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序言

面对百年未有之大变局，提高人才培养质量是当前我国教育改革与发展的迫切任务。而人才培养的质量取决于两大根本支撑，其一是教师，其二就是教材。教材的重要性不仅在于它为教学提供知识内容与教学方法，而且在于它在很大程度上决定了人才培养的价值取向，即为谁培养人的问题。在此意义上，教材成为国家事权。目前，我国教育界普遍认识到，教材必须体现党和国家意志，必须坚持马克思主义指导地位，体现马克思主义中国化要求，体现中国和中华民族风格，体现党和国家对教育的基本要求，体现国家和民族的基本价值观，体现人类文化知识积累和创新成果。

外语教材在我国教育体系中占有突出的重要地位。外语（英语）是唯一贯穿我国基础教育和高等教育全过程的科目，又是直接输入外国文化特别是西方文化的科目，教学内容承载着各种意识形态和价值观，影响学生时间最长、人数最多。在高等教育阶段，外语不仅是人人必修的公共课程，而且成为最大的专业类课程之一。不仅如此，外语（专业）教学较之其他科目（专业）的教学，更多地依靠教材所提供的学习材料。就教材的种类和出版的数量而言，外语教材无疑名列前茅。因此，外语教材的建设和研究应受到特别重视。

当前，加强外语教材研究应着眼于两个基本目标。一是把握方向，即保障外语教材正确的价值导向，服务于立德树人和培养社会主义建设者和接班人的根本教育方针。二是提高质量，即根据外语教育教学的基本规律，结合我国外语教育教学的实践经验，揭示具有中国特色的外语

教材编写理论与方法，打造融通中外的外语精品教材。

随着全国首届教材工作会议的召开，外语教材建设和研究进入新的发展时期。中国高等教育和外语教育的提质升级对外语教材建设和研究提出了一系列重大课题：在外语教材编写中，如何全面贯彻党的教育方针，落实立德树人根本任务？如何扎根中国大地，站稳中国立场？如何体现社会主义核心价值观？如何加强爱国主义、集体主义、社会主义教育？如何引导学生坚定道路自信、理论自信、制度自信、文化自信，成为担当民族复兴大任的时代新人？在中观和微观层面，外语教材编写如何吸收语言学、应用语言学、教育学研究的最新成果？如何提炼和继承中国外语教育教学的宝贵经验并开拓创新？如何借鉴国际外语教材编写的先进理念与方法？在全面贯彻落实《教育信息化 2.0》的时代背景下，外语教材如何支持和引领混合式教学、翻转课堂乃至慕课建设？一句话，外语教材如何为培养具有国际视野、中国情怀、思辨能力和跨文化能力的国际化人才提供坚实支撑？所有这些紧迫问题，都需要中国外语教材研究者用具有中国特色的理论与实践做出回答。

在此背景下，中国外语教材研究中心与外语教学与研究出版社策划了“外语教材研究丛书”。本套丛书一方面积极引进国外外语教材研究经典著作，一方面大力推出我国学者的原创性外语教材研究成果。在国内外语教材研究尚显薄弱的当下，我们首先精选引进了一批国外外语教材研究力作，包括：

- 《外语教材中的文化呈现》 (*Representations of the World in Language Textbooks*)
- 《英语教材研发：创新设计》 (*Creativity and Innovations in ELT Materials Development: Looking Beyond the Current Design*)
- 《英语教材研究：内容、使用与出版》 (*English Language Teaching*)

Textbooks: Content, Consumption, Production)

— 《英语教材研究：国际视角》 (*International Perspectives on Materials in ELT*)

— 《英语教材与教师角色：理论与实践》 (*Teaching Materials and the Roles of EFL/ESL Teachers: Practice and Theory*)

— 《语言教学材料的真实性设计》 (*Designing Authenticity into Language Learning Materials*)

“它山之石，可以攻玉”，引进的目的在于批判性地借鉴和自主创新。期待本套丛书为中国外语教材研究提供理论启迪和实践指导，最终为中国特色外语教材的编写、使用、研究做出贡献。

孙有中

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Introduction

Nobody who has witnessed language blossoming in a small child can be in any doubt that language learning is a natural—an *authentic*—activity. It is ironic, therefore, that the 20th century—a century which saw an unprecedented interest and growth in second language learning—initially brought forth some of history’s most contrived methods for teaching it. This is not to say that such methods as the Audiolingual or Direct methods were necessarily the less effective because of this, but it was not until the late 1960s that the most ‘natural’ approach—the learning of language *as* communication and *through* communication—began to take root.

The Communicative ethos has by now become engrained in language teaching (in the West at least) and has been consolidated by the revolution in information and communications technologies (ICT). ICT effectively concretised the concept of communication at the same time as opening up unlimited access to authentic texts from the target language culture, thereby impelling the issue of authenticity of texts and interactions to the fore in language pedagogy.

This then is essentially the background to what is put forward in this book, a comprehensive approach to exploiting authentic texts in the language classroom. This ‘authenticity-centred’ approach directly informs the design of language learning materials—exemplifying the symbiotic relationship (pointed out by Nunan 1989: 15), between the *approach* to learning and the *content/materials* used in applying it. The central premises of the authenticity-centred approach are the use of authentic texts for language learning and the preserving of this authenticity throughout the procedures in which they are implicated. The rationale for this approach—essentially, the reasons *why* authenticity is important at all in language learning—draws, as Chapters 2 and 3 explain, on second language acquisition research on the one hand, and on pedagogical experience on the other.

The authenticity-centred approach deploys a pedagogical model that has become broadly accepted and applied in language learning, the *task*. Task in relation to language learning is generally described in such terms as ‘a goal-oriented communicative activity with a specific outcome where the emphasis is on exchanging meanings, not producing specific language forms’ (Willis 1996: 36). The marriage of the authentic text and the task model is a felicitous one, in that both derive from the ‘real-world’, with the notion of task in pedagogy today broadening to encompass personal and divergent tasks as well as more practical ones.

Materials Design

The authenticity approach is materials-centred and upholds the importance of materials design not only as a professional skill applied by coursebook writers, but as one used by individual teachers in individual teaching contexts. Materials design remains a fairly neglected area in English Language Teaching (ELT) research and publication: ‘the professional literature on language pedagogy has, until this time, benignly overlooked the act of writing’ (Dubin 1995: 13) (whether this is due to a reluctance on the part of ELT publishing houses to endorse materials writing as a non-professional skill that might eventually undercut their market, is a matter for speculation). Responding to this effective gap in the literature, the handful of recent books in the area, notably Byrd 1995, Tomlinson 1998 and McGrath 2002, are all geared towards redressing the lack of a systematic approach to materials design and evaluation, and to research in the field. All of these works also voice the need for recognition of materials development as a ‘professional track’ within the professional field of ELT (see, for example, Byrd 1995: 6). Significantly, a common thread in all of these recent publications is the one that is the major focus of this book, the use of authentic texts for language learning and teaching.

Another concern voiced in recent literature in this field comes out of today’s heightened consciousness of cultural identities and differences. The endeavour to produce ‘global’ language learning coursebooks that are suited to a range of cultural audiences makes coursebook-writing today a frustrating activity that is fraught with compromises (see, for example, Bell and Gower 1998; Pulverness 1999a, 1999c; Rinvoluceri 1999b). The logical solution—for teachers to produce their own materials from within their own teaching contexts (possibly publishing them at national level)—is one being touted

by growing numbers of practitioners (e.g. Jolly and Bolitho 1998: 110-111; McGrath 2002). One of the objectives of this book is to offer some direction for materials design for teachers in this predicament.

Authenticity

It is perhaps incumbent to deal at the outset with the issue of adopting terms like *authentic* and *authenticity*, so weighted by the value judgements implicit in their gloss as *real*, *genuine*, *bona fida*, *pure*¹. Such value judgements have meant that *authentic* materials and *authenticity* are a naturally appealing proposition for language practitioners and learners alike. Their opposite poles—*inauthenticity* and *artifice*—appear at first glance to offer mean and meagre pickings by comparison. Yet, as has eloquently been described in Cook (2000), artifice in language, ‘language play’, is at the heart of the learning of our first language and remains central to our socialisation throughout our lives. The ‘artificiality’ of the classroom (Hughes 1981: 7) and the suspension of reality in the pedagogical situation (Widdowson 1984) reveal learners as willing collaborators in the learning game. It is interesting to surmise, therefore, what, at the eve of the 20th century, made the appeal of authenticity so strong as to have become the predominant paradigm for the language teaching classroom. The theoretical ‘authenticity debate’ (covered in some detail in Chapter 1 of this book) has been all but sidelined in the rush to exploit authentic texts for pedagogical purposes. The authenticity ‘explosion’ is probably in part a consequence of the symbiotic relationship between two movements—the one sociological and the other pedagogical. The first is the aforementioned revolution in information and communications technologies (ICT), which has opened up access to authentic texts of all types in hundreds of world languages. The second is the shift towards self-direction in learning, the transferring of the responsibility for learning, and the paths to information and knowledge, from the teacher to the learner. All this means that today’s language learner has high expectations of authenticity—of target language texts, of facts about the target culture and, not least, of the interactions used to obtain this information.

Aims

This book is intended to be of interest to linguists, language teachers, teacher trainers and trainees. The book’s structure and content reflect an attempt to break out of the ‘theoretical’ versus ‘practical’ genre division in

ELT publications, while at the same time broadening the scope of the latter by covering not one, but a cross-section of genres and media. While not attempting to supplant the comprehensive coverage of single genre resource books (to which the reader is referred in ‘further reading’ sections), this book is intended as a ‘one-stop’ publication for language teachers who are interested in sourcing authentic texts from a range of cultural products and in using classroom tasks that are correspondingly authentic. It is envisaged that the book might therefore serve either as a supplementary resource to the traditional syllabus, or, more optimistically, as a basis for the type of text-driven syllabus described in Chapter 3.

Outline

The book falls into two parts. The first is principally theoretical and consists of four chapters. The second part consists of seven chapters each focusing on one cultural product. Each of these chapters covers the pedagogical issues involved in using the cultural product for language learning and follows this up with a database of classroom tasks.

The content of the book, in affectionate homage to the author’s teaching background, basically responds to the *who, what, why, how, where* of authenticity and language learning.

Who used authentic texts in the past? (Chapter 1)

What are ‘authenticity’ and ‘authentic texts’? (Chapter 1)

Why use authentic texts for language learning? (Chapters 2 and 3)

How do we use authentic texts in language learning materials? (Chapters 4 to 11)

Where do we source authentic texts? (Chapters 5 to 11)

The first chapter of the book gives the historical background to the concept of authenticity in language teaching, then traces recent trends with the aim of offering a working definition of authenticity in the language learning context. In Chapter 2, findings of SLA research are presented to endorse the use of authentic texts in language learning. The third chapter establishes the pedagogical rationale for the use of authentic texts, crystallising these as ‘the 3 c’s’—*culture, currency* and *challenge*. Chapter 4 constitutes the transition between the theoretical part (Part I) and the practical part (Part II) of the book, concretising the authenticity-centred approach into a practical framework for authentic task design.

Chapters 5 to 11 cover seven different ‘cultural products’—literature, the broadcast media, newspapers, advertising, song and music, film and ICT respectively. The strengths of each as potential language learning material are highlighted and the particular types of tasks suited to it are discussed. Each ‘cultural product’ chapter is backed up by a *summary of the main principles* of its use in language learning, a brief *guide for further reading* and a *task reference section* containing a set of step-by-step descriptions of classroom tasks for that cultural product.

Terminology

Most of the terminology and acronyms used in this book are fairly standard. Certain terms, however, need to be carefully delineated in the context of the subject matter. Notably, two of the core terms are distinguished in line with the conventions used in other publications in the field (McGrath 2002; Tomlinson 1998), *viz.*: *text* is used to refer to audio, visual and graphic as well as printed texts which are drawn from the target culture (*TC*—see below), while the term *material* is used to refer to the combination of the text and the language learning activity/ies based on it.

Activity: Action or exercise involving the target language, but not necessarily goal-oriented (see *Task* below). A *task* may constitute a number of *activities*.

Cultural Product: The concept of *cultural product* is used in Tomalin and Stempleski (1993: 6-7) and Carter (1998: 50) and is adopted in this book as the supernym for the materials drawn from a variety of media and genres from the target culture.

Discourse Type: Discourse type is identified through *medium* (the physical way in which the linguistic message is transmitted to its receiver i.e. via phonic or graphic means) and on a cline of *modes* from spoken to written (distinctions based on McCarthy and Carter 1994: 4-9). There are an almost infinite number of discourse types which may vary from culture to culture. In English, samples of discourse types range from conversation to lecture, from newspaper article to novel, from advertising jingle to opera. The cultural products discussed in the book are subcategorised by discourse type in the task databases.

ELT: English language teaching

FL: Foreign language

Genre: ‘A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes [...] exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience’ (Swales 1990: 58).

ICT: Information and communications technologies

L1: First or native language

L2: Second language (the second or foreign language being learned)

LSP: Language for specific purposes

Language Variety: ‘A system of linguistic expression whose use is governed by situational factors’ (Crystal 2001: 6). Varieties of written language are defined according to these five features: graphic, orthographic/graphological, grammatical, lexical and discourse. Features specific to spoken language are: phonetic and phonological features (Crystal 2001: 6-9).

Material: The combination of the *text* (see below) and the language learning task/s based on it.

Medium: The means of transmitting text (phonic, graphic) (McCarthy and Carter 1994: 4).

NS: Native speaker

NNS: Non-native speaker

Register: ‘Functional language variation’ (Swales 1990: 40), ‘a variety of a language distinguished according to its use’ (Bhatia 1993: 6). Register is characterised via a correlation of situational (functional) linguistic variables (Leckie-Tarry 1995: 30).

SLA: Second language acquisition

Task: Learner undertaking in which the target language is comprehended and used for a communicative purpose in order to achieve a particular outcome (goal). (The concept of task is elaborated in Chapter 4).

TC: Target culture. The culture of the target language (*TL*—see below). For learners of an internationally-spoken language such as English, the TC may be variable (see Chapter 3 Section 3.1.2).

TL: Target language. The language being learned.

Text: Paper-based or electronic (audio or visual) data which can be in graphic, audio or printed form and includes video, DVD, television, computer-generated or recorded data.

Notes

- 1 Synonyms from the *Merriam-Webster online thesaurus* <https://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus>.

Part I

Authenticity in Language Learning

The Theoretical Grounding

Chapter One: Authenticity in Language Learning

Background and Definition

The elusive definitions of the terms ‘authentic’ and ‘authenticity’ and their application to language learning have been the subject of great controversy over the past three decades. The stimulus for this can be dated back to the inception of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the 1970s. Giving precedence to communication over form, CLT rejected previous, strictly structural approaches to language learning and opened the way for the use of authentic texts, texts which had been created for a genuine communicative purpose. This prompted the so-called ‘authenticity debate’ in which the nature of authenticity has been applied to everything from the original appearance of a text to perception and validation by the text user, and which has been further complicated by the advent of texts and interactions occurring on information and communications technologies (ICT). Before getting on to the complexities of the current debate, however, this chapter starts by situating this contemporary ‘search for authenticity’ within its historical context, where it will emerge that the quest is not, after all, unique to the modern era.

1.1 Authenticity in Language Learning: The Historical Background

The total corpus of ideas accessible to language teachers has not changed basically in 2000 years. What has been in constant change are the ways of building methods from them, and the part of the corpus that is accepted varies from generation to generation, as does the form in which the ideas present themselves. (Kelly 1969: 363)

With this in mind, sifting through the history books reveals many precedents for authenticity in language learning, and these can be seen to fall into three groups: ‘communicative approaches’ in which communication is both the objective of language learning and the means through which the

language is taught, ‘materials-focused approaches’, in which learning is centred principally round the text, and ‘humanistic approaches’¹ which address the ‘whole’ learner and emphasise the value of individual development.

1.1.1 ‘Communicative’ approaches

The cyclical nature of the evolution of language pedagogy is nowhere more apparent than in the Communicative approaches used at both extremes of the five millennia covered here. This may be justification for arguing that this is after all the most natural approach, based as it is on the premise that a means of communication can only be learned by using it for this purpose. ‘Communicative’ approaches were used in the earliest colonial contexts. As early civilisations discovered and conquered other lands, the need to communicate with speakers of other languages arose. Historians have found evidence that second language teaching took place among the Sumerians from around 2700 BC (Titone 1968: 5), when they were conquered by the Akkadian Semites who then wanted to adopt the ‘local’ language. Much of this early language learning and teaching in colonial contexts then and later (for example, in the Egyptian and Roman Empires) may be said to have been authentic in spirit, in that the language was usually acquired in non-classroom situations and without specially prepared language materials. It was usually done via direct contact with native speakers, either through sojourns in foreign parts or, as was common among the Romans, through the employment of a Greek-speaking tutor or slave (Titone 1968: 6). Roman education was bilingual from infancy. The basis for foreign language teaching in Roman times can therefore be said to have been communicative in its purpose and authentic in execution, even though this may have been for reasons of convenience more than pedagogical principle.

Pedagogical principle was, on the other hand, certainly the impetus for one of the best-recorded instances in history of a genuinely communicative and authentic approach to language learning; that taken in the 16th century in the education of Michel de Montaigne:

In my infancy, and before I began to speak, he [my father] committed me to the care of a German [...] totally ignorant of our language, but very fluent, and a great critic in Latin. This man [...] had me continually with him: to him there were also joined two others [...] who all of them spoke to me in no other language but Latin. As to the rest of his family, it was an inviolable rule, that

neither himself, nor my mother, man nor maid, should speak anything in my company, but such Latin words as every one had learned only to gabble with me [...] I was above six years of age before I understood either French or Perigordin [...] and without art, book, grammar, or precept, whipping, or the expense of a tear, I had, by that time, learned to speak as pure Latin as my master himself. (Michel de Montaigne 1575²)

The present-day permutation of the notion of communicativeness emerged in the 1970s following a century of frenetic experimentation and development in language teaching methodology. The preceding hundred years had seen a transformation from academic approaches, to experimentation with so-called ‘Natural’ and ‘Direct’ methodologies, to the first attempts at harnessing technology for learning purposes. However, while all these approaches had some influence on the synthesis of CLT, its real roots may be traced to the advent of the new field of *linguistics* around the turn of the century. From this developed the branch of psycholinguistics, the study of the cognitive faculties involved in the acquisition of language. The publication of *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (Chomsky 1965) in which the distinction is drawn between speakers’ *competence* (their knowledge of the language system) and their *performance* (their use of the language) is generally seen as the spark which ignited the Communicative philosophy that was to dominate the last three decades of the 20th century (Howatt 1984: 271). Chomsky’s notion of competence was later transformed into one of ‘communicative competence’, which encompassed language use: ‘There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless’ (Hymes 1971, 1979: 15). Competence was now seen as ‘the overall underlying knowledge and ability for language use which the speaker-listener possesses [...] this involves far more than knowledge of (and ability for) grammaticality’ (Brumfit and Johnson 1979: 13-14). In other words, an individual’s communicative competence involved what s/he needed to know about the language and its culture, and how well s/he was able to use the language in order to communicate successfully, that is, to get the desired outcome from the interaction. It is this notion of communicative competence that is the cornerstone of CLT.

The Communicative philosophy meant a reorientation of former teaching priorities: the teaching of communication via language, not the teaching of language via communication (Allwright 1979: 167). In other words, effective communication was the goal, the language merely the means; and it was

through the attempt to communicate using the language that the language was acquired. The idea of using texts ‘communicatively’, that is, exploiting them for their content rather than for their linguistic structure, represented a key precept of CLT, *viz.*, the predominance of meaning over form. The pivot of Communicative methodology—and where it can and does so easily fall down—is the design of, and learner engagement in, genuinely communicative activities. Typical activities of the early years of CLT used the strategy of information gaps; in order to bridge the gap, learners had to communicate (Johnson 1979: 201). The gap was produced basically by providing information to one member of a pair and withholding it from the other, as in the now standard ‘pair-work’ exercise. By the 1980s, ‘Communicative’ was the buzzword in all ELT coursebooks, although, as is often the case with commercial permutations of pedagogical approaches, Communicative ‘templates’ were sometimes used without their *raison d’être*. Nevertheless the realia creeping into the Communicative coursebook heralded the advent of the use of authentic texts which would eventually help return CLT to its ‘meaningful’ roots.

1.1.2 Materials-focused approaches

As with communicativeness, materials-focused approaches also have a long history, with instances of the use of authentic texts for language learning occurring as early as 9th century England. At that time, Latin was the international (European) language of communication. However, there were attempts to improve the education of the common people by integrating the vernaculars—Old English, Anglo-Saxon—into the education system, through translation of books into the vernaculars (some translations were done by the famous King Alfred himself, according to Pugh 1996: 160). Both the texts and methods of learning may be defined as authentic; long stretches of text were read in what has been called a ‘holistic, reading for meaning approach’ (Pugh 1996: 163).

The teaching of Latin passed through different stages over the centuries during which it was an international language, but by Medieval Times, the teaching method used (in England as elsewhere) was the ‘scholastic method’ which consisted of breaking down words into their constituent parts. Learning the alphabet was therefore the pre-requisite for reading, and finally memorising, sections of ‘primers’. These were not specially written texts for children, but were authentic texts, basic prayer books. This highlights one of the controversial issues of the use of authentic texts for learning, one that

will be touched on in Chapter 3, *viz.*, their potential for political, cultural or, in this case, religious indoctrination. As well as being identified with literacy (the Latin verb *legere* was used to mean specifically ‘to read *Latin*’), Latin had crucial religio-political importance in the Middle Ages, and the objective of learning Latin as opposed to the vernacular ‘was not to acquire a wide competence in reading [...] but to express the elements of Christian teaching’ (Clanchy 1984 cited in Pugh 1996: 162).

A more liberal application of authentic texts in language learning can be seen in the method devised by Roger Ascham in the mid-16th century. Ascham developed a ‘double translation’ method, in which pupils translated the target language text into the mother tongue, and then re-translated their versions into the target language. Ascham used simple but authentic texts in this process—when applied to the teaching of Latin, for instance, he used texts by Cicero. Interestingly, this technique is currently being revived in the context of cultural awareness-raising, where double translation at discourse level (rather than simply word/sentence level) is seen as a means of raising consciousness of cultural implications of linguistic choices (Pulverness 1999a: 9). The ‘inductive approach’ (whereby readers infer grammar rules out of the texts) adopted by Ascham (and later by others) is also strikingly modern (Howatt 1984: 24, 35; Titone 1968: 12).

An ‘inductive’ approach is also the basis of the theory of language pedagogy put forward by Henry Sweet in his 1899 work *The Practical Study of Languages: A Guide for Teachers and Learners*. Sweet used the term ‘inductively’ slightly differently from the modern sense (which he called the ‘inventional method’ and dismissed as being slow and frustrating for the learner). By ‘inductive’, Sweet meant that teachers should illustrate grammar with appropriate paradigmatic texts, which learners could then examine for more examples. Sweet maintained that the foundation of language study should be what he called ‘connected texts’ (this was in part a reaction against the dominance of the detached sentence in language teaching); ‘It is only in connected texts that the language itself can be given with each word in a natural and adequate context’ (1899: 164). He argued that the connected text was the best context for learners to establish and strengthen the correct associations between words, their contexts and their meanings (1899: 164-173) and that only after it has been thoroughly studied and assimilated should the teacher draw out of it grammar points and vocabulary items (1899: 192-193). The arguments that Sweet made for the use of authentic texts sound strikingly

modern in that the practice persists to this day: ‘If we try to make our texts embody certain definite grammatical categories, the texts cease to be natural: they become either trivial, tedious and long-winded, or else they become more or less monstrosities’ (Sweet 1899: 192).

Like Ascham, Sweet also saw the need for maintaining authenticity with lower level learners by providing simpler language samples. He suggested that such levels be catered for by selecting certain genres which are simpler than others, such as descriptive pieces (Sweet 1899: 177). In this he anticipated by almost a century, present-day arguments for authentic texts: ‘Such texts need not be “grammatically sequenced”; they need only capture students’ attention and be comprehensible’ (Krashen 1989: 19-20). Sweet also took pains to stress the positive advantage of using what he called ‘natural’ texts, because of their variety:

The great advantage of natural, idiomatic texts over artificial ‘methods’ or ‘series’ is that they do justice to every feature of the language [...] The artificial systems, on the other hand, tend to cause incessant repetition of certain grammatical constructions, certain elements of vocabulary, certain combinations of words to the almost total exclusion of others. (Sweet 1899: 178)

On the other hand, he was not averse to textbook writers producing simpler ‘natural’ texts for more elementary learners, as long as each text was not dedicated to a single grammatical rule, but presented variety (‘everything’ as he put it). It is interesting that this point was, and has been, frequently ignored in textbook writing to the present day.

The 20th century was dominated by materials-focused approaches, albeit embodying many different theories of language acquisition. First came the ‘New Method’ of the 1950s, which developed out of research into vocabulary frequency and the subsequent development of the ‘lexical distribution principle’ (Howatt’s term, 1984: 247). This principle was reflected in a spate of publications of grammars, dictionaries and word-lists all containing limited and controlled lexical and grammatical material. The graded reader concept began at this time, in which new words were restricted in number and introduced progressively. The principles of the approach led, more critically, to the much-maligned practice of simplifying works of literature—‘simplifying great fiction is like reducing a stock when cooking—it rapidly becomes too concentrated and indigestible’ (Prowse 1999 cited in Kershaw and Kershaw 2000; see also

arguments in Vincent and Carter 1991 and Valdes 1986a, among others).

Other methods followed: the ‘Oral Method’, the ‘Situational Approach’, the ‘Direct Method’, and the ‘Audiolingual Method’, all of which relied on carefully structured materials and prescribed classroom practices. The culmination of such approaches was an effective ‘cult of materials’ (Howatt 1984: 267), in which ‘the authority of the approach resided in the materials themselves’³ (*ibid.*). This may be seen as the start of a debilitating phenomenon in the ELT profession that still exists today; of dependency on, and subservience to the textbook, still the teaching material of choice for the majority of teachers (see Chapter 3). As the importance of foreign language learning increased with the progress of the century, it effectively developed into a modern industry accompanied by ever-evolving methodologies and production of pedagogical literature. This meant that, ironically, as the need for learning foreign languages for genuine communicative purposes increased, the authenticity of the languages in terms of materials tended to decline.

1.1.3 Humanistic approaches

Another thematically related group of approaches relevant to authenticity, can be termed ‘humanistic approaches’, and these recurred periodically throughout history, frequently in reaction to more mechanistic teaching methods. Reaction to the practice of rote-learning which pervaded the learning of Latin and Greek during the 16th century, for instance, came most memorably from the great humanist educator, Comenius. In his work on language, the *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (1658), Comenius gave a singularly modern emphasis on (to use modern terminology) ‘language use’ rather than ‘language usage’⁴: ‘Every language must be learned by practice rather than by rules, especially by reading, repeating, copying, and by written and oral attempts at imitation’ (Comenius cited in Titone 1968: 14-15). Comenius also advocated an ‘intuitive approach’, which used sensory experience as the starting point for language learning. The main tenet of this approach was that learners respond to visual stimuli, objects and pictures, and not to abstracts, such as grammar rules.

These ideas reappear in a number of 20th-century approaches, all of which place emphasis on exploiting the whole sensory repertoire of the brain during the learning experience. Suggestopedia (Lozanov 1978), Total Physical Response (TPR) (Asher 1977), The Silent Way (Gattegno 1972) and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) (Bandler and Grinder 1975) all draw on cognitive psychology, and are methods intended to exploit the

potential of the human brain for learning more fully than conventional methods. Suggestopedia and TPR are based on the assertion that the human brain can most easily process large quantities of new information when in a state of relaxation. The contention is that conventional classroom language learning situations are stress-inducing for the learner, inhibiting the language acquisition process. For example, the pressure in the traditional classroom to perform, to produce language output, is unnatural, in the sense that it is the antithesis of first language learning, where production is preceded, for many months, by the silent processing of input ('the silent period'). Furthermore, conventional learning methods tend to promote left-brain activity, the left hemisphere being the centre for more abstract language processing (see 'Whole brain' processing, Chapter 2). If right-brain processes were stimulated (the right brain hemisphere being the locus of motor activity) instead of, or as well as, the left brain, as naturally occurs in L1 acquisition, L2 learning might be enhanced. Involvement of the 'whole brain' can therefore be seen as a realistic and authentic interaction with input, as reaction to language input is not always limited to the cognitive. These ideas are not alien to more mainstream ideas on language acquisition as will be demonstrated in Chapter 2.

The approach 'The Silent Way' incorporated two other trends in learning popularised in the 1960s and 1970s, problem-solving and discovery learning. The method encouraged learners to take a problem-solving approach to deciphering language structures, a process of discovery and creativity rather than mere repetition of language. In that this entails a process of personal involvement with the language, it might be expected to promote language acquisition (see 'Affect' in Chapter 2).

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), developed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in the mid 1970s (see Bandler and Grinder 1975), is an approach for expanding self-awareness, fulfilment and communication (relational) capacity in all spheres of life (including language learning). As its name suggests, Neuro-Linguistic Programming draws on the areas of neurology, linguistics, and, lastly, anthropology [in the sense that it looks to observable patterns ('programs') of behaviour]. NLP is based on the process of modelling; observing both internal and external models of 'excellence' and applying or emulating them. Applied to learning, NLP involves enhancing learners' awareness of themselves and of others in order to fully exploit their learning potential. This awareness applies particularly to sense perception—visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory and gustatory. By incorporating multi-

sensory awareness into the learning process, and alerting learners to their own personal preferences in their sensory experience of the world, the tenets of NLP maintain that learners can be empowered both as learners and in their lives in general. In resource books such as Revell and Norman (1999), advocates of NLP offer activities for language learners which incorporate the raising of sensory awareness with language learning. NLP may therefore be seen very much as part of the contemporary trend in language learning (and other fields) to implicate affect and self-awareness in learning, a trend that can be seen in Suggestopedia (see above), in the integration of culture and language learning (see Chapter 3), and in the move towards more independent modes of learning (see below).

The latest broad movement in language pedagogy, *learner autonomy* or *self-directed learning*, is also included here under the theme of ‘humanistic approaches’ because of its emphasis on, and respect for, the individualism of the learner. Over the past thirty-odd years there has been a gradual shift of preoccupation in the field from *teaching* to *learning* and thence to *the learner*. This shift can be traced through changes in the terminology we use to characterise our profession. We started with language *teaching* (as, for example, in the name Communicative Language Teaching), moved on, in the late 1980s, to ‘language teaching and learning’ and culminated in the 1990s with ‘language learning’. These changes reflect the recognition that it is the learner who stands at the centre of—and ultimately controls—the learning process. No amount of pedagogical intervention or skill can induce learning in a student with flawed learning strategies or lack of motivation (see Chapter 2 Section 2.3). This factor of control, and the responsibility this brings with it, is central to learner autonomy: ‘The main characteristic of autonomy [...] is that students take some significant responsibility for their own learning over and above responding to instruction’ (Boud 1981: 23).

Learner autonomy is not *an approach* to learning but rather *a condition* involving ‘the internal psychological capacity to self-direct one’s own learning’ (Benson 1997: 25) through detachment, critical reflection, decision-making and independent action (Little 1991: 4). Attaining this capacity is a developmental process, an ‘internal transformation within the individual’ (Benson 1997: 19), involving, most fundamentally, attaining an awareness and acceptance of responsibility for one’s own learning (see also below). This capacity cannot really be learned or taught, but merely *fostered* through particular pedagogical practices which create the appropriate conditions (Benson 2001: 110). What

these conditions are, and how feasible it is to provide them, depends on a variety of factors ranging from personal preferences to cultural contexts and practical constraints. The most indispensable in the context of language learning, is access to abundant language input (I will suggest below that this should be authentic texts: see also Chapter 2 Section 2.7 which deals with autonomous learning and language acquisition) plus a pedagogical environment that encourages interaction. Beyond this, a range of practices and frameworks are suggested by the research and practice in the field. These tend to fall into two broad strands: provision of self-access structures and learner-directed curricula. Self-access is probably the best-known approach to encouraging autonomy and refers to a learning environment which includes access to resources, materials and information technology (the self-access *centre*) in which learners and teachers co-operate to promote learning and autonomy. The success of self-access depends on learners being supported and trained in using the resources effectively (and on avoiding the trap of being erroneously identified with *isolation*, Esch 1997: 168). For this reason, the other broad strand of approaches to autonomy, in which learners go through awareness-raising processes which enable them to make informed input into their learning procedures and curriculum, is often a necessary element of the use of self-access.

The level at which awareness-raising needs to begin varies among individuals and cultural contexts (see also Nunan 1997: 194-201 for the concept of levels of implementing autonomy). Learners may initially need to be prompted to think about their own and their teacher's role in their learning, and their degree of dependency on the teacher/curriculum. From this, they can be encouraged to examine pedagogical goals (of the teacher/curriculum) and to think about, and compare these, with their personal ones. Since, as Little points out, 'in the development of learner autonomy, learning goes hand in hand with learning how to learn' (1997: 230), an essential step towards autonomy is for learners to think about how they learn, by analysing their preferred learning styles (see Chapter 2 Section 2.5). This type of awareness can help learners to manage their learning more effectively and even to circumvent an imposed learning style (such as one constrained by the more teacher-centred pedagogies of some cultural contexts). It can also help learners identify the types of learning tasks and ways of going about these that best suits them. At this level, learners are ready to make informed input into the curriculum as regards content (i.e. drawing on their personal goals) and procedures (drawing on their

insight into their preferred learning styles and modes of studying). This might well involve the transition to a self-access set-up as individual differences in learning needs and strategies emerge. Not to be neglected are the most telling procedures: monitoring and evaluating progress in both autonomous modes of learning and in language acquisition.

It is important, finally, not to interpret learner-direction of curriculum and content as a form of ceding to the demands of the learner. The principles of autonomous learning are not meant to imply that the learner knows what is best, ‘at the beginning of the learning process, learners do *not* know what is best’ (Nunan 1997: 194), but that learners have within them the potential to *discover* what is best for them.

It is clear from even this brief description, that in autonomous learning environments, the role of the teacher shifts dramatically. The teacher is no longer the traditional purveyor of information, but rather, a counsellor, facilitator and resource (Benson 2001: 171; Little 1991: 44-45). These roles can demand broader knowledge, expertise and initiative than does the expository model of teaching, and contradictory though it may seem, require even greater confidence than does taking ‘centre-stage’ in the classroom. Confidence, first of all in the autonomous approach that s/he, the teacher, has adopted; secondly, the confidence, to ‘stop talking’ (countering the belief, to be inferred from some teacher practices, that if s/he is not talking, the learners cannot be learning; see Little 1991: 45); and thirdly, confidence in the learners—that they already know a great deal and possess the ability to exploit this knowledge productively (Wright 1987: 62).

The radical change in the power structure of pedagogy involved in autonomous learning is often seen as a European cultural construct (e.g. Benson 2001: 58) and inappropriate to certain other cultures: ‘To encourage learner autonomy universally, without first becoming acutely aware of the social, cultural and political contexts in which one is working, may lead at best to inappropriate pedagogies and at worst, to cultural impositions’ (Pennycook 1997: 44) (the issue of cultural differences in pedagogy is discussed further in Chapter 3). On the other hand, it can be argued that the potential for autonomy is a human universal (e.g. Little 1999: 15) and that, in common with the other humanistic approaches described in this section, the ethos of learner autonomy simply acknowledges the undeniable individuality of the learning process—that people learn things at different rates, in different orders, using different strategies and with different agendas.

In the language learning context, autonomy and authenticity are essentially symbiotic. The ‘ideal’, effective autonomous learner will utilise a wide variety of authentic sources in his/her learning and it is in an autonomous learning environment that such texts can best be explored. Case studies on learner-experiences in self-instruction, for example, have found that particularly at higher proficiency levels, learners benefit from interacting with authentic texts in autonomous modes (Fernández-Toro and Jones 1996: 200). Conversely, authenticity fosters autonomy:

Activities based around authentic texts [...] can play a key role in enhancing positive attitudes to learning, in promoting the development of a wide range of skills, and in enabling students to work independently of the teacher. In other words, they can play a key role in the promotion of learner autonomy. (McGarry 1995: 3)

Exposure to, and familiarity with authentic texts also help instil confidence in the face of the TL (Little 1997: 231), an important factor in autonomous language learning, as well as spurring learners towards authentic sources. Authentic sources, in turn, tend to stimulate learners to further independent discovery and learning⁵. In truly autonomous learning, the authentic source text itself may be left to direct the learner: ‘These are uncharted waters; but a dip is all it takes to generate new energy for exploration’ (Guillot 1996: 152).

Learner autonomy may be seen as a logical progression of the Communicative environment in which it developed, particularly in the context of the burgeoning use of information and communications technology (ICT) in education (as elsewhere). Today, learner autonomy means taking advantage of the technological resources now widely available, and extends the notion of communicativeness to encompass computer-mediated communication (see Chapter 11). On the sociological side, autonomy means a more egalitarian relationship (‘communication’) between the learner and the information provider.

1.1.4 Conclusion

Sifting through the history of language teaching for precedents for authenticity has clearly illustrated Kelly’s observation of the cyclical movement of language pedagogy (Kelly 1969). Over a thousand years ago, England’s King Alfred initiated educational use of authentic texts. In the

16th century, Roger Ascham and Michel de Montaigne described authentic approaches to the learning of Latin. Henry Sweet made arguments in favour of authentic texts that predate those of today's advocates by a hundred years. The concept of purposeful, authentic interaction is integral to the Communicative approach conceived in the 1970s; and authentic texts may be said to be central to autonomous learning practices which are subtly displacing CLT. The aim of this section has been to give historical weight and perspective to the concept of authenticity in language learning. The following section examines the modern-day interpretations of the concept against this background.

1.2 Towards a Definition of Authenticity

1.2.1 Introduction

'Authenticity [...] is a term which creates confusion because of a basic ambiguity' (Widdowson 1983: 30). At the time this was written, it was probably not intended as the understatement that it appears twenty years on. Recurring periodically throughout the history of language teaching as the previous section has illustrated, the modern-day preoccupation with authenticity in language learning is born of prevailing currents from three areas. The first is from SLA research, the second is from language pedagogy itself—Communicative approaches to language learning, and the third is sociological—the growing influence of information and communications technologies (ICT) on our work and learning practices.

The implications of the first influence, SLA research, are covered in detail in Chapter 2. Very briefly, there is substantial research evidence to support the use in language learning of the linguistically rich, culturally faithful and potentially emotive input supplied by authentic texts. What is more, there is little evidence of a fixed acquisition order, which is the rationale for the use of phased language instruction and which is often used to repudiate the use of authentic texts for language learning.

The notion of authenticity is, secondly, embedded in prevailing language pedagogies—communicative and autonomous modes of learning, as has been shown in the previous section. The emphasis in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) on 'real' language use begs the question of what is real, *authentic*, while among the choices students face in more independent language learning, are the types of texts they work with and the resources