters or in the subsequent interviews, I asked supplementary questions on pre-publication trials or try-outs of materials and on the typography and artwork of catalogues, as well as questions particular to individual firms.

In my letters, I asked to be put in touch with the people who could answer the type of queries I was raising in my letter so that I could contact them by telephone, to talk in more detail than was perhaps possible through letters, about the various points.

The letters were sent in advance of any phone-call partly to introduce myself, partly to give the firm adequate notice to brief someone, so that my call did not take them by surprise or leave me talking to people with different responsibilities.

Over the following weeks several replies came in. Despite a reminder, Cassell never did reply. CUP eventually did but were, on the whole, reluctant to give much time either on the phone-or in person-saying there was really no point in a visit.

In the replies, I was usually given a name and a telephone number and sometimes dates or times when it would be most convenient to call. Eventually, over a period of some weeks I was able to conduct phone-interviews with all of the companies but Cassell, in some cases more than once, and subsequently visited several companies at their invitation.

b) The phone call interviews generally lasted not less than 10 minutes and sometimes 30 minutes or more, in all. My contacts at these firms were usually in the ELT department or division, either in an editorial capacity or concerned with publicity or sales:

i)	Mrs Barbara Applin	:Senior Overseas Book Editor, Macmillan.
ii)	Mr Michael Daniell	:Editorial Director, OUP.
iii)	Mr Robert Seatter	:Promotion Controller, English Language Teaching, CUP.
iv)	Miss Caroline Egerton	:ELT Desk Editor, Collins.
v)	Miss Sue Bale	:ELT Managing Editor, Heinemann.
vi)	Mr Francis Baker	:ELT Sales, Nelson.
vii)	Miss Jenny Colley	:UK Sales Executive, Longman.

Since the phone-call was usually at a time convenient to both sides, it was not a rushed affair, and since the spokesmen were generally most anxious to be helpful, the interchanges were usually very full.

To start with, I would ask each of the questions as first put in the letter, taking notes on the answers as they came and putting supplementaries if required. (The notes were written up in more detail after the call was over). Some speakers, once they knew it was I on the line, launched right into the subject and needed no prompting. In fact only one speaker (some-one I had been referred to on the publicity-marketing side at Collins, and not at all typical of those I met on the editorial side) was rather brusque - "I can't talk for the others" - or "Well I think I've given you enough to be getting on with" - but this was noticeably the exception.

Because so much information was forthcoming, it was usually the case that before the end of the conversation, I was asked to come and visit them, when I could give them a suitable time, or to phone again with any other query that came to mind.

c) Visits to publishers I was invited to all the companies I spoke with, on the telephone, except for CUP who saw no point in my "coming all that way". In the case of Heinemann, there were difficulties in arranging a time that suited us both, and in the end, no visit could be paid, so an extra phone call was made instead, with supplementary questions - as was also the case with CUP.

Visits, then, were paid to 5 companies:

Collins
Longman
Macmillan
Nelson
OUP

- where I met and talked with several very helpful staff-members, including those with whom I had talked before on the 'phone.

The following report, then, is the result of a) letters; b) 'phone call interviews and c) visits - (in some cases all three) - to 7 of the 8 firms whose catalogues were the subject of the study.

Obviously, this method of eliciting information from the publishers is not ideal. It would have been better, of course, had I been able to spend longer with each firm, perhaps visiting both publicity and editorial departments instead of one or the other, as well as making visits to all of the companies, instead of just over half of them.

It might also have been useful to have arranged 2 sets of visits: one to take place as analysis of the catalogue was proceeding (and throwing up queries) - as was the case here, as well as another, to take place after all the information from the catalogue had been recorded and

digested, so that it could have been presented to the companies for comments and criticism - which then could have been incorporated into the total corpus of information on the catalogues. As it was, it was not possible to arrange visits to all the publishing companies or arrange longer, or repeat, visits, and the telphone interchange, though not ideal, was substituted.

Obviously, there were differences in the way the interviews went, depending on whether I was on the telephone, or visiting in person. However relaxed the inverviewee was, on the telephone, one was always conscious that one could not simply let the talk develop under its own steam, or become friendly chat; on the telephone, there had to be a framework based on the pre-arranged topics so that interviewer and interviewee both had a sense of purpose in getting through the list of topics, satisfactorily. During a visit, on the other hand, there was never the same strict attention to this framework: other topics would come up: other editorial personnel were introduced and consulted for a point here or there: I would be shown papers, new manuscripts, lay-outs, the latest catalogue, and so on - and they all felt freer to quiz me on the project and seek my opinions or recommendations on the catalogue.

Report on Interviews with Publishing Houses.

In the first part, the report covers the four major areas of catalogue information I was first concerned with: market; role; guidelines; and research; the second covers specific items or features of course-content or of catalogue presentation, such as trialling, the use of review material, reproduction of sample pages and so on.

Market

Depending on the size of the publishing house, the EFL catalogues are sent out to between 30,000 -- 100,000 names on their mailing-list.

Each publisher, of course, has his own mailing-list, but since all the publishers mention certain outlets, a great percentage of the names on their lists will be held in common.

These included i) Bookshops dealing in EFL materials, both in the UK and overseas.

ii) British Council Offices, in UK and overseas.

iii) Libraries;

iv) Teacher Centres, Training Colleges, Language Schools;

v) Ministries of Education.

vi) Language or Book-exhibitions, Trade Fairs etc;

vii) Teachers

-- "teachers more than anyone else -- more than book-shops, even" said the CUP representative.

Occasionally, within the year of issue there might be a reprinting of the catalogue (as with OUP in 1985) if, as several firms reported, something unforeseen, such as an extra exhibition or conference like the November 1984 ELT International Fayr being arranged, required the distribution of hundreds of extra catalogues.

The mailing list is revised, more or less regularly, and up-dated. Sales representatives would report new places to which materials could be sent and also report changes in personnel, like Heads of Departments.

Sometimes, as reported by the CUP man, questionnaires for monitoring the list might be sent out to find out how up-to-date their list was, but he reported there was such a bad percentage return on these, that it was not always easy to assess if the catalogues <u>were</u> reaching the "right people".

The catalogues go out in bulk to agents or representatives in their areas and are then generally mailed or delivered by them. The whole of the Middle East might come under one such agent, while Spain might have three (as in the case of Heinemann); it would depend on the company's interests and resources.

The vast majority of catalogues go abroad, not unnaturally, as the vast majority of the books are sold abroad. Nelson reported selling around £3 million in UK as against over £40 million worth abroad. All the firms reported selling "mostly abroad". The usual figure quoted - (e.g. by Longman, Nelson, OUP) - was 90% sold abroad.

Role

Most publishers did not see the role of catalogues as "mere advertising", as I originally suspected they might.

In fact, considerable effort, I was informed by Heinemann, Longman, Nelson and OUP spokesmen, went into making sure it was informative as well as a sales-piece. Longman expressed the opinion that they did not see their catalogue at all as a promotional tool, unlike others, citing OUP. At Longman they saw it more as a reference book, being so big and being a complete listing of all their titles.

However, practically every firm, including OUP, used the words "reference aid or tool" in describing their own catalogues. This was why, I was told - by Heinemann and OUP, among others - the catalogues were produced in booklet form; as references, they could be filed, kept, ordered from and referred to, time and again, whereas the specialised leaflets, which could be more expansive about a particular course, as well as more promotional, were often mislaid, lost or discarded. However, though the publishing companies argued - perhaps, defensively? - that they saw their catalogues as reference aids, (even the brightly-coloured OUP catalogue shorter on text than many of the others) what could not help coming across in coversation was its promotional role too.

Heinemann considered the copy was written "basically to encourage someone to write in for a sample"; Nelson similarly thought their copy was there "to plant the title" and other firms, like CUP, preferred their

catalogue copy not to be too detailed (i.e. not too informative), wanting their brochures to concentrate on "highlights", as did Heinemann.

As the brochures went out to the whole EFL market, from Primary through Secondary to Adult and Post-Secondary levels, the brochure could not, it was stressed, highlight too many items, or highlight one section rather than another. The exceptions were the new additions.

It was felt particularly with book-sellers and libraries that there was a need for a complete listing, to make it a useful aid to them for reference. But, from the point of view of sales and special promotions, the publisher, especially a large firm like Longman, would segment the list making a separate listing for say Primary materials or Adult materials, and separate leaflets highlighting those would sometimes be prepared for different countries.

Once interest had been expressed about an item or items in the catalogues, these more expansive and more specific leaflets or sample pages would be sent out, and, if requested, inspection copies. Sometimes, these specialised leaflets accompanied the main EFL brochures, for example to school departments or special exhibitions, where it was known in advance that the recipients were in the market for these individual products.

The sales representatives were generally seen as generating sales rather than the brochures, so, from their regional offices, the firm's representatives would follow up the sending-out of their brochures. The catalogues were seen as the openers in the sales campaign; the representatives then followed through.

There were two very different views, apparently about how the catalogue should be used:

(i) one was to give detailed, specific information about the materials, as Longman wanted, showing what the content, and benefits of the course were, rather than - as they put it - "image-building";

(ii) the other way was to give information, but not too much or too specific. Firms, like OUP, saw its role as not "overdefining" and especially in the case of information about markets and levels, several firms, like CUP, Macmillan, OUP, Nelson, said their copy would be neutral (Nelson) or bland (Macmillan).

In fact, with regard to market and level, most companies, including Longman, took the view that copy should be bland.

CUP's position was that unless the course had been specifically prepared or commissioned for a particular area, they would not mention area or market - it would be "over-defining" it to say, for example Western Europe; so they would not. This was a view shared by the others. Courses could be used in other areas, in different ways, or at different levels, different from the area for which it had origianlly been envisaged. OUP's Streamline, as Nelson pointed out, had originally been envisaged as a "short course", then "for adults", then as a "main course". Thus, it could happen that there would be changes in markets as it emerged where and how the courses could be used. OUP made their catalogue "pretty bland" to suit the teachers who came from all over the world and who used the courses in very different ways: those in Japan, for example, used the same course very differently at different levels, from teachers in Uruguay. OUP, therefore, tended not to specify even levels for the courses, as the company felt these were interpreted so variously, and level charts were not, as a result, included in their catalogue - in contrast to 6 of the others - but made up locally.

(Their Editorial Director, Michael Daniell was, in fact, currently preparing an article on the problems of referring to courses, levels and markets.)

Most companies, therefore, did not see it as their role, or that of their catalogue, to prescribe where exactly or for whom, the material they described was suited. However, in areas where it would be definitely not possible to use the material - as, for example, in the case of materials developed for use in the UK, with text and illustrations unsuitable for the Middle East - the local agent or representative could make this clear, without the catalogue having to commit itself to saying so.

In fact, because the average catalogue was seen as an "opener", it was not the role of the catalogue to suggest where a course might have more success; that was seen as the role of the regional representative, more likely than not a former EFL teacher with experience in that region. It would be up to him to outline which book or course in the catalogue would best suit local requirements and fit in best with their system. In addition, there often could well be - as in the case of large publishing companies like Longman and OUP - a locally issued list specifically for that region, omitting from the list, courses considered by them to be inappropriate - as, for example, Longman's Strategies might be so considered in the Middle East.

Guidelines Criteria

To all companies, there was one factor that governed practically every decision on what went into the catalogues: the budget.

(i) Budget: This had to be a main factor, governing as it did, for example, the size of the catalogue, the number of pages it had, the use of colour or black and white only, the number of illustrations as well as the amount of space allocated to each book or course.

The budget varied from company to company, obviously according to its size and market areas to be covered, but I was told by all of

them it was a costly exercise and they naturally were concerned to get it right. At Nelson, I was told, it cost them as much to prepare the catalogue as could launch two new titles on their lists. With as much money as this, then, tied up in sending out up to 100,000 copies - free every year, it might perhaps cross the outsider's mind, that it would pay the companies to research the cost-effectiveness of their catalogue-exercise.

To keep cost down the same copy material could be used for several years and in some cases, publishers, like Longman, were producing a catalogue every two years, rather than every year.

With costs very much in mind, therefore, the general view was that you cut your coat according to your cloth, as Heinemann put it. Because of the enormous investment in new productions, as companies like CUP, Collins and Heinemann were having, the largest slice of catalogue space would go to these new promotions or, if there were none, to the best-selling course or one recently revamped.

(ii) Who decides: What went into a catalogue was decided ultimately as a team effort but the publishers went about it variously.

Some firms, such as Collins, Macmillan and OUP, had forms or questionnaires for authors (and editors, sometimes), in which they were required to list what they regarded as the key points, or selling points, as Macmillan and others described them, which distinguished the course; what would make the course sell. Not one single company - however helpful in other directions, including giving me free samples of their courses - would part with a copy of any questionnaire or set of guidelines used by their firm with either authors, editors or salesmen. Longman, speaking almost for the rest, said these were purely for internal use; in fact it was better not to give them out as it could mean giving away their company-strategy.

In other cases, such as at Nelson, where there was no set form or questionnaire, with particular questions and headings to act as guidelines on what was required, the copy was "freehand" - as Nelson described it - perhaps a collaborative effort between author and editor. Sometimes, as Macmillan described, the authors preferred to leave the editor to make all the decisions. In one or two companies, copy for the catalogue was the preserve of a professional copy-writer, or a copy-editor took the raw material from authors and course editors to give it the finishing touches. Copy-editors were used by Longman and OUP. Using a single copy-editor for a whole catalogue had the advantage that the catalogue had a single, uniform style.

Sales representatives, too, it was suggested - for example by Collins - could suggest, from experience, what was proving to be "selling points" and what to emphasise. Because of feedback from their area, they could make recommendations on what sort of information, on levels, course-components, methodology, to include. The finished copy would be the result of agreement by a board typically comprising editorial, publicity and marketing personnel.

(iii) What goes in: the content: It must be remembered that since many of the manuscripts could have been solicited by publishers, for gaps in their lists, or chosen because they would suit a particular need or meet a particular audience's requirements, they therefore know what the intended market is to be and what is expected of the course. So how a course is to be described for promotional purposes such as the catalogue entry, is virtually known from the outset.

What decided the nature of the content to some extent was the purpose it was intended to have: descriptive or informative or promotional. The general impression, from all interviews, was that their content should be "descriptive" but though all the companies

made use of this term, their keyword, how it was used, varied. With new courses, there might be a promotional slant; but the main aim, I was told, was "to provide information".

But not too much. It was pointed out, for example by Heinemann, that the vast majority of catalogue copies went to non-native speakers of English and, while they wanted information, they did not want so much that they were swamped by it.

The main purpose of the entry was to interest people, to encourage them to write in for a sample - or simply prepare them for the local agent's visit, as Collins, Macmillan and OUP for example, pointed out. Heinemann aimed to produce a selling document as well as a reference aid and therefore provided basic information ("not too much") as attractively as possible. The store that publishers set on their local agents was made plain to me, as several pointed out that they provided the addresses of their local agents around the world, so that if and when readers wanted more information, they could reach their man-on-the-spot. (Perhaps the importance that the publishers attached to their agents had determined their key position in the catalogue, as most often these were listed in the inside (Heinemann, on the outside) back cover or page, of the catalogue, following the index in 5 cases).

The basis of the content was said to be "descriptive", about what the course contained and what it did. So one expected a listing of components and key features, and companies like CUP and Heinemann, for example, set these out very clearly. Unfortunately, not all entries lived up to this.

(iv) Items specifically singled out: Certain topics, like market and level, provoked a great deal of discussion while others like trialling did not, perhaps surprisingly.

Market: The catalogues almost never mentioned the market area, unless the company had been commissioned specially to provide a course for that area (for example, Nelson with a new course for Italy; Collins, one for Spain and so on). CUP could almost be said to speak for them all when their spokesman told me that unless they had been specifically commissioned they would not mention market-area because that would be "over-defining", too narrowly defining where a course could be used. Rather than print advice on markets in the catalogue, the company would leave it to their agent on the spot.

Sometimes with material which had originated in one specific region, as with Cassell's On the Way course and OUP's English for Adults, both intended for Germany, or German-speaking countries, originally, and considered unsuitable for use elsewhere, as (on asking about the OUP course for my adult groups in the Middle East) I was informed by OUP themselves, this information was not made available in the catalogue. In fact, it would appear from the Cassell catalogue, that the very countries for whom their On the Way course was prepared (by an author-team that includes a Gunther Reichwein) are not allowed to buy this course: a paragraph warning that the course is -

> Not for sale in the Federal Republic of Germany, Switzerland, Austria or the Netherlands.

- is appended at the foot of the course-description.

It was almost unanimous, then, that nothing specific about recommended market-areas would go in to the catalogue; nothing would be done to limit or "over-define" where any course could go and even with courses specifically prepared for one area, for example the EFL market in UK, nothing would be included in the catalogue copy to limit their use to that area: it would be left to sales personnel.

Level: OUP felt similarly strongly about indicating specifically what levels their course-material in fact should be aimed at, preferring not to include any level chart or guide in the catalogue. As a result of experiences in countries as far apart as Japan and Uruguay, they felt it would be wrong to pin the courses down to particular levels.

Authors/Reviews: It seemed to me the publishers were often in two minds here, about using "testimonial" type information about their authors and courses. CUP, for example, thought such references might be used if they were not overdone; OUP thought they should be included only if they made a good point and came from a good source. They made the further point, which other firms shared, that it would be "great" to use reviews if there were the space, but if it were done for one, it would have to be done for all and that was not possible. They would be more likely to include reviews for their more academic titles in, say, Applied Linguistics. It was also felt that since it was not possible to provide suitable review material or testimonials for every catalogue entry, it might be better to exclude it altogether. Similarly, not all authors used were well-known, so to promote only a few in the catalogue might invite invidious comparison.

In general, the catalogues were not consistent in their use of author and review material, as I have pointed out earlier in the analysis section. Sometimes, publishers used review material while elsewhere in the same catalogue, even where review material was available and to their advantage, they did not.

Research and Monitoring The monitoring of a catalogue's effectiveness was largely informal, through reports, or feedback, from sales representatives, booksellers and so on. More formal attempts to obtain information by means of questionnaires, as

described by CUP, met with a disappointing response. According to OUP, their questionnaires were directed not so much at teachers as at their own representatives, finding out what they liked and what needed improving.

These sales representatives, or reps, in their mediating position between publisher and clients were very important in relaying information from the customers back to sales, marketing and publicity board, and also in explaining and expanding on material to potential customers.

The information passed back at board meetings was often in the nature of -

"I've been looking at our catalogue and think that..."

with suggestions coming from a variety of sources.

There might also be a change in the light of what competitors did in their catalogues, as for example with the introduction of colour or a change in catalogue-size.

According to several publishers, like Macmillan, booksellers were very much against the larger catalogue, as it was thought to take up too much shelf-space. On the other hand, sales reps and customers preferred the larger size. Macmillan had changed down from a larger catalogue size to their present small sized one, but CUP, Collins and Longman still stuck to the large size.

Suggestions about catalogues could also come from the schools and institutes using the catalogue, with reps asking them if they found the catalogue helpful and easy-to-use and then feeding information back through marketing channels. Once all the copy, and suggestions and recommendations were in, there might be further recommendations from the professional catalogue-designer. Some firms like Macmillan preferred to use professional catalogue-

designers as distinct from their book-designers, as "the approach in designing catalogues needed to be different from that in designing books".

Although some publishers talked of possible changes in catalogue-style, mainly if there were to be a change in size or the introduction of colour (where those particular companies were not already using colour in their catalogues), on the whole they were fairly satisfied with its overall look. Except for Longman. Longman was the only company that admitted to having a major re-think about their whole catalogue approach. There was some feeling that with it being so big, so comprehensive, it could be unwieldy. There was also a feeling that the copy needed looking at afresh as there was a lot of variety in style depending on when the courses first came on the list.

In describing their catalogues to me and being aware of my research interest in their catalogue, the various spokesmen took the opportunity to quiz me, in turn, on what problems or disadvantages I saw in their product. And all of them welcomed suggestions for improvement, as Longman did, agreeing with me in finding their index "a bit of a problem".

In discussion of these question-areas, other topics kept coming up and much interesting information was forthcoming on what publishers did about trials, presentation in the catalogues and promotion in general.

Trialling/Try-outs

Several firms, such as Collins and Macmillans, considered it very expensive to set up trials. Macmillans, in fact, was against trials not only because it was very expensive to set up extensive trials after the book was a complete entity but because it also lost the firm time in getting it on the market, allowing their competitors in ahead of them. Collins had this experience in Spain where they had been carrying out extensive trials for a course for the Spanish market, in their Time for English school series. Another book came out ahead of theirs, cashing in

on their research and taking their title, forcing them to change.

CUP did run trials, as they describe in their catalogue entry for their new Cambridge English Course -

> extensively piloted throughout the world thoroughly tested in a wide range of teaching situations throughout the world, before publication.

But, according to spokesmen in other firms, like Collins, CUP were in a different position as they were subsidised, so could afford to do what others could not. When a book or course was commissioned by a Government, as Macmillan explained, then there could be formative evaluation trials such as they held in Nigeria and Saudi Arabia with sponsored projects. But, ordinarily, they would not go in for large, expensive trials once a book was ready for marketing.

What they preferred, once they had commissioned an author, was to continuously vet or try out the materials, unit by unit.

Another method, favoured by Collins among others, was to give the book or sample units to readers for almost a month, to comment on. Obviously, all the readers had different points of view, but if there were a general consensus that a book were useless or if a particular section came under fire, it would either be dropped or the author be asked to have it re-written. The readers would be representative of different places where the book would eventually be placed, in order to obtain different points of view, so that there would be experienced teachers, non-native teachers and so on.

Several firms mentioned that they did not have any set procedures for trying out new materials. The Senior Editor at Macmillan said she personally had never set up trials and was not aware who ran the trials which Contemporary English describes -

> Over 10,000 students took part in the trials of the course material.

- and it was quite likely that authors often undertook their own try-outs. Longman too had no fixed procedures; sometimes a book in the formative stages would be tried out in different language schools, from a sophisticated up-market school in Bath, to a rather down-market one in, say Bermondsey, and "all sorts in between". The length and depth of the trials varied according to the new product being tried, as well as the area. Because countries varied in what they wanted - Scandinavian countries were very conservative, while Italy was not and the Middle East was a separate case altogether - a course might be re-written to suit a particular country.

The overall impression, among publishers, on the subject of pre-publication trialling, was that it was not something on which they held strong views. There certainly was no sense either that they felt under a "moral contract" to conduct market trials, as recommended by such writers as Brumfit, Breen and Candlin, among others. In several cases, in fact, such as Macmillan, it was felt that where there was a long-established author, with a great deal of experience, like Geoffrey Broughton at Collins or L.G. Alexander at Longman, it could be left to the author to decide what would work or not, as he was considered a good judge of materials in the classroom.

How little emphasis the companies in general gave this aspect of the course is reflected in the catalogue entries.

Illustrations

The use, and allocation, of illustrative material was decided by the budget in the first place and, in the second, by its usefulness in the space allotted to the particular course.

The use of black and white illustrations, even of colour covers and so on, was defended, mainly on the grounds of cost. What was even more strongly defended was the decision to use illustrations of book-covers (usually only in black and white, too) rather than inside sample pages.

The arguments usually followed one of two lines: the case for covers being used as illustrative material or the case against the use of sample pages in a catalogue.

(i) One argument by Heinemann and others for using covers was that people tended not to remember titles, but did remember covers.

(ii) An illustration showing the covers of course-books and cassettes, according to firms like CUP, was better than text at indicating the the extent of a course and all its components, and had a better chance of being remembered.

(iii) Covers are what people see and remember. Covers "stood for" (showed off) the book in a way no inside page could do, according to Collins and others.

(iv) In any case, covers, I was told at Collins and OUP, were ready first which made them available for photo sessions for the new catalogue. The catalogue had to be prepared months in advance and it was therefore much easier to illustrate a new course, not yet ready from the printers, with already-prepared covers.

Against all that, there were arguments for not using sample pages from courses, in the catalogue, even though those could illustrate, better than text, to the readers what was in the course and how it was being presented. The arguments from the publishers against the use of these sample-pages included these:

(i) If it came to a choice, for reasons of space, between covers or sample-pages being used, covers were preferred as sample pages did not "stand for" the course and could not be immediately associated in the public's eyes, with the course.

(ii) If sample pages were much reduced, as both Heinemann and Macmillan pointed out, it would not look good or be easy to read. (It is however, perhaps worth noting that Heinemann and Macmillan were not among those using the larger sized catalogues and that Heinemann

while arguing against sample-pages on the grounds of reduction, nevertheless made use of very reduced sample pages in their catalogue, with sometimes two sample pages very much reduced in one half, of one page.)

(iii) According to some firms, like CUP, reproduction of sample pages was not all that good though OUP admitted the problem of making them more legible could be overcome. It was argued that at the moment you could not always get the detail, but readers of the catalogue, like myself, are perhaps not so interested in every word on every sample page so much as in seeing the sort of lesson/unit the course provides and the presentation in space and illustrations, and even with the reduced samples in catalogues the size of Heinemann's, or smaller, like OUP (which offers a Streamline sample-page beautifully reproduced, in full colour) the catalogue-reader can learn a lot about the course.

(iv) It was also argued that if people wanted to know about what went into the course (over and above seeing what it looked like from the illustrations of course-covers) it was better, according to firms like Collins and Macmillan among others, that they were sent sample pages or specialised leaflets - which could do the course justice - rather than have the catalogue crammed with inadequate illustrations.

Against the run of opinion, Longman informed me they were not interested in covers. They were not interested in image-building, but going in a "different direction", and not illustrating for that reason. To them, covers were "not relevant"; on the other hand, copy was.

Interestingly, this was not actually borne out in their catalogue. Illustrations of book-covers (black and white) were used for 6 of the 7 courses here (no illustrations of any kind being used for Essential English); in fact for Kernel, Mainline and Follow Me, covers were used virtually exclusively, while in the case of the others, the illustrations

of sample pages (presumably to illustrate the copy, rather than "image-build") were so greatly reduced and so very poorly reproduced they provided the ideal argument for the case against sample-pages.

Allocation of Catalogue Space:

In general, the proportioning of space, page: column: paragraph, depended on the new-ness and importance of the course in the company's list. There was agreement among companies, that with a huge investment in a new course, the allocation of space, text and illustration devoted to it was extremely important.

It was largely the responsibility of the editor (as editors at Collins and Macmillans explained) who was in charge of the new book or course, to design the overall lay-out in the space allocated. She would also have to find the necessary art-work, select appropriate photographs and decide on headings, margins and so on. This was most often done after consultations with authors (though not all wanted to take a share in these decisions), designers, photographers and others. Especially with the smaller companies, many of these being consulted would not be full-time members of staff, but outside "consultants".

Even where there was a lot of space for the new course (in comparison, say, with the others in the list) it was thought a mistake to go in to too much detail, on specifics, where an illustration displaying the number of course-components could prove more effective than columns of text, at putting across an impression of the course. This would account then for the proportion of illustration to text in the catalogues, for new courses such as CUP's Cambridge English Course, Heinemann's Main Course English, Collins' Express, and OUP's Streamline course.

Pricelists

Only 2 of the 8 catalogues, Collins and Heinemann, included pricelists inside their catalogue.

The main argument given was that it was of no use outside of the UK, because of differences in currency, fluctuating exchange rates, special marketing deals for bulk purchases, high markups in certain countries and so on.

Especially in the case of large companies with agencies abroad, in various countries, courses were sold through these agencies at specially negotiated bulk rates, often imprinted with the local agency's address. Booksellers or agents abroad could even make up their own pricelist; in some countries like Germany, I was told by OUP, booksellers made up their own EFL catalogue copying out OUP material.

It was normal practice to offer special rates for bulk-buying and courses were more often sold this way than any other; even with books, such as the Advanced Learner's Dictionary, it was pointed out, it was not likely to be "an impulse buy". With large orders, special rates would be negotiated between the buyer, often an institution or Ministry of Education, and the publisher, and it was suggested in some firms, like OUP, you could risk offending your overseas distributors, by giving them the UK pricelist as a guide. It was also pointed out that it made sense to print the pricelist separately as 6 of the 8 firms did, as prices could fluctuate and rather than have to up-date the whole catalogue, only the pricelist would require amending, if it were kept separate.

However, this does not appear much of an argument. Both Collins and Heinemann provide a pricelist with their catalogue, as a centre-fold, and both mention prices can fluctuate. The whole catalogue would <u>not</u> be in need of amendment if it were only the prices in the detachable centrefold that had to be altered. Booksellers also brought up another argument <u>for</u> the inclusion of a pricelist. When I had spoken to various bookshops of my difficulties in obtaining pricelists both through my own efforts (writing off more than once in several cases) or through the offices of various sales assistants, they had assured me they too had difficulties,

with either the separate pricelists not being sent along with the brochures or becoming easily lost or mislaid, since they were not attached to the brochure itself. Microfiches in bookshops did not provide complete lists either.

When the points were put to various spokesmen at the different companies, the response was virtually the same: that with 90% of their titles sold overseas and at special bulk rates, it was almost irrelevant what the UK price was. Providing UK prices so that customers overseas, like those in UK (always assuming they could obtain one of the separately-issued pricelists) could compare different courses from the point of view of value-for-money was not an argument they would accept; most said it was up to local booksellers or agents abroad to draw attention to comparisons of that sort.

Courses Old and New

It was inevitable in discussing copy for catalogue entries that comparisons would arise between the latest courses and those that had been on "the lists" for decades.

One question that came up was: why is it that some courses are still on the lists, despite being so patently "old-fashioned" or out-of-date, while others only a few years old, are being dropped from the list?

At Longman, they certainly were not considering dropping Eckersley's Essential English course, though Eckersley's books first came out 50 years before. As long as orders kept coming in for it to remain in stock, the answer was, it would remain in the catalogue. By contrast, Mainline, by Alexander and others, promoted in the catalogue as "an entirely new departure in course design" was, in all probability, going to be withdrawn, as it was not having the success they had foreseen for it. Courses like Kernel and New Concept (an Alexander course) were, on the other hand, doing very well. As Longman put it, it was very difficult to predict what made a particular book or course a winner.

In fact, more than one publishing company admitted to being at something of a loss to explain why it was that one of their range sold so much better than others which could be more up-to-date, better grounded in theory and methodology, and altogether better than their competitors. Longman, privately, could not see, for example, how it was that OUP's Streamline which certainly "looked very well" was selling so well, when it was not nearly as "solid" as their own Strategies series, also selling well.

At OUP, they themselves expressed some surprise that their Network course produced by a strong, respected author-team, was not doing as well as it had been expected to.

Because not all countries wanted the same approach - traditional, conservative, grammar-based or up-to-date, communicative, functional - it made sense to carry a variety of courses on the list. Countries like the Scandinavian ones and Nigeria were cited as examples of those who favoured a conservative grammar-based approach and so names like Eckersley for Longman, Ridout of the 1950s for Macmillan and Hornby from the 50s-60s for OUP remained on publishers' lists.

Publishers agreed that they would prefer to keep a title "in place" in the catalogue, rather than go through the expense, of over £1 million, not to mention the uncertainty of success, in launching a brand-new course. And, sometimes, to do this, the course in question needed some revising, if not a total overhaul.

Quite a few companies, for example, seeing the impact of colour, in a course like OUP's Streamline, thought of as a leader by several other publishing firms, brought out revisions of previous books or courses, with the addition of colour being the principal new feature.

This is what happened to the course that became New Incentives. On the market previously as a black and white course, it appeared to be faltering, in the face of coloured opposition; it was taken in for

revision which meant virtually revamping the course in colour and issuing it with a new name, New Incentives, under which it has since taken on a new lease of life.

Similarly, other companies made the switch to colour for later additions to their latest - piecemeal-produced-series, like Longman with later Strategies components (Opening Strategies, for example "in full colour" while Starting Strategies began life in black and white) or Heinemann with its Main Course English Book 3, Advances, billed in their catalogue as NEW and IN COLOUR. Gradually, in fact, all the different stages of these courses, including the previously issued ones, have been reissued with colour added.

Since colour is proving to be a factor which cannot be overlooked in the evaluation of courses - (however much Longman may deplore Streamline's "good looks" giving them an advantage over their own more solid - but originally black and white - Strategies series), it might pay all companies with courses illustrated only in black and white, like Longman's Mainline and OUP's Network - which both companies find surprisingly unsuccessful - to switch to colour, rather than lose their entire investment, by withdrawing the course completely from the market. Other courses acquire a more up-to-date look, in the subsequent revisions, like Eckersley's 1930s Essential English, now issued with more up-to-date illustrations or with additonal components that are now de rigeur in a course-package, such as workbooks. Heinemann does this with its Main Course English, advertising in their catalogue, that their second course-book, Encounters is being offered NOW WITH WORKBOOKS, and similarly Longman has done this with its Strategies series, while in the case of OUP's Access, the new additions to the course are new cassettes, tests and so on.

Conclusion

One thing that was learned from these interviews was that there was such a thing as "the publishers' point of view".

And while each of the 8 companies expressed individual opinions on such diverse matters as trialling, levels, or the promotional role of the catalogues, generally speaking there was a considerable degree of agreement among them which could be presented as a common view.

This came over, even where I was speaking to representatives from different branches of the publishing company. In the case of Longman and Nelson, I spoke mainly to the senior sales executives, put forward by their companies as spokesman, while in other cases I spoke mainly with staff on the editorial side.

Because all the spokesmen, put forward by the companies on their behalf, were extremely helpful and informative (with the possible exception of the one at CUP), within the limitations of interviews conducted over the telephone, by letter and in brief (2-3 hour) personal visits, I was able to piece together a picture of how the different publishing companies saw the role of the catalogue; how they produced it, where it was distributed and what it was hoped it would achieve.

While too there was obviously differences in, say, the composition of editorial boards taking decisions on the content of a catalogue, or in a company's appointing one overall copy-editor for the catalogue as a whole, rather than one per entry, or in employing a catalogue designer rather than the company-illustrator, there was general consensus on basic catalogue planning.

Companies were, in the first place, agreed on having a catalogue, expensive though it was to produce one every year and to send it out in hundreds of thousands, free, all over the globe.

The companies also agreed on wanting the catalogue format, rather than a series of promotional leaflets, for its usefulness then as a

reference, for bookshops, libraries as well as teachers and English departments. They all saw their catalogues therefore as reference aids, though it could be argued that some companies offered less information on their books and courses than others and appeared, like OUP, to be producing a catalogue which seemed more of a promotional tool.

However not one company saw itself (through its editorial or sales representative) as producing a catalogue for promotional purposes alone. To advertise or promote, they would resort to special leaflets, especially for the launch of a new or revised course. The catalogue, however, was intended more for information purposes than as a "sales piece".

In general, companies agreed on not wanting to narrowly specify markets in their catalogues, though OUP was alone in also being cautious about advising on levels. It was felt that salesmen, in their given territory, be it Spain or the Middle East, could more accurately pinpoint what was needed, in a particular department or college. So companies were agreed, again, in being neutral or bland, in how they described their material, not wanting to put off potential customers.

While the companies varied in how their materials were tried out or tested, for example leaving it to their authors to set up trials, or relying on various readers to review the material, and in how they brought in details about authors, reviews, market reserach and so on, not one company, however helpful in all other respects, would part with their questionnaires or sets of guidelines for authors, editors and salesmen, claiming this would be giving away company policy.

What effect my seeing these would have had on my study of the catalogues, or indeed what incalculable harm or disadvantage the companies thought they might be bringing upon themselves by letting me have a look at these, is impossible to estimate since I was not given a glimpse of any. In the event it was probably as well that I did not obtain even one such document for this might have placed that particular

company at a disadvantage, compared to the others, in having them disclose and expose preferences, preoccupations and priorities, without the compensating balance of similar disclosures from other companies. As it is the catalogues themselves have been left to speak for their companies; they hold the key to company policy on brochures.

The companies all took notice of their salesmen's reports from the field and this feedback was incorporated where necessary and possible into improvements both in the courses themselves and the catalogues. And it was generally felt, in all the companies, that it was their sales staff who sold their books and courses; not the catalogues. The catalogues functioned rather as "openers".

It could of course be argued that potential customers from Nicaragua to Nigeria might prefer to be fully briefed on courses and books from a variety of firms before being confronted by a particular salesman but all the companies placed a great deal of confidence in their salesmen, usually ex-EFL teachers in that region, knowing "what was right for the customer", and what was not. And it was left primarily to the salesman to do the promoting and fleshing out of the bare bones of a catalogue entry.

Budgets, space and timetables were all factors that influenced the shape and content of their catalogues. And of course it could not be ignored that a potential readership of many thousands, 90% of whom live outside the UK in enormously different countries, did greatly influence the amount of actual information provided and the way it was all presented.

The end result, they admitted, could appear "pretty bland". However, they all had the feeling they were doing their best in the circumstances but would, nevertheless welcome constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement. And while wishing the thesis every success, they expressed the hope that they themselves might benefit from the exercise.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis has been, in the first place, to investigate some of the factors that might influence the choice of an EFL course for adults, and then to investigate what role, if any, EFL catalogues could play in this evaluative process.

There are usually many possible sources of information and influence in any educational evaluation: there is, first of all, the book or course or whatever it is to be evaluated, and the alternatives with which it is in competition; there is the teacher with his past experience of previous courses and classes, as well as colleagues with similar or contrasting experiences; there are the students, of different levels, backgrounds, nationalities, and there are all the external sources like training-colleges, conferences, book-exhibitions, librarians, book-sellers, advertisements, catalogues, as well as journal and newspaper articles and reviews.

In evaluating published EFL adult courses, both information and influence can vary according to whether the potential customers are UK-based or based overseas; are experienced teachers or novices; are native or non-native speakers of English; trained in evaluative techniques or not.

While studying how certain factors might influence the choosing (or not) of a published EFL course, I have been particularly concerned to see how, in this kind of evaluation, publishers' catalogues which are so widely distributed overseas could help overseas EFL teachers who have little or no access to those other evaluative aids, such as libraries, book exhibitions, journal reviews and so on that their UK colleagues might take for granted.

The vast majority of EFL teachers in fact work overseas. More than 90% of publishers' catalogues are sent all over the world, with hundreds of thousands of catalogues being distribuetd to teachers abroad, individually or through schools, colleges, British Council Offices, libraries and Ministries of Education. Yet the use, and usefulness, of the catalogues as a major evaluative aid for these overseas teachers (or indeed as an auxiliary evaluative aid for EFL teachers in the UK) are ignored in EFL writings.

Why this should be so cannot exactly be established for, of course, these book catalogues are rarely if ever mentioned. (In fact, even the use or usefulness of textbooks themselves as an instructional aid is neglected, as I described in Chapter 2). Perhaps Van Els and his co-authors speak for the rest of the EFL establishment, when they write:

> The information provided by authors and publishers of textbooks usually leaves much to be desired. [If] information is "the provision of pertinent and verifiable details about a textbook" ...authors and publishers can hardly be said to give such information. Textbooks are usually commercial products... commercial considerations are involved in the information provided by publishers. Leaflets from publishers are hardly useful in textbook selection, because they are intended as advertisements. They are not independent or unbiased, and for that reason do not meet the standards to be set for textbook descriptions. (Van Els)

The generalisation made here that publishers' leaflets "are hardly useful in textbook selection" is not one that is easily verified. In the first place, this study has shown how different catalogues from eight major EFL publishing houses can be, and how the information they provide varies in quantity, quality and variety. And in the second place, since Van Els and his co-authors do not cite any tests or experiments with teachers or other users of such catalogues, it is not easy to justify their dismissing all publishers' advertising material as "hardly useful in textbook selection", when we are not shown how they arrived at this conclusion. In the complete absence of references to experiments or

surveys among users of the catalogues, or analytical studies of the catalogues themselves, we must query the validity of Van Els' indictment.

First of all, while the catalogues are certainly not independent or unbiased, (any more than a BMW brochure or mail order catalogue), that alone surely does not justify their contents being dismissed as "hardly useful in textbook selection because they are intended as advertisements".

In fact, following this line of argument through, one would have to assume that anything "intended as advertisements" (like holiday-brochures, educational-course pamphlets, as well as leaflets describing BMW cars or Xerox equipment) is equally likely to be dismissed by Van Els and colleagues as unhelpful in making a selection, purely "because they are intended as advertisements". And this is patently not the case at all.

It seems that in the case of textbook selection, publisher's leaflets and catalogues are being singled out. Now if it could be shown that, in fact, EFL book catalogues, like these 8 in this study, representing eight different companies, each a major UK publishing house, did not put out "pertinent and verifiable details" about their books and courses, but instead, depended upon irrelevant and far-fetched claims, Van Els could make out a case against all eight publishers.

What this study has shown, however, is that far from being "mere advertisements", by which one assumes he means advertising claims built on fantasy rather than fact, all the catalogues in this study offered very many "pertinent and verifiable details" with barely one extravagant claim among all 23 courses examined.

Secondly, to dismiss the use of publishers' material about their courses simply because it comes from the company itself, and not an outside course, is also indefensible. Selection is aided by advertising material in leaflets and catalogues, in all sorts of different spheres, whether describing holidays, cars, or educational establishments. And

people do not display any reluctance in these areas to admitting to using company literature, in making their holiday selection, or in choosing a new car or camera. But in the textbook field, or perhaps EFL in particular, there is no encouragement to use publishers' factual material about their courses, at all; more usually, it is active discouragement.

This could, of course, have arisen had there been a previous record of inaccuracy or wild exaggeration in EFL book catalogues. But so far as we know, this is not the case. It could perhaps, then be argued that it is not so much gross inaccuracy or exaggeration in the catalogues that has discouraged or offended potential EFL customers; simply the fact that the catalogues have not, thus far, selected or included, in their descriptions, what it actually is that potential customers want to know. And, because the catalogues are lacking in these "facts", they, therefore, do not figure in any of the evaluative articles or checklists.

It has to be admitted, however, that in researching this thesis, I have nowhere come across this particular argument in any book or article on evaluating EFL methods and materials, to account for the EFL catalogue not being listed as an evaluative aid. Nor do any EFL writers (including Van Els et al who singled out publishers' catalogues as being useless and biased) suggest, anywhere, that a useful source of information about EFL materials would be the catalogues of those that produce them - provided they were to furnish this, that and the other detail. In fact, nearly all EFL writings totally ignore these EFL catalogues, without explanation or excuse.

While, however, there appears to be no independent test or survey among catalogue users to support such criticism as Van Els' or to justify the neglect of catalogues in other EFL writings, nor anything actually present in the catalogues themselves (no distortions or inaccuracies in the selecting of features or details, nor wild exaggerations and far-fetched claims) that precludes any of them from ever being recommended

for a respectable role in the evaluative process, there does seem, on the other hand, to be some kind of invisible influence on the teacher-customer, through training-college, EFL articles and checklists, and promotion boards, which can perhaps account for the catalogues being ignored altogether in the selection of textbooks and courses.

There are three key areas where the EFL teachers have expressed concern about materials, and where they are subject to this influence, consciously or sub-consciously, from authority such as the EFL establishment. These are:

i) whether or not to use a published course at all, or produce their own materials;

ii) how to go about making an informed choice of what is right;

iii) how to assess the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods, along with the materials embodying them.

In the first area, whether or not to use a published course at all, or produce their own materials, I have cited several writers such as Candlin, Breen, O'Neill, Swales and others, to show that trainee-teachers at college and qualified teachers in the field, are on the one hand actively discouraged from using published courses, and, on the other, positively encouraged to produce their own:

> If one certain way up has been to get materials published, what does using a textbook profit a man if by using it he loses the prospect of advancement? ..... in many cases this heavy commitment to materials writing has been intensified by the expectancies of the employing institutions, which increasingly require their English departments to write all their own courses ... the pressures on service English ... have become .. so powerful that the purchase of textbooks for class use is seen to signal an academic retreat and one tinged with institutional dishonour ....because of status pressure (the teacher) has had to turn a blind eye to the possibilities in external materials and embark upon the task of writing his own course. (Swales).

If there were real justification for this pressure from the training and employing establishments, this concentration almost exclusively on materials writing rather than any evaluation of published courses on the

market, namely that anything that any teacher produces, however trained or inexperienced or un-creative, has been shown to perform better, in his circumstances, than anything published, one could then understand EFL establishments focussing so intensively on designing their own materials. But as many writers (Maley, Dubin, O'Neill, Swales et al) point out, there are excellent courses already on the market.

> Almost always a textbook can be found which will provide the core language which is necessary and useful for a group whose needs at first sight seem unique ... there is an immense variety of textbooks to draw upon. (O'Neill)

> Although there is lively interest in teacher-created materials, for reasons of economy of time and energy the backbone of most language courses is tied to a textbook ... the textbook is still a basic ingredient. (Dubin)

However, in the face of exhortations at college level (and requirements at interview boards) to produce one's own course, notwithstanding teachers' frequently voiced complaints that they have neither the time, the energy nor the capacity to do this in the real world of teaching, it should come as no surprise that EFL teachers (or would-be teachers) would have had their attitudes to books and published courses, not to mention the catalogues promoting these, coloured: this prejudice on the part of the EFL establishment is bound to have had a lasting effect on these teachers.

Teachers are also being misled into assuming that their own style of teaching is so individual to them that they could not be happy, or successful, working with any published course; likewise that their classes are so different from others elsewhere that only materials created and produced locally by their own teachers will produce results.

But again there are writers, EFL teachers themselves, who can refute this.

> The assumption .. that each group is so unique that its needs cannot possibly be met by material developed to meet the needs of another group ... is a false assumption for two major reasons. First, the differences tend to obscure the similarities, which are great .... The second reason is that, particularly today, with the great and growing variety of materials devised all

> over the world, to teach English to different groups, there is usually something we can find to provide the core teaching material for the group we regard as so unique and utterly different from any other. (O'Neill)

> ...it would be useful to consider the potential virtues to be found in published materials. One such virtue is that they have a clearly discernible shape ...
> ..any consolidated course (inevitably a difficult and long-term objective in a local situation) can provide an overall shape to the learning, which in turn creates predictability for the student and hence some assurance of where he is going, how far he has gone, and how far he has still to go ..... published material can provide a shape and an organisation, both in itself and as perceived by the participants, that is not easily equalled in a local situation. (Swales)

And, of course, until independent tests have shown that students perform noticeably better with teacher-created materials than with published courses, their teachers should, one would think, feel free to prospect among all these published courses on offer in the catalogues.

I would suggest however that because prospecting among published courses has been so heavily discouraged as a consequence of training establishments concentrating on self-produced materials ignoring published ones, and neglecting to include evaluation exercises on published courses and books, EFL teachers, probably in UK as well as abroad, who are in a position to choose a new course are therefore being handicapped.

In fact several writers have drawn attention to this. They lay the blame for sketchy and rushed evaluations and the resulting poor selection of textbooks not on the inadequacy or scarcity of published courses --

> The current availability of a very wide range of EFL teaching material, much of it of high quality, cannot but increase the efficiency of almost any TEFL operation if the material is appropriately selected (Cunningsworth)

- but on the training establishments for having neglected to fit the new EFL teachers for the real world:

> ... the lack of training in selection and use of texts.. is so characteristic of colleges of education and teachers' colleges today. The textbook is the universal tool in public education, yet few institutions which prepare teachers attempt to teach their students how to choose and use a good book .... So books

> continue to be used unskilfully by untrained teachers, because they are not taught how to select and use them skilfully. (Spalding).

For the EFL teacher (in the UK or overseas) the dilemma of choice, whether to have a published course or not, and how to go about evaluating which is the appropriate one in the circumstances, all without proper advice and training at college level, is further complicated by the plethora of teaching methods available (in theory, at least) embodied in the different teaching materials. This is the third of the three key areas where teachers are likely to be influenced, consciously or subconsciously, in their choice by the EFL establishment.

It would seem, here too, that while there appears to be a considerable degree of choice from traditional grammar to functional-notional or communicative approaches, and while EFL writers are on record as advising that there is no one "right way", there is, at the same time, the powerful undertow of the current orthodoxy, sucking in those who are too inexperienced or lacking in confidence in their own teaching style and technique, to opt out of the mainstream. So teachers tend to fall in with the current fads and fashions, requiring them to throw away their textbooks, eschew the use of drills and grammar exercises and engage in "communicative activities", in a "learner-oriented classroom".

Publishers come under attack here, accused of leaping upon the latest bandwagon and promoting, with extravagant claims, courses using the new methodology. However, this study has not shown a single course claiming, in the catalogue, to perform miracles because it is following this rather than that particular approach. True, as Ann Raimes and others have pointed out, textbook authors and their publishers are sometimes guilty of (unscrupulously?) exploiting the use of fashionable labels like functional or communicative because "these labels sell". But there is no case here of a course being labelled, say, functional while being something totally different.

It is not, in fact, so much the unscrupulous publishers who are misleading EFL teachers about the relative effectiveness of one method or another. Publishers, it sometimes seems to me, appear to be being made something of a scapegoat in this, just as their courses and text-books have been made responsible for poor classroom performance. Time and again, though, it is the EFL establishment itself, I have shown, who are found making extravagant claims for first this method (audio-visual, transformational grammar, programmed learning, notional-functional) or that, recanting two, three or more years later when results prove disappointing or a new method comes along.

As Richards and others are at present describing, claims are made by methods developers, without any evidence at all to support their claims.

> Surely the claims of any method or approach are only as good as the evidence that can be found to support them. Yet very few methods developers or their supporters have made any attempt to gather evidence that could be used to evaluate their claims. It is rare to find methods writers even contemplating the possibility or desirability of evaluation through empirical studies and experimentation. (Richards).

In recent years the claims are being made on behalf of Communicative Language Teaching (often by writers who elsewhere advise that there is no "right way" to teach EFL), based on the assumption that <u>communicative</u> classrooms with interactive games and information-gap activities provide a better environment for second language acquisition than traditional classrooms. Yet as Richards points out, however many claims are made for it by EFL enthusiasts, there is no evidence whatsoever yet, a dozen or so years after its introduction, to prove that learners acquire English more effectively in a "learner-oriented" classroom, through these "communicative activities".

In fact there is no evidence that any method with any particular age-group, at any given level, will perform better than any other.

It could therefore be assumed that trainee teachers would be shown, on their training-college courses, how to assess the advantages and

disadvantages of the different methods, and the materials embodying them, so that each trainee teacher could discover which one he or she could feel most happy with. And that these potential teachers would, after the evidence of the post-war years, be warned against the blandishments of method promoters, including EFL establishment figures like Wilkins and Widdowson, who claim against all the odds that their new approach

> - will be of greater value than grammatical information and will be more complete than situational information. (Wilkins)

- only to retract,

a scant two years later.

But there is not the same disparagement of promoters like these, such as there is of publishers and their catalogues. One has only to imagine what hay the EFL establishment would have made of any publisher who had promoted his new course in such over-enthusiastic vein, only to withdraw it two years later.

When critics like Van Els and colleagues expect publishers' catalogues to contain nothing but "pertinent and verifiable details" disparaging them as biased, not independent, and not meeting "the standards to be set for textbook descriptions" (unspecified as these are), they are, on the other hand, apparently uncritical of those who do actually develop and promote methods unsupported by empirical studies and experimentation. Wilkins, for example, is not criticised for having acted "independently" or for giving so few "pertinent and verifiable details" about how, actually, his approach would work. Similarly, EFL training establishments, equally without evidence, pertinent or verifiable, concentrate all their efforts on promoting meaningful interaction, problem solving, information exchange, teacher-created materials and learner-oriented environments, all the while disparaging the publishers and their works.

The second section of the thesis has dealt in some detail with EFL catalogues' course descriptions, both in terms of content and of

presentation, partly to ascertain the truth of such criticism as Van Els'. But the study has also sought to discover what it is that catalogues actually do provide (and how adequately) by way of information about their courses and whether it is the kind (as well as the amount) of information that EFL teachers want.

There is unfortunately as yet no actual evidence anywhere, as I have described, for what EFL teachers want to see in these catalogues. No one has yet conducted a survey among catalogue-users, such as EFL teachers in the UK or abroad, to establish whether catalogues in their present form do provide them with the content they want or whether they find catalogues generally unhelpful and inadequate, as critics like Van Els claim. For their part, all the publishing companies interviewed withheld their guidelines to authors, editors and salesmen on courses and catalogues. Without these company guidelines on copy, and with no tests, questionnaires, or surveys produced by either disenchanted catalogue-users or by the publishing companies themselves, as evidence of what the consumer wants, it is difficult to make any specific links between how publishers determine exactly what is selected for inclusion in a catalogue-entry and what the catalogue-readers require of such an entry.

There are, however, some clues. If topics or items in current check-lists designed to help teachers carry out an evaluation of EFL materials are compared with topics or items singled out for mention in the catalogue-entries, it will be clear that there is a great deal of correspondence. And the interviews with the publishers made clear (together with their letters; see Appendix 1, for a sample) their concern was generally to make available to their wide readership a "concise description of content and methodology", "highlighting strong points", without being too "wordy" or "specialist" or "overloading the catalogue-reader with detailed descriptions of the content".

How successful the selectivity process has been in the case of each publishing house can be judged from the analysis of the entries for all 23 courses in the 8 catalogues.

No individual catalogue, it must be said, can be held up as ideal on all counts, a model which others should copy. Again while one entry in a catalogue might offer the kind of information we would like to find, it was sometimes the case that another entry in the same catalogue (perhaps under the supervision of another editor?) was less satisfactory. In fact there was uniformity in a catalogue on the presentation side, only.

However, in a study of this kind, of entries which ranged from those too brief and inadequate to be of much use as a reference, to those which were over-copious, crammed and repetitive, such as one or two of Longman's, it is possible to arrive at a tentative set of standards.

First of all, within the constraints of column-inches and budget requirements, it could perhaps be agreed which topics or items actually require to be there. Of all the items that feature in one or other of these 23 course-entries:

age; level; market;

type of course;

number of lessons, units, teaching-hours;

authors; reviews; trialling;

date; revisions;

appearance; covers; use of colour; illustrations;

aims or objectives; motivating features;

methodology;

skills;

language-work; grammar, vocabulary, oral-aural work;

activities: exercises, drills, revision, testing;

subject-matter: facts or fiction; "authentic"; "cultural";

components: teacher's guide; cassettes, etc.

cost -

it should not prove impossible to get agreement on which ones must be covered; then on those ones which could be added, or expanded upon, given more brochure-space. It should, of course, not be sufficient that any item merely be mentioned, as often has been the case with certain items like teaching-units; language-work; subject-matter or cassettes and it would therefore have to be determined just how much information, how much detail, could feasibly be selected per item for the average-sized entry.

As the analysis progressed, it became fairly clear, as item by item was examined, that a standard could be arrived at for each "ingredient" of a course-entry, derived from the best features (the most informative, most economically put, etc) of the entries. Comparing and contrasting the way course-entries handled descriptions of age-groups, levels and markets, or how they covered course-content such as subject-matter, language-work and activities, usually produced if not one, single, clearcut "winning course-entry", at least clear indications of what could be achieved in the space of a column-line or paragraph, as well as clear indications of what was inadequate or incomplete. By putting together the "standards" for each ingredient to be included, it should be possible to arrive at an amalgam that could be the basis of "standard course-entry".

One typical item in a course-entry that illustrates the variety in coverage, from the very sparse to the long and detailed, and offers opportunities for improvement is the Teacher's Book. In the first place, not all of the 23 course-descriptions include the item. 18 do, with 5 exceptions: Collin's Express, Longman's Mainline, Macmillan's ACE, Nelson's Function and OUP's Engforad. It could therefore be recommended that all course-entries include this item. From the 18 entries which do

mention the Teacher's Book, over 30 separate "ingredients" can be culled, including points such as these:

student's book incorporated;

lesson plans for sample units;

models for student performance;

alternative teaching strategies;

detailed explanations of teaching points;

suggestions for activities;

cultural information;

clear layout;

tapescript;

key to exercises

Over half the items appear only 2 or 3 times, throughout the 18 entries, with a dozen others being mentioned only once each (e.g. models for student performance; cultural information; spirally-bound for ease of use) but several do crop up 6, 7 or 8 times:

Notes on each section/chapter;

Introductions on methodology and theory;

Tapescript (or print-out of cassette, oral work);

Key to exercises in student-book and workbook.

Items such as these could be considered the basic ingredients, not only for the Teacher's Book itself, but for the description of it in the course-entry.

In course descriptions of two pages or more, such as those for Foundeng, Strategies and Kernel, there is usually a paragraph for each Teacher's Book in the course, with Foundeng and Kernel each offering 3 and Strategies, 6. Such entries provide up to 11 or 12 of those 30 different ingredients. Even in course descriptions of just one page, such as Cambeng, Meanword and Contact, the sentence or paragraph on the Teacher's Book contains up to 6 different points. And it is not always

the case that the bigger the spread, the more information given. Heinemann's Mainco course is set out in 2 double-page spreads but makes do with a one-sentence paragraph covering 3 points; whereas, by contrast, Nelson's Newincen course, set out on one page only, has a paragraph 3 times longer, covering 5 different points. Coverage then can vary from 1 ingredient only, to 11 or 12, and can be either as short as a single sentence (or less, as in the case of Conteng) or as long as a whole column as in the case of Access and Quartet.

What is true of the Teacher's Book is true for most of the other items that feature in a typical course-entry. And as such it can also illustrate how easily improvements can be made to an entry without adding to the problems caused by limited space and budget. For example, there is the question of size: how big, how comprehensive the book actually is.

Apart from the actual description of the Teacher's Book (when given), all 23 course-entries usually listed their course-components at the end of the entry. But in these 23 listings, 15 - which include all the entries for CUP, Longman, and OUP - did not print, alongside, the number of pages per book, thereby giving a clear indication of size. In some cases, CUP's Cambeng, Longman's Kernel and OUP's Streamline, the text itself indicates that the Teacher's Book "included all the student-book material" and more besides. But this point illustrates just how easily more information (e.g. 155 pp.) could be fitted in to an entry without affecting existing space or costs.

While specific recommendations can be made to improve the quality and quantity of information in each course-description, in each catalogue, such as have been made thoughout the analysis, other recommendations can be made to improve the quality of the presentation of this information.

There is no question but that unappealing presentation can lead to such catalogues never being read at all. As writers like Poulton and

Wright, among others have pointed out:

> At a time when far more is printed than can possibly be read ... it is necessary to use styles of type and layout which are both attractive at a casual glance and also efficient methods of transmitting information (Poulton).

- while presentation factors such as the uninterrupted length of a piece may reduce people's willingness to start reading it at all (Wright).

All the catalogues could benefit, one way or another, from a closer attention to presentation factors, such as, for example, the allocation of space and text in layout; the variety of type-styles and type-sizes; and the use of colour photographs. Particularly important for catalogues are pages devoted to listing their Contents as well as indexing their authors and titles. Too often these are not where one might expect to find them in a catalogue: Contents pages are <u>not</u> always the first or second pages in the EFL catalogue nor are the index pages always found at the very end. And it is essential to the uncommitted browsing readers, such as Ennis describes, that signalling devices for Contents and Index pages are absolutely clear, but sadly, in several cases, this is not yet so.

Of the 8 catalogues examined in the study, Longman's was particularly guilty of poor presentation, from the use of poor quality paper exhibiting a great deal of "see-through", as well as inexpert column and page layout, with inadequate illustrations (black and white only, often much reduced), and oceans of "empty space" awkwardly interrupting text (as described in Chapter 6 and illustrated with a sample page in Appendix 2).

While there obviously are several interpretations of "clear layout" or "thoughtful presentation" as well as differing views on the use of colour, colour-coding, borders, pictures, a 2 -, 3 -, or 4 - column layout and so on, as I have described, one only needs to set a catalogue

like Longman's alongside the 7 others to see at a glance that Longman's is not the best model to copy.

But all the catalogues were guilty of poor presentation in some respect. One of which they all seem guilty is "multiple cueing" where catalogues, in the space of one entry, might have used up to 13 varieties of type involving several degrees of bold (even colour), as well as different type faces including italics.

As Hartley has pointed out:

> Certainly many instructional leaflets, advertisements, forms and lists use a variety of typesizes, weights and faces - with resulting confusion

and Burtt has made a similar point:

> ... in an arrangement which combines several type faces in a single page, difficulty does sometimes arise. This is more apt to occur in advertisements than in educational material. In one instance speed of reading tests showed that mixed type faces (with also some mixture of sizes) produced an 11 per cent loss of efficiency that was clearly significant.

In order to avoid similar confusion resulting from an over-abundance of type-faces and type-sizes, Burnhill and Hartley redesigned a college prospectus so that there was only one typestyle in two sizes, without any use of italics. They took the view that by a consistent use of space and by functionally grouping parts, you can easily dispense with the multiplicity of type-faces and type-sizes, type-colours, degrees of bold and light that are used in text and headings (with corresponding savings to the publishers too in printing costs).

In fact many of the recommendations and improvements suggested to publishers in Chapter 6 are likely to represent, not an increase in catalogue-size and production costs, but a reduction. For as many experts on typography have indicated this can be achieved by the consistent use of space, unjustified margins and floating baselines, together with a reduction in the variety of type.

And the result, in their opinion, would always lead to enhancement of "clarity, retrieval and comprehension". Indeed more than one writer

has made the point that not only were the readers more motivated to pick up and read through well-presented material, but those readers also found such text more readable and understandable.

These are both good reasons for publishers to pay more heed to the style as well as the substance of their course-entries. Display, as Burnhill and Hartley have shown, is not something added merely "in order to produce an interesting or artistic effect".

While however specific recommendations can be put forward to improve the quality, or quantity, of both style and substance in each course-description of each catalogue, such as I have made throughout the analysis, it must be said I can find no real justification for the sweeping generalisation that catalogues, per se, like these 8 EFL catalogues, are, as Van Els described:

> hardly useful in textbook selection
>
> - or that
>
> the information provided by authors and publishers of textbooks usually leaves much to be desired.

This study will have shown, if anything, how within the limitations of budget and catalogue space, a great deal of information can be, and is, put across. Throughout the analysis of the 23 course-descriptions in the 8 catalogues, I have indicated how each has covered a particular topic (authors, trialling, age of course, structure and methodology used, number of lessons and teaching hours afforded and so on) showing the sort of information both pertinent (to any evaluation or selection process) and verifiable, which has been provided. And here and there in Tables, a comparison with others will have revealed that a particular course-description, perhaps for reasons of space or catalogue priority, lacks certain information, or rather enough information, say on the number of teaching-hours, or in what areas revisions have been made. Recommendations have then been made suggesting how the description, in my opinion,

could be improved by the addition, or substitution of some detail or example, for perhaps a rather vague generalisation like "revised throughout" or "comprehensive coverage".

Obviously not all the course-descriptions in every catalogue provided all the information that could be thought adequate. On the other hand, there was no evidence whatsoever of gross distortion or exaggeration on the part of any catalogue in any of their course-descriptions such as would justify critics writing these off as biased, unhelpful and of no use in textbook evaluations. In fact, the catalogues relied not so much on unsupported, exaggerated claims such as are found in the poorest of advertisements (and the writings of some methods promoters and their supporters), as on a selection of these very "pertinent and verifiable details", though the selection of these from catalogue to catalogue might vary somewhat, as I have shown. The course-descriptions were based largely on those, and actually provided far more of these than I had initially supposed. A one-page course-description could provide, for example, details on authors, pre-publication trialling, course-structure and methodology, use of fact or fiction, number of lesson units and teaching hours, details of course components like cassettes and teacher's handbook, together with illustrations of sample pages, all of which is of course extremely "useful in textbook (and course) selection".

Critics, like Van Els it may then seem, have erred somewhat in their disparagement and rejection of the (potential) use and usefulness of catalogues in the evaluation and selection of courses. Instead of total dismissal because these catalogues are "provided by the publishers" themselves, because they are "intended as advertisements", because there are "commercial considerations" (what product has not?) or because they "do not meet the standards to be set for textbook descriptions", whatever and wherever these are, such critics as Van Els and those whose opinions

he cites, together with those in the EFL establishment who share their views, might consider an alternative approach, rather than the one of throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

Just as critics of textbooks do their case no good by recommending that because of some poor examples, all textbooks should be banned, so also should those critical of textbook catalogues, instead of calling for them to be condemned and discarded, turn their attention and energy to reforming and improving them. They could begin by dealing with the points raised by Van Els and those whom he cites:

> What sort of pertinent and verifiable details have been left out of the catalogue descriptions?
>
> What sort of information provided by catalogues "leaves much to be desired"?
>
> What sort of standards should be set, for such descriptions in the catalogues?

It could be that the answers to questions like these can be found in consultations with EFL teachers themselves, both here in the UK and (perhaps especially) overseas.

While my own study has served to give a fair indication, I hope, of the wide coverage of topics provided by the catalogues, had time and circumstances permitted, I should myself have liked to have had the opportunity of collecting and putting on record, the views and suggestions of EFL teachers:

- whether they used the catalogues at all in the evaluation and selection process, and how;
- what they found wanting in the catalogues;
- what they would like to see, by way of improvements.

However, in the absence of teachers' comments, suggestions and recommendations, this analysis of the content and presentation in eight major EFL catalogues can provide some refutation of the claim that catalogues are not to be considered useful or suitable for evaluation purposes. Indeed, through the comparisons of the different course-

entries on any given topic, it is possible to produce what can be claimed as a standard, suitable for textbook descriptions, for anything from paper quality and page-layout, to arrangements and contents within an index or course-description, from authors to teaching-hours, from activities and exercises to subject-matter and methodology.

If information is indeed "the provision of pertinent and verifiable details about a textbook" and if evaluation is concerned with the gathering of information, as well as judging relative worth, it does not make sense for any evaluation or selection of textbooks to proceed by first deliberately excluding information, which can be shown to be both pertinent and verifiable, that comes from authors and publishers. And where it is not possible, as in the case of those overseas, to obtain information about these books and courses, directly from the books themselves, and where it is as impracticable to ask for inspection copies of every available course on the market as it would be to sample every lawnmower or camera before making one's selection, the catalogues have an important role to play in the evaluation process.

Stake has written:

> The best substitute for direct experience is probably vicarious experience

- and it is my belief that the catalogues can help provide exactly this, just as holiday brochures, mail-order catalogues and educational course pamphlets already do, in their field.

But for them to be taken as seriously as these brochures and pamphlets, rather than dismissed as "jolly advertising slogans" or "promotional leaflets", we, of the EFL reading public, must perceive them as reliable reference aids. We must be motivated to need them, to seek them out for reference or evaluation purposes. A glossy cover may initially attract a browsing customer and colourful pages occupy him for a time, but for these catalogues to justify the colossal annual expenditure and to fulfil the companies' belief that they <u>are</u> worthy

reference aids, worthy of a role in the selection of EFL materials, entries must be made as specific, reliable and consistent as any in a mail-order catalogue or camera-brochure, and their presentation made as attractive and readable as ergonomic research can allow.

The role is indeed there; it remains only for the EFL catalogue to be better prepared to play its part.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

(a) Draft letter sent out to each of the eight Publishing Firms.

(b) Some replies from the Publishers:

(i)	CUP letter	11th July
(ii)	CUP letter	13th August
(iii)	Collins letter	9th July
(iv)	Heinemann letter	9th July
(v)	OUP letter	11th July

c/o Department of Teaching Media
University of Southampton
Southampton

Dear Sir,

I am at present carrying out a piece of research at the University of Southampton, related to the evaluation of EFL textbooks and courses.

In the course of my research, I hope to hear the views of several of the publishers of these EFL materials and I should be most grateful for your assistance too.

My enquiries particularly concern the EFL book-catalogue, especially with regard to four main areas:

a) Market: for whom are the EFL catalogues mainly prepared?

b) Role: what functions are these seen as fulfilling: are they for advertising or for reference, for instance?

c) Guide-lines: what guidelines or criteria are used by staff to help them decide on the copy for each entry?

d) Research: how does the marketing department monitor the effectiveness of the catalogue?

I realise it might be difficult to answer all these queries fully in a letter and if it was felt I could learn more by talking with some member of your staff, on the telephone, I should be grateful if you could give me the name, and a convenient time to ring. Alternatively, if you felt it would be better for me to visit the company and meet some member(s) of staff who could help to answer my queries. I should be pleased to hear that is acceptable to you, and we could arrange a suitable time.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

PUBLISHING DIVISION
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
THE EDINBURGH BUILDING, SHAFTESBURY ROAD, CAMBRIDGE CB2 2RU
Telephone (0223) 312393 *Cables* UNIPRESS CAMBRIDGE ENGLAND *Telex* 817256

The right of the University of Cambridge to print and sell all manner of books was granted by Henry VIII in Royal Letters Patent of 20 July 1534

[redacted]

[redacted]

Thank you for your letter to [redacted] of 5 July.

Unfortunately, [redacted] has just left on a working trip for Greece and so is not here to answer your letter. I will do my best to answer those questions which pertain to me, as Publicity/Promotion Controller, and I will also pass your letter on to a member of the Editorial staff so that they can offer their ideas.

As far as Catalogue entries go, the scheme of things is thus: the author writes a brief description of his/her book which is the basis of all future publicity (this is usually done in consultation with the editor). The author is himself given guidelines at this point, and is asked to present clearly the main points he/she wants to convey to an EFL teacher. Though writing for a professional audience, the author is asked not to assume too much familiarity with specialist ideas or with ideas contained in the book which may be unfamiliar to an important part of the audience. He/she is asked to bear in mind what has been agreed between editor and author in the preface and introduction of the book, so that all descriptions of the book are consistent.

Broad guidelines for copy going into the Catalogue are arrived at after discussion between Adrian and myself, during which we sort out priorities for the coming year and which books should be emphasised. As you remarked in our telephone conversation, this is usually new and forthcoming titles. This is then discussed with the editorial group as a whole.

The amount of copy for new titles is usually standard, unless it is a major new course. The copy is arranged as follows: a brief introduction saying what the book is about and who it is for (level etc), followed by a list of starred major features. Books which are not suited to this type of treatment i.e. more professional type books are arranged in normal paragraphs. Once again, however, it is important that the book is clearly defined by its content, readership, approach and methodology (if relevant). As all our course materials are extensively tested and piloted, we endeavour to make mention of this. Details about authors etc are only included with Methodology/ Applied Linguistics books (except for very major course books). Review quotes are inserted after by me.

I hope that this information is useful. If you require further details, please get in contact.

I enclose another copy of our Price List, just in case the last one I sent you failed to reach you, as I sent it to Southampton University.

[redacted]

[redacted]
ELT Promotion Controller

PUBLISHING DIVISION
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
THE EDINBURGH BUILDING, SHAFTESBURY ROAD, CAMBRIDGE CB2 2RU
Telephone (0223) 312393 *Cables* UNIPRESS CAMBRIDGE ENGLAND *Telex* 817256

The right of the University of Cambridge to print and sell all manner of books was granted by Henry VIII in Royal Letters Patent of 20 July 1534

13 August 1985 AduP/SF

[redacted]

I trust that the letter from my colleague [redacted] has answered most of your queries.

Basically my assumption is that if the book is well conceived and well executed, then writing a fairly straightforward description of it serves both as information for prospective consumers and also as publicity material. If there is a disjunction between a written description of one of our books and the book itself, then something serious will have gone wrong somewhere in the process and I would want to know the reason why.

As you clearly will be scrutinising our catalogue rather more carefully than most users of it, I would be interested if you discover any inconsistencies in the way in which we describe various books, so please do let me know about this as the more consistent we can be in our descriptions, the better for the profession.

[redacted]

COLLINS EDUCATIONAL

8 GRAFTON STREET LONDON W1X 3LA TELEPHONE: 01-493 7070 TELEX: 881 3355 LIBER G

[redacted]

Thank you very much for your letter.

I'm not sure my answer will be particularly representative. Collins ELT has been through a good deal of reorganisation recently, as has the Educational Publicity department. For the time being, at least, our links with Publicity are fairly tenuous, and much of our publicity activities are carried out by our own marketing and editorial staff.

To answer your questions, then - with the above as background:

a) The amount of copy depends largely on the space made available by the design. Editors, marketing staff, and especially the Publisher who commissions the books, will reach a joint decision on which books should receive full-page treatment, which grouped 3/4/5 to a page etc. This doesn't involve much heavy discussion, in fact, as in most cases the weighting is fairly obvious. One of the editors will be in charge of coordinating all the copy and discussing it with the designer. She will give the others a rough idea of the quantity of text required. Extra space is also filled by illustrations, sample pages, and covers.

   We usually try to reuse copy from the previous year's catalogue, as this saves typesetting costs and gives a clearer idea at the start how much space is available for copy on new books. Sometimes backlist copy has to be cut down to make space. In the main new books receive priority over backlist, but this depends on the success and importance of particular backlist titles.

b) The kind of information which is included is determined by the editors, though our ELT Marketing Manager has sight of copy and makes suggestions. Any quotable reviews are collected during the year and used where appropriate. (This is again an editorial decision.) Information on authors etc. is collected in Publicity Questionnaires, which are sent to authors on signature of contract. Copies of these are held in the Publicity Department and also by marketing staff and editors. They are consulted when catalogue copy and cover blurbs are prepared.

The catalogue is seen both as publicity material and as a source of information for teachers and schools. It is sent to agents, booksellers, and language schools and other relevant institutions. No doubt Daphne will give you more information. I don't think a bias in either direction (publicity or information) would much affect the content (but perhaps this is a rather subjective view). Much purely publicity material - advertisements, leaflets etc. - is highly informative in tone. I think this has more appeal in educational circles than jolly slogans etc. (though you will find some of these in both ads. and catalogues).

I hope this is of some help. Do let us see your thesis (or a relevant portion of it) when it is complete. I would be very interested indeed.

Best of luck in bringing it to its completion!

[redacted]

Heinemann Educational Books

[redacted]

9 July 1985

[redacted]

Thank you for your letter of 5th July. I'm sorry that we weren't able to meet up.

You ask questions about catalogue entries. Yes, the editor is responsible for writing the copy, having been given a rough idea by the marketing department of the amount of space available. The marketing dept then 'doctor' the material to fit, perhaps giving it a more sales-oriented slant in line with the style of other entries in the catalogue. Editor and marketing then discusss the final copy, making small adjustments where necessary.

The editor is considered to be the best person to write the copy as she/he knows the book better than anyone else and will usually highlight the strong points and try to give a concise description of content and methodology. Marketing might want to include review quotes. It is very much a joint exercise by editorial and marketing but with the basic groundwork being done by the editor.

We tend to avoid overloading the catalogue reader with detailed descriptions of the content as this information is readily available on separate publicity leaflets (in the case of large projects) or in the Inspection copy which the prospective purchaser can request. Space limitations also prevent copy in the catalogue from becoming too wordy. We try, wherever possible, to show specimen pages of books as these often tell the reader a lot more than descriptive 'blurb'.

So, to sum up, in the catalogue we need to interest the readers enough for them to want more details. We do this by stating:

- Who the book is for (age, level etc)
- What its strong points are
- What the components are
- How the book fits in with other titles/series.

and by showing:

- the cover
- specimen pages (especially for large projects)

I hope this is of some use to you. If you have any further queries just drop me a line.

With best wishes

[redacted]

[redacted]

Oxford English

English Language Teaching Division

Oxford University Press
Walton Street
Oxford OX2 6DP

Telephone (0865) 56767
Telefax (0865) 56646
Telex 837330

MHD/kc

[redacted]

Thank you for your letter of 5 July. I shall try to answer your questions but it will not be easy, as on the writing of publicity material we do not have hard and fast rules: a great deal depends on the people involved. First of all you ask who guides how much copy will be written for a catalogue entry: this is a decision that is taken by the publicity department. Secondly, the publicity department will also often advise on some of the essential information that needs to be included in an entry and they may go so far as to provide the editor with a rough draft. However, I think the main answer to your questions is the principle we adopt that catalogues should be a clear source of information for customers, showing them exactly what a course or reference book will provide. We try to be as informative as possible within the space available, but we are also constrained by the need to make our catalogue as understandable as possible by the very wide range of customers who refer to it.

If your research reveals improvements on the way we could provide information, I would be most interested to hear of this.

I hope your move to Oman will go well: please do get in touch if I can be of any help while you are there.

[redacted]

APPENDIX II

Sample course-descriptions, in full-colour from each of the eight catalogues, arranged in the order:

(i) CUP

(ii) CASSELL

(iii) COLLINS

(iv) HEINEMANN

(v) LONGMAN

(vi) MACMILLAN

(vii) NELSON

(viii) OUP

NEW

The Cambridge English Course

☆ The major new adult beginner's course from Cambridge University Press
☆ Four levels, from complete beginner to upper-intermediate (Cambridge First Certificate) level
☆ Level 1 available early in 1984

Adults learning English need a course which takes into account their experience of the world and enables them to use their knowledge, feelings, opinions and imagination in their learning. The course must also provide a sound foundation for further progress.

By a combination of extremely varied teaching approaches, together with a carefully constructed integrated syllabus, *The Cambridge English Course* achieves these aims. It has been thoroughly tested in a wide range of teaching situations throughout the world before publication, and the result is an up-to-date and motivating course for adult learners' needs in the 1980s and beyond.

The Cambridge English Course is a complete course for adult and young adult learners of English, in four levels. Book 1 is for complete beginners and "false beginners" and takes learners to a point at which they can use English fluently for simple practical purposes. At the end of Book 4, students will be at a level equivalent to the Cambridge First Certificate in English.

Book	Level	Year of Publication	Components
1	Beginner/ Elementary	1984	Student's Book Practice Book Teacher's Book Test Book Student's Cassette Class Cassette Set
2	Lower-intermediate	1985	
3	Intermediate	1986	
4	Upper-intermediate	1987	

The course:
☆ is specially desig
account of their
☆ allows for a rang
styles and has a
approach
☆ systematically in
functions, notio
pronunciation th
constructed syll
☆ teaches languag
use
☆ provides activiti
with
☆ contains topics,
interest adults
☆ often allows stu
about their lear
☆ makes wide use
☆ is not dominate
and story lines
☆ has been extensi
the world
☆ is written by two
imaginative aut

Component

Student's Book 1
each, alternate sp
of each unit provi
giving a total of 96

Practice Book 1 f
covered in class. P
to reading and wri
the student to thin
intonation.

Teacher's Book 1
from Student's Bo
detailed teacher's
together with clea
tapescripts and te

Class Cassette Se
recorded material
course effectively

Student's Cassett
to have their own
material for refere

Test Book 1 for te
collect in when se
third of the course

The authors:
Both of these well
extensive teachin
learners. Michael
successful books
and Catherine Wa
forms an importa
innovative First

NOW WITH WORKBOOKS

Cassell's Foundation English Series

A structurally based, four-book series for beginners to post-intermediate students.

All four language skills are given the emphasis appropriate to the level and student participation is encouraged throughout, particularly in the listening activities.

Each book can be used independently at the appropriate level.

The Workbooks

Starting English Workbook:
Damien Doorley

Discovering English Workbook:
Damien Doorley

Exploring English Workbook:
Hugh Templeton/Tim Blakey

Thinking English Workbook:
David Christie

Each Workbook contains a collection of imaginative and interesting exercises based on the main structural and functional areas covered in the coursebooks.

Exercises on vocabulary are also included and areas of special difficulty, such as modal and phrasal verbs are highlighted.

The exercises are organised on a unit-by-unit basis to facilitate their use in conjunction with the coursebooks.

The Workbooks are suitable for use in class or at home, and will help students to consolidate their learning in a thoroughly enjoyable way.

American English edition

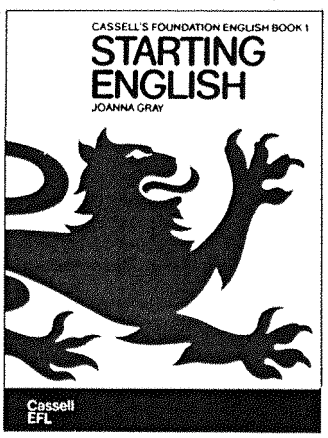
For details see page 19.

Starting English

Joanna Gray

For beginners.

This book combines the best features of the modern approach to language teaching with the best of the traditional. It is fresh in approach, thorough in its teaching techniques and attractive in design. Notionally based but backed up with thorough and progressive structural practice, its features include:
listening activities which encourage the active participation of the students; texts (not just dialogues) from the first unit onwards; a variety of practice material; four progress tests and word lists at the end of each unit. The texts are lively and interesting, being student-oriented in subject and tone, and all the materials reflect the active and continuing work of the author in the classroom.



The **Teacher's Book** by Susan Henderson and Joanna Gray gives lesson plans for sample units, suggests a variety of classroom activities, discusses difficult language points, includes the texts of the listening activities, and provides answers to all the exercises.

Recorded material including the listening activities, dialogues and drills is available on cassette.

Student's Book
128pp 304 30621 5

Workbook
64pp 304 31151 0

Teacher's Book
96pp 304 31025 5

Cassettes
2 × C60 304 30623 1

Discovering English

Joanna Gray

For pre-intermediate students.

This book exploits more fully the language introduced in *Starting English*.

The course is structurally based but has a strong functional component. Stress is placed on the development of the student's reading and writing skills through increased use of texts and narrative. The teaching of communication skills is also increasingly important as it is at this stage that the student will be learning how to express himself about things outside himself and his immediate environment. Listening activities are interspersed throughout the units and closely linked to the texts and main teaching points of the units.

The **Teacher's Book** gives detailed explanations of teaching points, suggests a variety of classroom activities, gives the listening comprehension passages and provides answers to all the exercises.

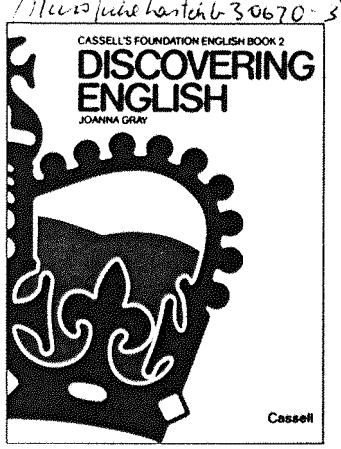
The **Cassettes** include the listening activities, dialogues and drills.

Student's Book
144pp 304 30669 X

Workbook
64pp 304 31152 9

Teacher's Book
128pp 304 31026 3

Cassettes
2 × C60 304 30671 1



Express

NEW

Geoffrey Broughton

Express is a rapid revision course in English for adults. It consists of two stages of material, taking the false beginner up to a high intermediate level. The course is designed to be used mainly in class but much of the material lends itself to reinforcement and individual study at home. 51

Subject matter has been chosen for its intrinsic interest to adults and covers both fiction and non-fiction areas. Lessons are deliberately contained within a set number of pages, to generate a sense of achievement and rapid progress. In Book One, there are fifteen double page lessons, followed by fifteen lessons of three pages each. 54

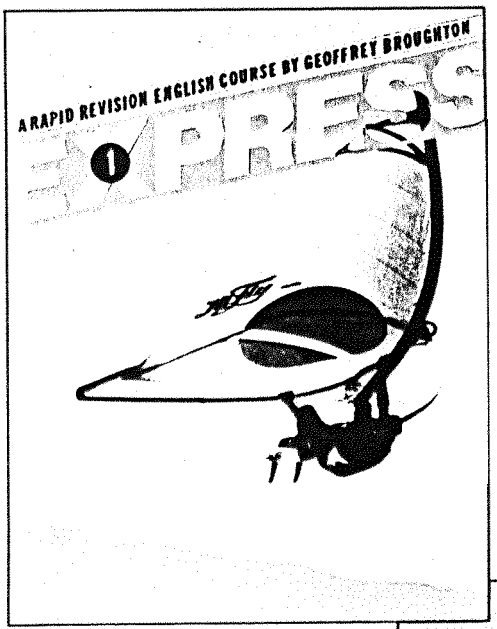
Each stage consists of a Student's Book, a Workbook, a Teacher's Book and a cassette. The Student's Book contains all the core material and the Workbook provides follow-up practice in both reading and writing, with supplementary tests. The recorded material includes dialogues and pronunciation work. 45

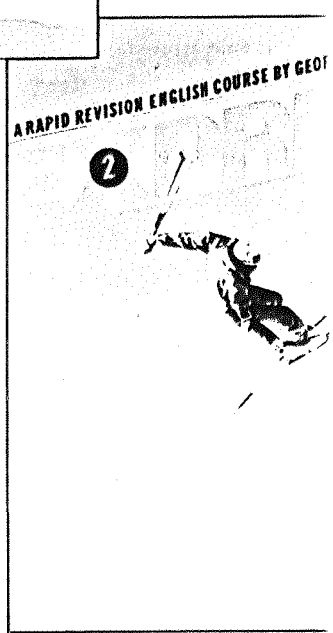
Geoffrey Broughton is the author of a number of well-known English Language text books. He has worked at the London Institute of Education, and until recently was director of Eaton Hall International. 32

Early 1985

Student's Book 1	00 370635 4	80pp
Workbook 1	00 370650 8	96pp
Teacher's Book 1	00 370651 6	64pp
Cassette	00 370652 4	

Stage Two is currently in preparation.

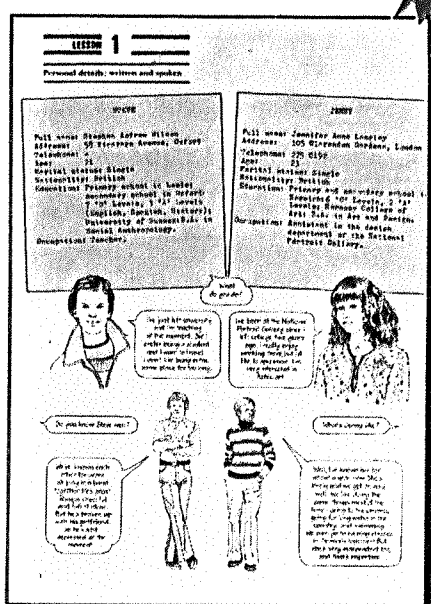


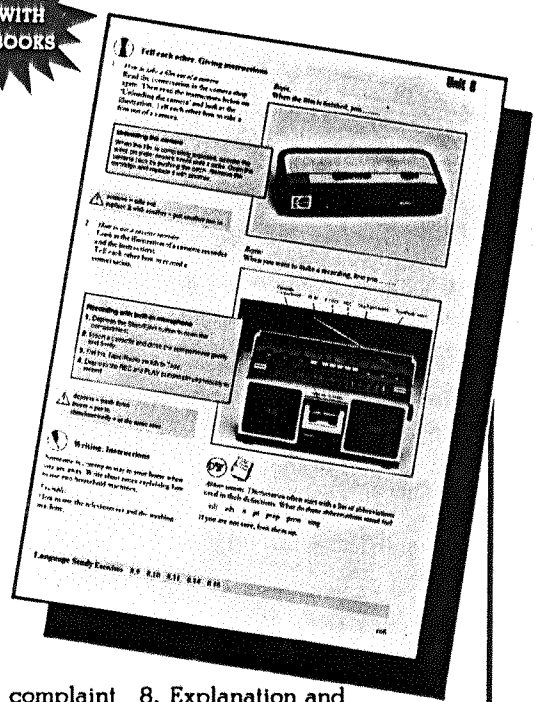


EXPRESS
EXPRESS EXPR

EXCHANGES

NOW WITH WORKBOOKS





LEVEL

Exchanges is designed for use at pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. Part A is suitable for pre-intermediate and Part B for intermediate students. 22

AIMS

Communication: To enable students to use English to exchange information and ideas and to express feelings at a more sophisticated level. 20

Language: To consolidate existing language abilities, and to develop control over the full range of intermediate language areas. 17

CONTENTS

Exchanges has ten units, each with five lessons and a Language Study section. Together with **Encounters**, it covers all the major components of the Council of Europe Threshold Document, while at the same time providing a thorough grounding in essential language skills. The main themes covered in Exchanges are: 48

1. Personal information 2. Money and possessions 3. Opinions and argument 4. Work 5. News: 6. Personal feelings and information 7. Persuasion and complaint 8. Explanation and instructions 9. Planning and co-operating 10. Studying in English. 17 10

KEY FEATURES

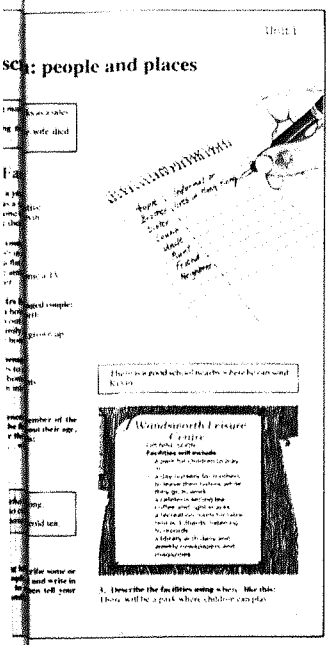
- Topic material drawn from interesting and varied sources stimulates students to express their own feelings and thoughts in English.
- Specific attention paid to the development of reading, writing, and listening skills. 31
- Innovative communication activities in each unit stimulate free language use.
- Self diagnostic language check-up tests provide opportunities for individualised work. 20

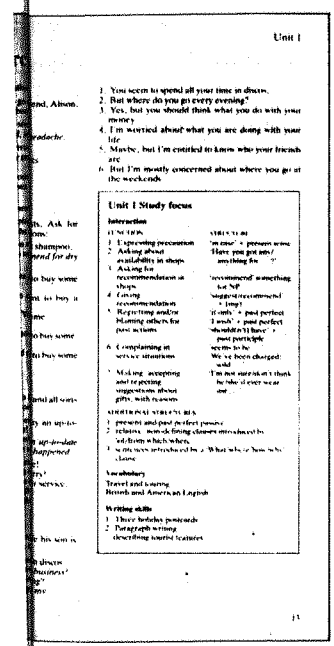
Exchanges: Part Edition

Part A Students' Book	80pp	435 28469 X
Part A Workbook	48pp	435 28441 X
Part A Teachers' Book	96pp	435 28464 9
Part A Cassettes	(3)	435 28465 7
Part A Tapes	(3)	435 28466 5
Part B Students' Book	80pp	435 28468 1
Part B Workbook	48pp	435 28442 8
Part B Teachers' Book	96pp	435 28467 3
Part B Cassettes	(3)	435 28463 0

Exchanges: Complete Edition

Students' Book	160pp	435 28470 3
Dialogues and Songs Cassette		435 28459 2





Studying Strategies

Strategies 4

Brian Abbs and Ingrid Freebairn with John Clegg and Norman Whitney

Studying Strategies is the fourth book in the **Strategies** series. Students and teachers who have used **Starting Strategies/ Opening Strategies**, **Building Strategies** and **Developing Strategies** will be familiar with the communicative approach linked to the integration of the four skills.

Studying Strategies is for intermediate students aged sixteen or over. It will be of special relevance to those students who need general practice at a level leading to the Cambridge First Certificate in English. It is also suitable for those students who wish to continue their academic studies of English.

Studying Strategies contains fifteen units of work arranged in groups of four teaching units followed by a consolidation unit. Each unit is based on internationally relevant themes – including foreign travel, crime, medicine and health, festivals, science and technology – to which the students are encouraged to contribute from their own knowledge and experience through authentic reading and listening materials. **Studying Strategies** is fully illustrated in colour and in black and white.

Studying Strategies revises important functions and structures in new contexts, and gives practice in both spoken and written communicative tasks. In addition, the book emphasises the importance of good study habits, the building of vocabulary in word fields, dictionary work, strategies for reading challenging texts, and the organisation of ideas in sequenced writing. Throughout, learning progress is clearly indicated by a summary of main language points at the end of each unit.

The Teacher's Book describes the principles behind the course, suggests practical teaching procedures and gives step-by-step teaching notes, keys to exercises and suggested models for student performance. There are also indexes of the functions, grammatical points and writing tasks presented in each unit. The **recorded material** contains the dialogues, listening passages, recordings of some of the literary texts, and the oral exercises.

NEW

Workbook

Steve Elsworth

This Workbook uses a variety of exercise types to focus on structure practice, comprehension, verb tenses and vocabulary, and can be used by students in class or at home.

0 582 51681 1 Students' Book
0 582 51686 2 Teacher's Book
0 582 51683 8 Set of 2 Cassettes
0 582 51687 0 Workbook
Publication early 1984

Strategies

Integrated English Language Materials

Brian Abbs, Angela Ayton and Ingrid Freebairn

The main aim of **Strategies** is to provide the learner of English with the language skills that may be required for, and are relevant to, a wide range of communicative situations. The approach adopted in the materials is primarily functional, and secondarily structural.

Strategies is designed for pre-intermediate and intermediate students, but the material is constructed in such a way that it may be used at a wide variety of levels for **reinforcement**, for **motivation**, and for introducing new concepts, functions or structures.

The Teacher's Book contains a total print-out of all the oral exercises, a breakdown of the language covered in each unit and extensive teaching notes. All the oral exercises and dialogues are recorded on the accompanying cassettes.

The dialogues are also available on cassette. The songs from **Strategies** are available as a separate collection, **Skyhigh**, on cassette.

0 582 51872 5 Students' Book
0 582 51873 3 Teacher's Book
0 582 79032 8 Set of 6 Cassettes
Dialogues and Drills
0 582 56744 0 Cassette – Dialogues

Skyhigh

0 582 56948 6 Cassette + song sheet

Courses

Broader Context English

Colin White and Paul Davies

Illustrations; Key; Tape

A comprehensive course which reinforces and extends the basic grammar and vocabulary taught in *Active Context English* and *Intermediate Context English* to the level required by Cambridge First Certificate.

Each of the eighteen units contains a lively dialogue followed by a great variety of practice material in both the spoken and written registers – a careful distinction is made between the two – together with specific preparation for the First Certificate examination.

Coursebook *160pp*		18997 3
Key *36pp*		21629 6
Tape		

Contemporary English

R. Rossner, P. Shaw, J. Shepherd, J. Taylor, P. Davies

Beginners/Intermediate; Secondary/Adult
Photographs/Illustrations; Coursebooks; Teacher's Books; Workbooks; Wallcharts; Tapes

The Coursebooks take the student from beginner to intermediate level. Over 10,000 students took part in the trials of the course material, which features:

- contexts which emphasise the use of English as an *international* language
- realistic and varied frameworks for language practice
- intensive coverage of major structural elements and vocabulary areas
- additional practice of functional elements in interaction sequences, and (in later books) in activities such as role-playing and partially guided conversation
- consistent and integrated practice of the main language skills
- systematic, cumulative practice and revision exercises
- comprehensive teacher's books, and tapes
- notes on American English equivalents of the British English used in the course

Each coursebook provides about fifty hours of work for the student. All the 'basic skills' (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are fully covered; the reading and listening activities often require the sort of initiative and guesswork which is necessary if these receptive skills are to develop significantly faster than speaking and writing, as the authors believe they should.

Regular 'Review and Complementation' units ensure that new material is thoroughly understood and revised.

Workbooks provide opportunities for additional practice outside the classroom.

STAGE 1			
Coursebook 1 *88pp*		25786	3
Workbook 1		29362	2
Tapes for Book 1			
Teacher's Book for Stages 1 and 2		27367	2
Wallcharts 1		27733	3
STAGE 2			
Coursebook 2 *112pp*		25889	4
Workbook 2		30955	3
Tapes for Book 2			
Wallcharts 2		27734	1
STAGE 3			
Coursebook 3 *112pp*		26792	3
Workbook 3		32575	3
Tapes for Book 3			
Teacher's Book 3		28877	7
Wallcharts 3		28752	5
STAGE 4			
Coursebook 4 *128pp*		28729	0
Workbook 4		32576	1
Tapes for Book 4			
Teacher's Book 4		30037	8
STAGE 5			
Coursebook 5		32461	7
Tapes for Books 5 and 6			
Teacher's Book 5		32463	3
STAGE 6			
Coursebook 6		32462	5
Teacher's Book 6		32464	1

NEW INCENTIVE

W S Fowler, J Pidcock and R Rycroft

"A straightforward course which manages to combine structural and communicative approaches effectively. The Students' Book is very attractively presented."
(ELT Update)

New Incentive is a complete full-colour course in three stages taking the student of English from beginner to intermediate level.

It follows a structural progression based closely on genuine communicative needs and is designed to teach students to communicate effectively and accurately in speech and writing from the beginning. The emphasis throughout is on active student participation, the use of realistic situations for presentations and exercises, and natural everyday English.

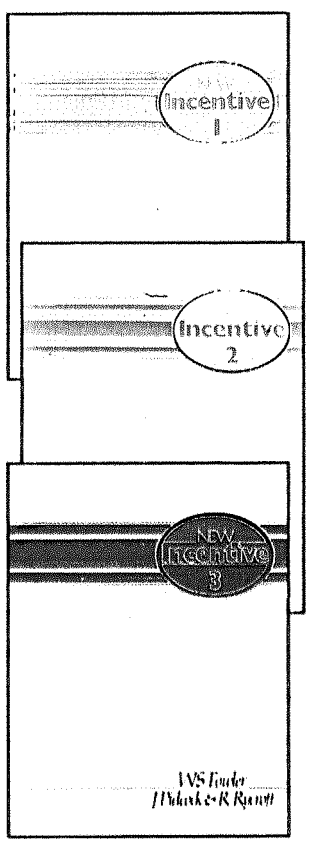
Each level comprises a Students' Book, a Practice Book, a Teacher's Book, two cassettes and a tapescript.

The Students' Books are divided into twelve sections and provide material for about 90 classroom hours. In each unit, Study and Summary sections consolidate structures and language forms, and tests in every sixth unit provide opportunities for revision and assessment.

Lively full-colour photographs and drawings illustrate the language structures and exercises throughout.

The Practice Books contain written exercises on the work covered in the Course Books, consolidating the students' ability to understand and use the material presented in each unit, and providing the opportunity for further practice on related topics.

The Teacher's Books contain the full text of the Students' Book interleaved with Teacher's Notes, which detail presentation times, point out possible problem areas, and suggest Practice Book exercises and drills for each section. The Notes encourage teachers to relate the material to the students' specific situation using local or particular names, and student interests as a context for the work.

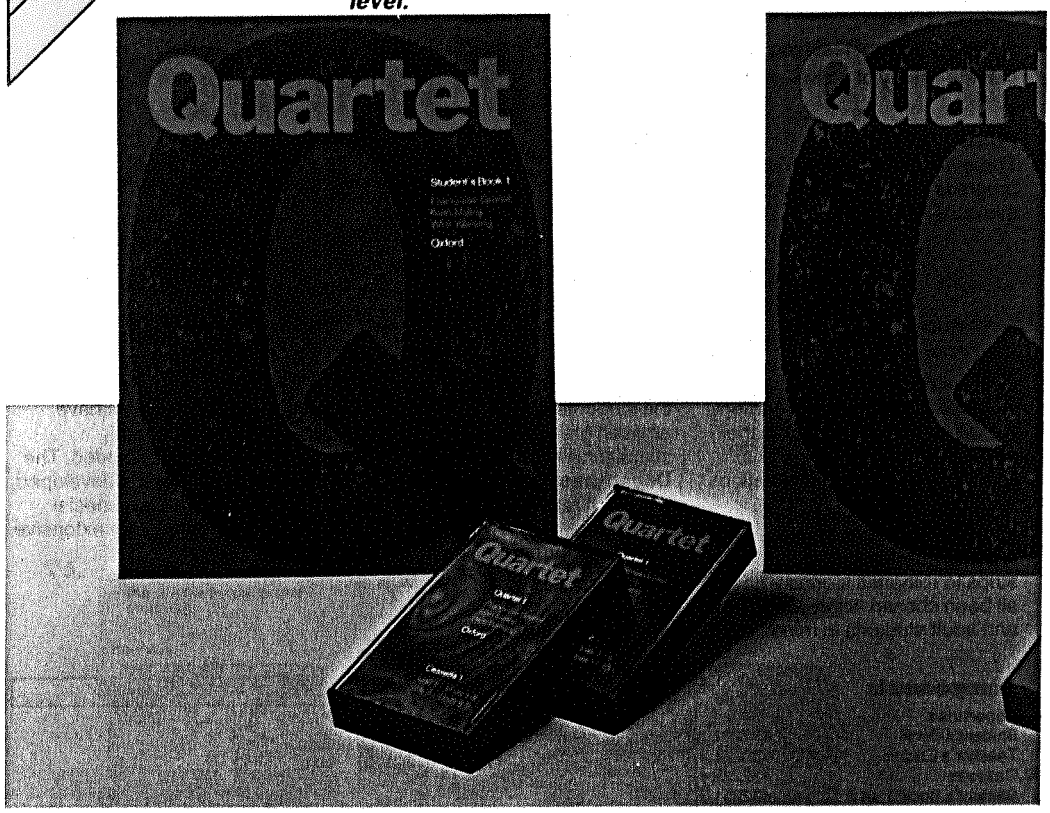


NEW INCENTIVE

Students' Book 1	0-17-555372-6	96pp 246x189mm
Teacher's Book 1	0-17-555373-4	144pp 246x189mm
Practice Book 1	0-17-555374-2	64pp 246x189mm
Cassette 1:Dialogues & Conversations	0-17-555375-0	
Cassette 2:Drills	0-17-555376-9	
Tapescript 1	0-17-555377-7	32pp 246x189mm
Students' Book 2	0-17-555423-4	96pp 246x189mm
Teacher's Book 2	0-17-555425-0	144pp 246x189mm
Practice Book 2	0-17-555424-2	64pp 246x189mm
Cassette 1:Dialogues & Conversations	0-17-555426-9	
Cassette 2:Drills	0-17-555427-7	
Tapescript 2	0-17-555428-5	32pp 246x189mm
Students' Book 3	0-17-555429-3	96pp 246x189mm
Teacher's Book 3	0-17-555431-1	144pp 246x189mm
Practice Book 3	0-17-555430-7	64pp 246x189mm
Cassette 1:Dialogues & Conversations	0-17-555432-3	
Cassette 2:Drills	0-17-555433-1	
Tapescript 3	0-17-555434-X	32pp 246x189mm

Secondary and Adult Courses

Quartet
Françoise Grellet, Alan Maley, & Wim Welsing
Intermediate
A task-based course for students at upper secondary and university level.



Quartet involves learners in a wide range of motivating activities that require them to understand and produce authentic language. The tasks include:

- ▷problem solving
- ▷role play
- ▷group and pair work
- ▷note taking
- ▷map and diagram work

36

All the activities arise naturally out of the theme of each unit and are prompted by highly visual authentic and semi-authentic material like:

- ▷authentic texts and dialogues
- ▷plans and maps
- ▷photographs
- ▷letters
- ▷tables
- ▷questionnaires
- ▷quizzes
- ▷unscripted recordings

37

Because the theme of each unit dictates its shape and extent, **Quartet** is very flexible. Units can be selected in any order to meet the students' particular interests and linguistic needs.

31

APPENDIX III

The Contents Page from each of the Catalogues (reproduced here without colour-coding bands, etc).

Arranged in the order:

(i) CUP

(ii) CASSELL

(iii) COLLINS

(iv) HEINEMANN

(v) LONGMAN

(vi) MACMILLAN

(vii) NELSON

(viii) OUP

MAIN COURSES

THE CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH COURSE 6-7

We are proud to announce this major new course for beginners, which represents an important new approach to the teaching of adults. The careful syllabus, the very varied approaches to teaching and learning, and the extremely attractive design distinguish this course from others.

MEANINGS INTO WORDS 8

The Upper-intermediate level of this course is now available. The Intermediate level, published in 1983, was enthusiastically welcomed by teachers and students who both appreciate the integration of grammatical, functional and notional areas and the highly original methodology.

COURSE MATERIALS 9

Includes some of our best-known titles such as *Functions of English* and *Notions in English.*

CAMBRIDGE EXAMINATIONS 10-12

Cambridge ELT now offers the most extensive range of titles for the 1984 Syllabus, including *Progress towards First Certificate* and two sets of official 1984 practice tests published for the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate.

AMERICAN ENGLISH 13

Our expanding programme now includes *How to Survive in the USA* and pronunciation and listening practice in *Clear Speech.*

PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH 14

The first two titles in this new series are *Business Reports* and *Business Listening Tasks.*

STUDY SKILLS 14

Study Listening is a new addition which develops the crucial ability to understand talks and lectures in English.

SPEAKING 15-17

This includes our well-known lists of pronunciation practice and fluency practice materials. *Speaking Personally* and *Ideas* are our newest fluency practice books. *Elements of Pronunciation* is now a one-volume pronunciation course.

WRITING 18

Writing Skills has received a delighted welcome from teachers and so, we believe, will *Writing Tasks* which offers a new approach to advanced writing skills.

READING 18-21

Authentic Reading has already proved to be an instant success. *Reading Choices* is the only authentic ELT self-access material at present available. *Variety* is something new for work on varieties of English.

LANGUAGE & LITERATURE 21

We are delighted to announce the publication of *Reading Between the Lines* which takes students to the first stage of literary awareness, while providing plenty of fluency practice.

LISTENING COMPREHENSION 22

Reasons for Listening and *Elementary Task Listening* are distinguished additions to this outstanding list.

ROLE-PLAY & SIMULATION 23

Eight Simulations has deservedly attracted a great deal of attention.

GRAMMAR PRACTICE 23

TRANSLATION 23

BOOKS FOR TEACHERS

CAMBRIDGE LANGUAGE TEACHING LIBRARY 24

This authoritative series contains new books by Christopher Brumfit, Gillian Brown, Wilga Rivers, William Littlewood and Tom McArthur.

CAMBRIDGE HANDBOOKS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS 25

This series goes from strength to strength, with new books on teaching listening comprehension, using stories in the language classroom, a new compendium of communication activities and a new edition of the best-seller *Games for Language Learning.*

NEW DIRECTIONS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING 2

Offers a new book on video in language teaching by an authority in the field.

CAMBRIDGE LANGUAGE TEACHING SURVEYS 2

Contains an invaluable collection of state-o the-art surveys of important topics in language teaching.

SYLLABUS DESIGN 2

READING 2

PRONUNCIATION & PHONETICS 2

In addition to the classics by Daniel Jones, we now have an introductory textbook which recognises the needs of trainee teachers for whom English is a foreign language: *English Phonetics and Phonolog*

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REFERENCE 2

This new entry in our catalogue contains a major new title *English as a World Langua*, in addition to the familiar *Cambridge Engl Lexicon* and the authoritative *Accents of English* in three volumes.

LANGUAGE & LINGUISTICS 29-

This contains a small selection of relevant titles from the outstanding Cambridge Linguistics list.

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ORDER FORMS

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Publisher's Notes

Specimen Copies

Cassell will consider requests from teachers for inspection copies of textbooks for possible class adoption. It is not possible to supply inspection copies of reference works or audio materials.

Orders

Cassell ELT materials are stocked by major booksellers throughout the world. If you have any difficulty obtaining our titles please contact:

Cassell Ltd

ELT Sales Department,
1 St Anne's Road, Eastbourne,
East Sussex BN21 3UN, England.

Our branches and overseas representatives, listed on page 22, will also be happy to provide you with further information about our materials and about stockists in your area.

Prices

The UK prices of the titles in this catalogue are listed in a separate price list. Local prices may be obtained from your usual supplier.

Printed in Great Britain by T. H. Brickell & Son Ltd.,
The Blackmore Press, Longmead, Shaftesbury, Dorset.

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BS Bridge Series 103
GAL Galaxies 82
GBS Plays by Bernard Shaw 106
LERAW Living English Readers for the Arab World 150
LEG Longman English Guides 59
LES Longman English Series 114
LGSRAW Longman Graded Structural Readers for the Arab World 150
LHLT Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers 141
LICCS Longman Integrated Comprehension and Composition Series 54
LLS Longman Listening Series 47
LM Longman Movieworld 83
LSES Longman Simplified English Series 99
LSR Longman Structural Readers 84
LST Longman Study Texts 104
NCE New Concept English 38
NMSR New Method Supplementary Readers 94
NSS New Swan Shakespeare 106
NSSAS New Swan Shakespeare Advanced Series 106
NUC Nucleus 125
WAW World at Work 119
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