Forty years of language teaching

It was at a meeting of the Board of Language Teaching *in 2005 that discussion began on how we might suitably commemorate our 40th year of publication. The late Chris Brumfit made the suggestion that it would be interesting to gather in nostalgia from a number of academics who had started their careers in one of the preceding four decades and ask them to comment on what appeared to them were the major new trends that represented best hopes for the future at that time. As the project grew, we extended the brief to include those who expressed a particular yearning to describe another decade although it did not see the launch of their careers as such. Sadly, Chris is no longer with us to see the fruits of his original idea, but the editors – and those who have here responded to his call – would like to dedicate these reflections to the memory of a man whose commitment to our field spanned all four decades, and more.*

The nineteen-sixties

remembered by **H. Douglas Brown**
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A historical glance back at world events in the 1960s quickly reveals a decade of tumult, revolution, and accomplishment. In 1960 alone we saw the establishment of 16 new African nations (followed by others), then in the same decade the founding of OPEC and the PLO, the assassinations of Kennedy and King, the six-day Arab-Israeli war, the Cuban missile crisis, and of course the onset of the Vietnam war. On more positive notes, the Beatles recorded their first album, Woodstock brought together pot-smoking, music-loving, counter-culture throngs, the Soviet Union put the first human into space, and Christian Barnard performed the first successful heart transplant. A sizzling decade indeed!

Was the language teaching profession witnessing equally astounding events and changes? Oddly enough, the 1960s were relatively quiet for pedagogically-inclined APPLIED linguists, in spite of the big splash that Noam Chomsky and his MIT colleagues made on the theoretical front (Chomsky 1957, 1965). The sudden popularity of the generative-transformational school of linguistics put language teachers in a quandary of hope and mystery: how was one to APPLY this revolutionary view of language? Should language courses push those beloved tree diagrams onto students? The upshot of a period of questioning was an ultimate resolution in the form of a disclaimer: John Lamendella (1969), Robert Krohn (1970), and Bernard Spolsky (1970) all agreed that transformational grammar was 'irrelevant' (Lamendella 1969) or, at best, one could derive 'implications' for language teaching but probably not 'applications' (Spolsky 1970).

Meanwhile, language teaching in the 1960s seemed to putter along unceremoniously with various amalgams of structural approaches (Fries 1952) and audiolingual methodology (Pitman 1963; Brooks 1964) that stressed oral practice through pattern drills and a good deal of behaviourally-inspired conditioning (Skinner 1957, 1968). But this orthodoxy of the time should be viewed against the backdrop of some history.

A glance through the previous five decades' language teaching shows that as disciplinary schools of thought – namely psychology, linguistics, and education – waxed and waned, so went language-teaching trends. We see, for example, the rise of 'scientific' oral approaches at the beginning of the 20th century (Palmer 1921, 1923) only to be abandoned in favour of a return to reading and grammar-translation in the 1920s and 1930s. But with the revival of behavioural and structural schools of thought in psychology and linguistics, respectively, the decades of the 1940s and 1950s brought another change. Albert Marckwardt (1972: 5) saw these 'changing winds and shifting sands' as a cyclical pattern in which a new method emerged about every quarter of a century.

A prime example of this cyclical nature of methods is found in the Audiolingual Method (ALM) of the mid-twentieth century, which borrowed tenets from its predecessor the Direct Method by almost half a century while breaking away entirely from the Grammar Translation Method. The ALM, with its focus on oral pattern drilling, was firmly grounded in linguistic and psychological theory. The 'scientific descriptive analysis' (Fries 1952) of languages claimed by structural linguistics and the conditioning and habit-formation models espoused by behavioural psychologists meshed perfectly with the mimicry drills and pattern practices of audiolingual methodology.

The widely embraced ALM was destined to grow into disfavour in the 1960s. Challenges came from several fronts. Generative linguistics showed that language could not be neatly dissected into the linear, discrete units claimed by structuralists. The 'new' school of cognitive psychology amassed evidence that behaviour – especially human behaviour – could not be drummed into an individual by rote repetition (Ausubel 1963, 1964). And then the *coup de grace* was performed by Wilga Rivers's (1964) eloquent demonstration of the failure of ALM to teach long-term communicative proficiency.

As teachers and materials developers saw that incessant parroting of potentially rote material was

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not creating communicatively proficient learners, a new mousetrap begged to be invented. What then vied for methodological recognition was a short lived, quite un-sixties-like set of hypotheses that advocated more attention to thinking, to cognition, and to rule learning, in the form of a rather bizarre approach called Cognitive Code Learning. With quasi-generative ideas dancing through their heads, and perhaps a lingering if not secret fondness of the Grammar-Translation Method, the proponents (Carroll 1966; Jakobovits 1970; Lugton 1971) argued for more deductive rule learning in language classes, along with some of the drilling typical of ALM, but with the addition of allowing more creativity and meaningful learning in classroom routines.

Unfortunately, the innovation was short-lived, for as surely as rote drilling bored students, overt cognitive attention to the rules, paradigms, intricacies, and exceptions of a language overtaxed the mental reserves of language students. With all the tumult and protest that daily lives were experiencing in the 1960s, the language teaching profession needed some spice and verve. The stage was set for all that and more as innovative minds moving from the sizzling sixties into the spirited seventies were up to the challenge.

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Like many other US students in 1960, I learned Spanish in an audiolingual classroom and language lab. When I taught high school Spanish in 1967, I did so using the audiolingual method, armed with Lado's textbook and audio tapes. But in 1968, I traveled to Scotland to do graduate work in the Department of Applied Linguistics at Edinburgh University. I had no clue that I was going to a place where a revolution was brewing – that Edinburgh's Department of Applied Linguistics was planting seeds that would help bring the dominance of audiolingualism in US language teaching to a close.

Throughout the Sixties, in the US audiolingualism was the dominant method of language teaching, justified as such because it was based firmly upon 'modern scientific' – that is structural – linguistics (see Howatt 1984; Richards & Rodgers 2001). Lado (1957) made the principles of this approach very clear: all language learning difficulties were due to interference between differing structures of the native language and the foreign language; a careful contrastive analysis of the structures of the two linguistic systems could identify those points of structural difference; those structural points would be drilled and repeated in the language lab, and thereby all learning difficulty would be overcome. The principles were based in logic, not empirical data, but I did not question them when I headed off to Edinburgh.

Graduate students in applied linguistics at Edinburgh in 1968 were exposed to a number of things that would eventually make audiolingualism untenable as a teaching approach. We learned that Chomsky (1965) had raised serious questions about the structuralist linguistic theory on which audiolingualism was based: behaviorist notions of habit learning could not explain the creativity inherent in language learning. The chair of my new department at Edinburgh, Pit Corder, had just published a paper (Corder 1967) that declared that adults with sufficient motivation could acquire second languages simply through exposure to the data, by reactivating the same innate language acquisition ability described by Chomsky. Second language learners' errors were not problematic, but rather were ephemeral, evidence of the growth of their learner language as a system in its own right. This view of learner language as inherently creative and systematic, produced what Corder called 'the learner's built-in syllabus', helped overturn the intellectual foundations of audiolingualism. Corder's work was to have a major impact in the next decade on second language acquisition research, including that

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of Dulay & Burt (1973), whose morpheme studies would support the new Monitor Model. In 1968, Larry Selinker was a young Fulbright scholar at Edinburgh, having begun to question the assumptions of his advisor, Robert Lado; four years later he published the influential paper on learner language ('interlanguage') that stimulated the first research on second-language acquisition (Selinker 1972).

As graduate students at Edinburgh, we also studied Firth and Halliday, who (unlike American theoretical linguists) stressed the inseparability of language structure and language function, and particularly focused on language varieties used in social context (Halliday, McIntosh & Strevens 1964). 1968 was the year Henry Widdowson, as a graduate student at Edinburgh, published the first of a series of seminal papers that would lay the foundations of the communicative approach to language teaching, building on the earlier work of Firth and Halliday. Widdowson (1968) argued that English foreign language teaching should take into account the reason why people around the world wanted to learn English: in order to use it in their work as scientists or professionals. In that paper, Widdowson made an articulate and persuasive case for teaching an English register appropriate for scientific content rather than 'general English' – it was one of the first papers on English for specific purposes (ESP). In subsequent papers in the mainstream of applied linguistics, Widdowson would continue to build a philosophical framework for communicative language teaching.

I was lucky to find myself in the Department of Applied Linguistics at Edinburgh University in 1968, at a time and place when views about language learning and teaching were being questioned. In addition to those mentioned above, our faculty that year included Alan Davies, John Lyons, Ruth Clark, Patrick Allen, Tony Howatt and others who contributed to the change that was underway – change that would in the next decade produce interlanguage study, second language acquisition research, communicative language teaching, and English for specific purposes. These and other innovations would help to end the audiolingual era in the USA.

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remembered by **Michael Swan**
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From the mid-1960s to the late 1970s I was an untrained EFL teacher, working first in Oxford and then in Paris. What follows is, therefore, necessarily more of an 'underview' than an overview – the period as seen by someone who, in between preparation, teaching and marking, was trying to educate himself professionally and to keep track of the changing winds of theoretical fashion.

At first everything was very simple. Our 'theory' was a vague post-direct-method orientation (we were experts at explanation without translation: any EFL teacher could mime 'mortgage repayment' or 'epistemology' at the drop of a hat). Beginners' textbooks recounted the exciting experiences of two young foreigners visiting London. At higher levels we did grammar, pronunciation, dictation and conversation, taught 'situational' language, 'went through' texts and asked 'comprehension' questions. We set and corrected homework. It was well known that this was how you taught English. Our students got better, which proved that it worked – although they did go on making lots of mistakes. The full-timers, who spent their days in class with other foreigners, didn't learn as fast as the part-timers, who worked with English people. Perhaps this should have told us something.

Structuralism and audiolingualism reached us belatedly and complicated matters. It appeared that language was a set of habits; a second language was another set of habits; mistakes came from old habits interfering with new ones; the solution was 'overlearning' through repeated structure drills. This was best done in one of the new language 'laboratories' (a wonderful term that made us all feel like scientists). The resulting lessons combined ineffectiveness and boredom, qualities that today's teaching generally manages to keep separate.

I read what I could find on language and methodology. *ELT Journal* and *Language Learning* were helpful, as were books by Palmer (1925), Kruisinga (1932), Weinreich (1953), Hornby (1954), Lado (1957), Billows (1961), Gimson (1962) and Quirk (1968). Some writers, like Halliday, MacIntosh & Strevens (1964), were difficult, but I supposed that if couldn't understand a professional book it must be my fault. The Association of Recognised English Language Schools ran useful weekend teachers' courses. Membership of ATEFL (later IATEFL) and BAAL, both founded in 1967, also broadened my horizons. As I worked out a personal synthesis of traditional approaches and recent developments, I came to feel that I knew pretty well

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how to teach languages. Things were no longer simple, but they were still manageable.

Then everything suddenly got much more complicated, as researchers started coming up with new theoretical and methodological bases for language teaching. It was an exhilarating time: the air was full of discovery. In Paris, where I was now working, the British Council's inspirational English Language Officer, Alan Maley, brought over all the big names. For 50 francs you could attend, for example, a weekend workshop on discourse analysis by Coulthard and Brazil, with free coffee thrown in. At last I got my professional training.

Attitudes to the new ideas were often more enthusiastic than critical. Needs analysis generated great excitement. You established what your learner needed to do with English, punched in the code for the relevant language functions, pressed a button, and the machine cranked out the appropriate language specifications. Or would do – after a little more research. Taxonomies mushroomed: the 'skill' of reading was now 19 subskills (Munby 1978), all of which you were supposed to teach on the assumption that learning a new language took one back to cognitive zero. Everybody talked about language USE, citing Hymes (1971: 278): 'There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless'. For many, newer was axiomatically better. People promoted, with enormous conviction, novel methodologies which they would not have tolerated themselves for five minutes from teachers of driving, skiing or the trumpet.

Books for teachers proliferated; in my memory, they have become one impenetrable tome called 'The communicative teaching of language as communication in the communicative classroom'. Our job, we discovered, was no longer to teach English, but to train learners in the interactive interpretive and expressive skills and strategies required for negotiating meaning and assigning contextually-determined values in real time to elements of the linguistic code, while attending not only to the detailed surface features of discourse but also to the pragmatic communicative semiotic macro-context. I now decided that if I couldn't understand a professional book, perhaps it wasn't my fault after all.

Paris is never a hostile environment to a prophet with a message, and fringe religions such as Silent Way, Suggestopaedia and Counselling Learning flourished, especially in the private sector. Some merged imperceptibly into DIY New Age psychotherapy, so that you could simultaneously learn a language, remodel your personality and find true happiness.

It was a bewildering time for teachers. Some embraced one faith and stuck to it. Many adopted a confused eclecticism, feeling that if you threw enough kinds of mud, some would stick. Others (including many state school teachers) went on doing what they were doing before, but called it 'communicative' if anybody was listening.

In retrospect, I have a sense of an opportunity missed. Our handling of the new insights and research findings was often exaggerated and naive; none the less, we had made enormous progress. Our knowledge of both formal and functional aspects of language, our growing understanding of acquisitional processes, and our vastly improved methodology and materials, provided all the necessary ingredients for a balanced and effective model of instructed second-language learning. In practice, however, we probably threw away on the swings most of what we had gained on the roundabouts. The new interest in learner-centred, naturalistic, activity-based learning was allowed to fill the horizon, so that teaching language was all too easily replaced by doing things with it. All these years later, I believe we are still paying the price.

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The nineteen-seventies

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Inevitably, one's perspective on any decade in language teaching is coloured by one's own personal experiences of that decade. I am inclined, then, to begin my account of the 1970s autobiographically.

Like many British applied linguists, I began my career in the 1960s as a teacher of English, first in Spain, where I taught in a small, newly-opened Berlitz School (I did not last long!) and then in Zambia, where I taught English in a spanking new 'bush' secondary school. In Spain I learned to teach a 'method'; in Zambia I learned to be eclectic, combining what Brumfit (also an old Africa hand) was to later refer to as the methodologies of ACCURACY and FLUENCY (Brumfit 1979). Accuracy was catered for by means of 'situational grammar exercises'; fluency was variously catered for, but especially by means of extensive reading. At the beginning of the 1970s I completed a Masters Degree in 'Linguistics and Language Teaching', where I learned a lot about linguistics (Chomsky and Vygotsky

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both figured strongly) but not much about language teaching. On completion, I returned to Zambia, this time as a teacher educator in what was at that time the sole secondary teacher training college in the country. The courses I taught were strongly influenced by my experiences as a teacher and by the contemporary methodology books (in particular, Bright & McGregor 1970). In contrast, applied linguistics held little sway over me at that time. There was one exception – the work that was beginning to appear on error analysis (e.g. Richards 1974) which, for the first time, made me think seriously not just about how teachers should teach a second language but how learners actually learn it. In 1977 I returned to the UK to complete a Masters in Education. This brought me in contact with Gordon Well's work on child language acquisition, which provided the basis for my subsequent doctoral research with L2 learners. This got underway before the end of the 1970s. Thus, the decade was a personal odyssey – from teacher to teacher educator and also from teacher educator to researcher.

What then are the issues that (for me) shaped the 1970s? At the forefront is undoubtedly the establishment of SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SLA) as a significant field of enquiry within applied linguistics. SLA had emerged in the 1960s (there had been very few previous empirical studies of L2 acquisition) but it came of age in the 1970s. The key construct was that of INTERLANGUAGE (Selinker 1972) – the idea that learners constructed their own idiosyncractic L2 systems, which were reflected in the errors they made, the order in which they mastered specific grammatical features, and the sequence of stages involved in the gradual acquisition of specific structures. This idea was supported by case studies of children and adults learning an L2 (see, for example, Hatch 1978), which demonstrated the gradual and dynamic nature of learning. It led to the rejection of the behaviourist view of language learning, according to which learning involved the accumulation of linguistic 'habits', in favour of a mentalist view that emphasized the learner's contribution. Interlanguage theory had a profound effect on language teaching as it challenged the view that teachers could direct what learners learned and opened the door to a radically different theory of language teaching that was taking shape under the influence of both SLA and new conceptions of language that emphasized USE over USAGE (Widdowson 1978). This new theory found its most radical expression in Prabhu's Bangalore Project (Prabhu 1981), which was underway before the end of the 1970s.

These days nobody talks about interlanguage theory. This is because the original theory was essentially descriptive rather than explanatory in nature. That is, it served as a label for the findings of the empirical studies demonstrating a relatively universal ORDER and SEQUENCE of acquisition but it rather underspecified the internal mechanisms responsible for these. Over time, the theory has given way to a number of different and competing accounts that attempt to explain the how and why of L2 acquisition. Four such theories (or rather paradigms) dominate SLA today. The interactionist paradigm attempts to explain the roles played by input and interaction (Long 1996). The connectionist paradigm proposes that L2 knowledge is represented not as rules but rather as an elaborate, highly interconnected network of nodes representing 'sequences' of various shapes and kinds (Ellis 1996). The nativist paradigm claims that L2 knowledge derives from a 'universal grammar' consisting of biologically endowed linguistic principles and that the learner's task is simply to discover how these principles work out in a particular L2 (White 2003). Finally, the sociocultural paradigm claims that acquisition is not something that originates inside a learner's head but rather in the scaffolded interactions in which a learner participates (Lantolf 2000). Clearly, SLA has moved a long way from the original notion of interlanguage. Nevertheless, the term has stuck. All current paradigms continue to make use of 'interlanguage' to refer to the L2 mental representations that learners construct, even though how they conceive of these representations differs quite widely.

The 1970s was a period of adolescence in SLA – a coming of age. Subsequent decades have seen the field expand enormously. It has complexified and, as is the wont when positions harden with age, it has balkanized. Increasingly, too, it has severed its ties with language teaching, seeking the academic esteem of a pure rather than an applied field of study. Whereas many of the early SLA researchers (myself included) began their careers as language teachers, younger SLA researchers are as likely to be linguists, psychologists or sociologists, with no interest in pedagogy. As a result, SLA seems to me to be having less an impact on teaching than it did in the interlanguage years.

Nevertheless, the SLA of the 1970s instigated the debate that is ongoing today. This debate pits a view of teaching that emphasizes DIRECT INTERVENTION in the process of language learning by itemizing bits of language for presentation and practice against a view of teaching that emphasizes INDIRECT INTERVENTION through the provision of tasks that facilitate learning. However, whereas SLA in the 1970s very clearly lent support to indirect intervention, SLA today is more ambivalent, reflecting the diversity of theories it encompasses. While some SLA researchers continue to promote indirect intervention, others present a case for direct intervention. And some, of course, (myself being one) argue for both. Perhaps this is why the language teaching profession is less drawn to their pronouncements than once it was.

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remembered by **Luke Prodromou**
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HENRY: O fair Katherine! If you will love me soundly with your French heart
I will be glad to hear you confess it brokenly with your English tongue . . . I am glad thou canst speak no better English.
(*Henry V*, *Act V* sc.ii, 103ff.)

My career in ELT began in 1973 with Shakespeare ringing in my ears. In the first interview for an EFL job I ever attended – in a huge chain of private language institutes in Athens – the director asked me a question which, for him, must have been the acid-test of a competent teacher of EFL: 'How many parts does the verb *to be* have?' I was puzzled by this question as, coming from an 'Eng lit' background, I had no idea that verbs had parts at all. I only knew that *Henry VI* had three parts and *Henry IV* two parts. The only parts of the verb *to be* I could think of were the infinitive form, positive and negative: 'To be or not to be'. In any event, I overcame this grammatical obstacle to my incipient TEFL career and set out to learn and teach, if not the PARTS of the verb *to be*, at least the structural patterns of that Hamletesque verb and many others.

I have never quite relinquished the idea that real language is the language of literature as embodied in the works of Shakespeare and his heirs: Keats, Wordsworth, T. S. Eliot and the rest. It was a novel experience in my first job as a 'language' teacher to find varieties of language so bare and un-poetic: 'This is Mr Brown; this is Mrs Brown. This is Mr Brown's book; the book is on the table.' My introduction to ELT was therefore a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous but I soldiered on, trying to help students pass a seemingly endless stream of English language examinations, run by an organisation known as UCLES.

The method for teaching this odd form of the language was simple and direct. We used textbooks called *Structural words and sentence patterns*, *The Oxford progressive English course* and, later, *Practice and progress* and *Access to English* by authors whose names would, in time, become as familiar to our ears as household words: Hornby and Gatenby, Coles and Lord, Bruton and Alexander. I had read nothing about teaching, let alone English language teaching and thus found the strong guidelines in the teachers' manuals a great help: a teaching method based largely on repetition of form was easy to learn, even if it was intellectually unchallenging after *Hamlet*. At the time, I assumed that teaching 'English as a foreign language' was to be a temporary stop-gap between my BA and a career which I vaguely imagined would involve reading Shakespeare and being paid for it. Thirty-four years on, we have moved on from the drills of those early textbooks, with their minimalist line drawings and approach to language to, as Polonius, with his love of hyphenated compounds might have put it, the full-colour functional-notional, communicative-humanistic, lexico-grammatical, task-based and even corpus-informed textbooks of today. The threshold, for me, really came before attending a Postgraduate TEFL Diploma at Leeds University and after: it was the difference between the predominance of audio-lingual-structural approaches and – broadly speaking – communicative approaches. In those early pioneering days at Leeds, our heads were filled with functional-notional syllabuses, ESP and 'teaching language as communication'.

From this hotbed of radical ideas for the teaching of English in authentic, native-like ways, we, postgraduate 'EFLers', set out in different directions, in Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America, to take up our duties in organisations such as the British Council and International House or in 'overseas' Universities. It was these disparate destinations that would eventually raise questions in my mind regarding the status of English as an International Language. We, a small band of teachers, went forth and multiplied: the profession grew and the degree of professionalism grew; training courses and MAs in TEFL and Applied Linguistics proliferated. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, we, 'English language experts', all emanating from the UK, saw nothing problematic in native-centric models: there was only one standard form of English and that was indeed – ultimately – the language of Shakespeare. But what we were not fully aware of at the time, in our enthusiasm to teach 'authentic English' as defined by native-speaker norms, was that English itself was also going forth and multiplying. The concept of 'English LANGUAGES' and questions of ownership did not cloud our judgement, as we taught, trained, and wrote materials, all within the framework of an unexplored and unquestioned 'Global English'.

Thirty-four years on, the certainties of the 1970s have gone: the crusading confidence in a single language, a single 'correct' approach, a single native-speaker, the conveyor of authenticity. Since those unitary days, the concept of the native-speaker and the role of English as a Lingua Franca have changed radically; though this may mean teaching varieties of English which are even further away from Shakespeare than Hornby's native-speaker-driven *Structural words and sentence patterns* (1959), it is a development that Shakespeare, with his evident love of richness and diversity in language, may have approved.

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For reasons best known to himself, David Stern, in describing the characteristics of the seventies, omits the educational technology movement. He places its beginnings in 'the post-war decades' (Stern 1983: 102). Not wrong, certainly, and Howatt (1984: 219) concurs that around 1963 'the stage was set for a major attack on the equipment budgets of countless unsuspecting education authorities'. This victimisation process may have started in the post-war years, but it was in full swing when I entered university teaching in 1970. The seventies can even be described as the heyday of educational technology. There were high hopes among us Young Turks for the language lab and its attack on traditional classroom practices. The SUBVERSIVE side of the lab had as its target to undermine the prevalent bookish character of foreign language learning and teaching. The schoolmaster's voice was no longer the only authority on what foreign languages sounded like. But there was also a COMPENSATORY side to it. The lab was expected to heal the cracks that became visible in the structure of a society on the move to new horizons. As one of the classical props of classroom teaching, the home, was slowly breaking away, Skinner-inspired pattern drills with their chunks of spoken language would compensate for the loss, we hoped. I was working in the Linguistics Department of Kiel University at that time, serving as Director of the department's language laboratories and doing research on (foreign-language) dyslexia, because, if something went wrong somewhere in language development, I reasoned, that could tell us something about what normally happens when children learn first and second languages. The compensatory function of teaching aids would then be brought to bear on the defective aspects of development. Unfortunately, the lab was discredited in the wake of Chomsky's attack on behaviourism. As a language learning theory, behaviourism had not much to offer. But as a method of acquiring skills, its derivative – programmed instruction – had a long tradition behind and a future before it, some of us thought. Given the fact that not much was known at that time about what went on in the student black box (with Chomsky's LAD inside), technology-enhanced conditioning seemed to be a useful alternative to nothing.

A bibliometric search of the ERIC data base for the years from 1966 to 1981 reveals that 'the most frequently used media' (Stern 1983: 444) are on the way up until 1975, the climb being largely due to the language laboratory. In 1975, educational technology takes a big fall. It continues to lose ground ever after until an all-time low is reached in 1981.

To see what was put in its place and to test my memory, I conducted a search of the AUTHOR indices for the journal *Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts* between 1968 and 1985. The most often quoted scholars in the British data base can hardly be described as ed-tech aficionados. They have made a name for themselves as immersion researchers, methodologists, applied linguists, second language acquisition researchers or test specialists (see Jung 2001).

Looking at the SUBJECT indices of *Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts* and the annual averages of the most often used descriptor terms between 1970 and 1981, we find that, here too, the ed-tech movement reaches a peak in the early to mid-seventies (Language Laboratories 1970: 25 entries – 20 entries in 1972; Drills 1973: 21 entries; Audiovisual Aids 1973: 15 entries; Teaching Aids 1973: 8 entries; Television 1976: 6 entries; Films 1973: 5 entries; Radio 1972: 4 entries). In this same period, its rivals average about the same number of entries (Psychology of Learning 1973: 25 entries; Psycholinguistics: 20 entries; Children, Language Development of 1974: 20 entries). The two movements, which are the hallmark of the seventies, are on a par in the early years of this decade. It is only after 1975 that ed-tech starts to lose ground. The seventies, as I remember them, were a decade of conflict and ferment.

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Some decades seem longer than others, and some to have had more of a significant impact. But it all depends on your age, and on where you were and what you were doing. Looking back, for pop music it was the 1960s, but for ELT it was the 1970s. The 1970s was the decade of liberation, it was the decade when just about everything was put up for grabs. Many of the existing fundamentals in ELT were being questioned profoundly, and both social and professional conformity and convention were altering. But above all, it was the decade of the Communicative Approach.

Language learning was no longer seen as purely learning chains of habits, acquired from concentrated repetitive practice routines, but rather as a creative process. Furthermore, language learning was for language use, but also the result of it. The individual was not seen to be purely at the mercy of the surrounding environment, but a player who took initiative and experimented with the language as part of acquisition. Errors were no longer necessarily reflections of failure, but were evidence of creative construction and the evolving interlanguage, and they could be learned from. Students evolved idiosyncratic dialects or systems, which were not completely native-like, and which were to be recognized as such.

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But it was not only the processes in learning that were being questioned, but also the goals of foreign language learning. The purpose of learning foreign or second languages was no longer to either translate or read literary texts, or study and compare languages. The object was communication, and the ability to communicate in the target language. At the time, there was a big shift from a total concern for accuracy or correctness to recognizing appropriacy. Social norms were as important as purely linguistic norms, and the context of situation became a critical variable in language use. Not only was the context of situation crucial for determining appropriate speech behaviours, but without it, the intention, or illocutionary force, of an utterance could not be fully interpreted. What was not said, but implied, became as important as what was said, because the common background knowledge of the speakers was central.

In terms of syllabus, of course, the 1970s was the decade of the notions and functions. So-called form-based structural inventories were supplanted by meaning based ones, with a combination of general notions (general propositional meanings and the productive counterpart of structures), specific notions (lexical items), and functions (illocutionary meanings or intentions). The recognition of students as consumers and their communicative needs became another axiom of the 1970s. It was assumed that some of the more useful linguistic features would be selected and sequenced before others. In addition to the language syllabus, there was a renewed interest in the skills, but for contextualized communication. The distinctions between the mediums (oral–written) and the modes (receptive–productive), and the integration of the skills in language courses became a central issue. Inventories of language items were supplemented with inventories of sub-skills.

In terms of methodology, the structurally-based situational approach ceded ground on two fronts. The static situation was replaced by more dynamic, interactive, and varied contexts, since the same functions (and notions, of course) could potentially occur across various situational contexts. In addition, improvisation activities became more prevalent, as the rigid habit formation routines were relaxed or replaced. Form-based mechanical drills took the back seat to more meaningful practice activities, especially role-plays. The notorious PPP had arrived, and Present–Practice–Produce sequences became the basis of language-focused activity.

However, apart from notional–functional syllabuses and PPP, the other major novelty was just round the corner: the advent of group work in ELT. It was when group work emerged as a methodological option for classroom activity at the end of the 1970s that the communicative approach had found the key to communicative interaction, peer interaction. It was not only that group work made way for pair work, so that peer work later became a basic feature of language classrooms, but it offered the possibility of dividing information among students to create real reasons for communicating. Information and opinion gap tasks were a huge leap forward, not only because of the communicative interaction they could potentially generate, but because they decentralized communicative classes. Students gained more collaborative independence.

Having almost reached the end of my brief without mentioning any names, so as not to disappoint the reader, I will list the four books – my hits – that I think made a huge impact on the ELT profession, and close with a special mention for one of the applied linguistics stars of the time: S. Pit Corder.

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Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!

Wordsworth is here talking about the French Revolution, but he might equally have been talking about working in the Centre for Applied Language Studies (CALS) at the University of Reading in the seventies. The dawn chorus had started in the 1960s, when Newmark (1966), for example, talked about the phenomenon of the structurally competent, but communicatively incompetent, student. But the actual moment when the sun broke the horizon coincides rather well with the beginning of the decade, with Hymes' (1970) seminal paper on communicative competence specifying dimensions of language behaviour thus far ignored by linguists and hence by their slavish followers, the applied linguists. Hymes (it may be argued) was cleverly translated into language teaching terms by the Council of Europe's team, and the development of the notional/functional syllabus. Trim, Richterich, van Ek & Wilkins (1973), describing this work, sees the sun beginning to develop some heat.

These ideas were heady enough, and suggested a host of practical implications with potential to rock the language teaching world. But would they work in practice? It might be said that David Wilkins founded CALS in 1974 to find out. Part of CALS' 'mission' in the early years was to develop notional/functional materials – to see if they 'worked'. A series of books, such as Morrow & Johnson (1979), are testimony to the experiment.

There is one view of history (and this account very much represents just one, partial view, with

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much of importance omitted and many of influence unmentioned), which says that communicative methodology grew out of the notional/functional syllabus. Teaching how to INVITE, ACCEPT or DECLINE INVITATIONS involves (it may be argued) techniques not required to teach the present perfect tense. Wilkins (1973) distinguishes between the 'language of reporting' and the 'language of doing'. Practising the latter involves creating situations where things are 'done' – putting learners in situations where inviting and responding to invitations, for example, will happen. Techniques for doing this (the obvious ones are role play and communicative games) were plentifully developed in the late 1970s. The sun was then truly at its zenith.

Right in the middle of the 'communicative metaphor' is the notion of language activation – that a learner may have knowledge of a language but not have developed the ability to use it. The importance given to this notion explains why Communicative Language Teaching concentrated so much on 'activation techniques', and why so many of the notional/functional textbooks were for intermediate/advanced level students, aiming to activate language already 'known'. Hence the movement gave birth to a host of new exercise types aimed to develop 'ability to use' – the information gap, the information transfer and the jigsaw among others. These were all children of the 1970s British communicative movement (not of subsequent applied linguists as some later wheel re-inventors would have it).

Dawns, alas, invariably turn into dusks. The notional/functional day was already dimming by the early 1980s, when the approach became seriously questioned (see, for example, the debate in the journal *Applied Linguistics*, Wilkins, Brumfit & Paulston (1981). And what of communicative methodology? In 1978 I was privileged to attend what became a series of exciting seminars held in Bangalore, run by Dr Prabhu. My brief was to explain European notional/functional/communicative. When I had done so, the hugely astute Prabhu concluded that what was being described offered a new dimension to language teaching (appropriacy). But, he argued, in India the problem was that methods for teaching the old dimension (grammar) had failed and new means were needed. What he developed was not COMMUNICATIVE, but COMMUNICATIONAL – relatable to the former but different from it. With the change in suffix, CLT sashayed into TBT (task-based teaching), and with it the beginning of a new decade and a new dawn. But someone else's dawn, I guess, and the chance for others who were young to seek their own very heaven.

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The nineteen-eighties

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There is a saying that if you can remember the 1980s, you weren't there! Well, the decade is alive and well in my memory, and in this short piece, I would like to revive some of the professional pedagogical highlights that stay with me in the 2000s.

In 1980, I had just returned to Australia after several years spent studying and teaching in England and Asia. Personally, it was a formative decade, in which I was able to adapt, develop and apply key concepts and ideas on language and pedagogy that had begun to emerge in the 1970s. In 1980, I was on the threshold of my career as a teacher and researcher. By the end of the decade, I had taught in a range of contexts, both ESL and EFL, and had published several academic books, a textbook series, and numerous articles.

The largest waves being made at the beginning of the decade came from the pen or the typewriter (yes, the personal computer had yet to enter the marketplace) of Stephen Krashen. His various hypotheses and models (the input hypothesis, learning–acquisition distinction, affective filter hypotheses, etc.) set off reverberations that can still be felt today. Although his views came in for some trenchant criticism, they did signal the coming of age of second language acquisition as a key area of inquiry within the field of applied linguistics.

The 1980s also saw the growth of a healthy skepticism among language teachers. The 1970s were punctuated with the so-called designer methods movement – Suggestopedia, the Silent Way, Community Language Learning and so on. Most of these methods were 'data free', drawing sustenance from rhetoric rather than empirical support. While these designer methods continued to flourish into the 1980s, teachers, perhaps influenced by the growth of research into instructed second language acquisition, were less inclined to embrace pedagogical proposals without some kind of evidence. This does not mean that the 'methods' movement was easy to kill off. I recall one particularly inappropriate approach, called *All's Well!*, being foisted on refugees in adult immigrant education centres in Australia.

My own 'guru' in the early 1980s was Earl Stevick. His humanistic take on learning in general and language learning in particular resonated strongly with

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my experiences as a teacher in both ESL and EFL settings. Stevick's message was inspirational rather than empirical, and he affirmed the worth of language teaching as a profession. At the end of the decade, I had the pleasure of co-teaching a TESOL Summer Institute with Earl at ESADE in Barcelona.

At the TESOL convention in Tampa Florida in March 2006, I was part of a colloquium to celebrate TESOL 40th year as a professional association. The theme of the presentation was 'TESOL's most daring ideas'. One of the speakers was Julian Edge from Manchester University. Edge devoted his talk to the influence of Stevick's ideas on his own thinking and development as a teacher. In his talk, Edge reminded us that if anyone asks 'What do you teach?' the first response should be 'Learners!' ('Language' can come later). The talk resonated strongly with the audience and reminded all of us that there are principles, ideas and ideals that endure.

The 1980s was the decade in which the principles of communicative language teaching, which had evolved in the preceding decade, began to gain traction in the classroom. We began to see curricula and materials that took as their point of departure an analysis of learners' communicative needs, rather than inventories of language systems. Needs analysis procedures and needs based programming emerged to support the development of differentiated curricula to meet different learner needs.

Needs-based programming was part of a broader trend towards a learner-centred approach to instruction, which, in turn, emerged from traditions of humanistic psychology and experiential learning that Stevick, among others, was promoting within language education. In learner-centred curriculum, learners are actively involved in making decisions about what will be taught, how it will be taught, and how it will be assessed. Learner diversity, particularly in terms of learning styles and strategies, also comes into prominence.

Another key development in the 1980s was the emergence of task-based language teaching and learning (TBLT). TBLT gave practical effect to the more general philosophical orientation of communicative language teaching which sees language as a tool for communication rather than as a system of rules to be memorized. As the decade drew to a close, many of the concepts and ideas that at the beginning of the decade were in flux began to cohere.

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The 1980s is a time I know well in terms of language teaching. By that time I had already taught languages (Russian, German, and English) in the US and gained a rich graduate background in educational psychology. In the 1980s I was focused on research on language teaching and learning from a psychological viewpoint; only later did I embrace sociocultural theory as well. For me, the 1980s contained a flurry of ideas – Krashen's hypotheses, Long's focus on form, and learning strategy work by O'Malley, Chamot, and myself – each with instructional implications.

The decade started out with a bang through Steve Krashen's hypotheses about language acquisition (Krashen 1982, 1985). The hypotheses reverberated throughout the language teaching field like a mini-version of Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses being nailed to the door of the Wittenburg Church. Krashen called for a reformation of our thinking about how languages are acquired. He contended that structures are acquired automatically, implicitly, and informally through natural, developmental processes only, not through attention or awareness. It is useless to discuss or analyze forms or encourage learners to do so, because overuse of the built-in 'monitor' will inhibit language acquisition. Krashen applied these ideas in designing the Natural Approach (Krashen & Terrell 1983). In this approach, attention is placed solely on meaning. 'Acquisition' is the goal, not formal 'learning,' which (for Krashen) has no relationship with acquisition; this is the quintessential no-interface position. In this approach, there are no 'target forms' to make explicit, nor are grammar rules supplied by the teacher or the textbook. Students receive holistic, comprehensible input, that is, input slightly above the level of full understanding ('i + 1'). The situation must be relaxed and comfortable so that participants' 'affective filter' is low enough for input to become 'intake'. Many of Krashen's ideas later came under attack; 'Krashen bashin'' became a popular sport in some quarters. Later research has shown that the totally implicit, informal focus on meaning often produces an unacceptably low level of formal accuracy (Ellis 2006). Yet it was valuable that in the 1980s Krashen nailed his theses to the door in a very public way, causing many professionals to rethink what language acquisition is all about. He had an influence on the language field's 'professional collective unconscious'. For two additional decades he has continued his work on implicit, informal learning, as well as other related topics.

Another major strand in language teaching in the 1980s was Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) à la Mike Long (1985). In the 1980s the terminology concerning language instruction tasks became a bit clearer, though certainly not conclusive across all theorists. (For the many definitions of language instruction tasks, see Oxford, forthcoming.) Long created Task-Based Language Teaching, which he described as reflecting a 'focus on form' (*FonF*), as contrasted with a 'focus on meaning' (*FonM*), exemplified by Krashen. However, Long's and Krashen's approaches do have some similarities. They are both types of implicit language instruction in which the main focus is on meaning, with no rules given and no *overt* directions to attend to any given form. A major difference is that Long's TBLT temporarily and subtly diverts students' attention to specific forms that arise incidentally when a communication breakdown occurs for a student. Because of the tremendous emphasis on meaning in TBLT, this model could easily be described

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as *FonM* WITH TEMPORARY *FonF*, although *FonF* is certainly simpler and easier to remember. Long's TBLT, with its *FonF*, is altogether different from what Long calls a focus on forms (*FonFs*), in which students are given very specific language rules to apply deductively. Though these contributions, including TBLT and distinctions among *FonM*, *FonF*, and *FonFs*, first became well known in the 1980s, Long has continued his work in this area into the present.

Another major push in the 1980s was from learning strategy researchers, such as Mike O'Malley and Anna Uhl Chamot, and their research group (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper & Russo 1985). They built on the 1970s work of Rubin (1975) and Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern & Todesco (1978) concerning the 'good language learner', who uses strategies to enhance learning. They also incorporated cognitive information processing concepts. These researchers built an early framework for learning strategies theory and research in the 1980s, although their major contributions came in the 1990s. They stressed the importance of language learning strategies for gaining language proficiency and autonomy. This was of great importance to language teachers, who began to recognize their major role in teaching students to use optimal learning strategies (relevant to particular tasks and students) to enhance language learning. 'Strategy instruction', woven into regular language teaching, became a key theme in the language teaching field as a result of the foundational work in the 1980s. Also in the 1980s, I developed and pilot-tested the STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL; Oxford 1986), which became the most widely used language learning strategy assessment tool in the world. It was later translated into more than twenty languages and adapted in various ways. The work of all prior strategy researchers, especially that of O'Malley and Chamot and their team, was crucial to the development of the SILL.

These were some of the most influential trends in the 1980s. It was a time of ferment and argument, as always, but it was also a time of major contributions. This was a formative period in my career, and I was glad to have been present to witness the developments of the decade.

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The nineteen-nineties

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In 1991, I was working on my MA dissertation at Birmingham University, in the UK. The research topic was David Brazil's model of discourse intonation (DI). My introduction to the model was reading the monograph *The communicative value of intonation* (Brazil 1985). It was not an easy read, but Brazil's ideas profoundly changed my views about pronunciation teaching. Before I began my postgraduate studies I taught English to secondary school students in Malaysia, so I knew the demands of teaching pronunciation. Like many syllabuses at that time, mine aimed to help learners 'speak using correct pronunciation, with correct intonation, word stress and sentence rhythm'. To me, English intonation seemed fleeting, even capricious. Brazil, however, offered a comprehensive description of intonation as realised in spoken interaction by relating intonation to the function of an utterance. The model also had a simple-to-use notation system that I felt would work equally well for research and teaching. If I was fully convinced of the merits of DI, some of my classmates in the applied linguistics programme, especially those from Britain, were ambivalent. Other than the issue of regional variation they said, there was also the question of why anyone outside of Britain would be interested in this model. The discussion in that seminar room foregrounded for me some of the issues of pronunciation teaching which surfaced in the years that followed.

Shortly after Brazil's 1985 monograph, *Intonation in context*, the first course book based on the DI framework was published (Bradford 1988). This was followed by a collection of research papers (Hewings 1990), a pronunciation course book for pre-intermediate learners (Hewings 1993) and David Brazil's own course (Brazil 1994). Bradford and Brazil devoted their entire course to the various sub-systems in the DI framework, while Hewings presented intonation in one useful chapter that included activities for teaching pronunciation communicatively as advocated by Celce-Murcia (1987). Although the role of DI in pronunciation seemed promising, it is clear in retrospect that its value went mostly unnoticed in the 1990s, ironic in an era when 'communication' and 'contexts'

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were buzzwords in language teaching. Even in situations where the Hallidayan view of language was prominent, DI (which was based on the same) never truly became an integral part of many language and teacher education programmes. Nevertheless, its application in research has been sustained in comparison. Teachers found the concepts abstract and therefore difficult to explain, teach or perceive. As with all changes and innovations, the central 'precepts' must be disseminated to and understood by potential users. In the case of DI, its value was immediately recognised by those who had direct contact with David Brazil and his work. Unfortunately, these ideas were not always disseminated widely outside the extended Birmingham community. As a result, DI as a framework for teaching did not acquire a critical mass for it to flourish the way other areas of language teaching did.

Brown's (2000) study towards the end of the decade revealed a general lack of interest in DI. Selecting 29 pronunciation features, he surveyed 33 international experts/ textbook writers and 115 Singaporean teacher trainees. Both groups identified aspects of pronunciation they considered 'high priority' in teaching. Intonation in discourse was not one of them. In spite of the apparent lack of interest in DI in the later part of the 1990s, it is heartening to see recently that its applications in teaching have not only been reinvigorated but also widened considerably, compared to the previous decade. Richard Cauldwell's award-winning 'Streaming Speech' demonstrates how DI can be successfully incorporated into the teaching of speaking as well as listening (Cauldwell 2002). Martin Hewings also shows teacher educators and language learners the potential of DI by presenting intonation as manageable packages that are 'framed within a theory of intonation so that they can be seen as related aspects of a coherent system' (Hewings 2006).

Fifteen years ago, with my rather naïve view of ELT, I believed that many teachers would readily choose to exploit the potential of a discourse model of intonation for teaching pronunciation. The years that followed showed me many realities I had not foreseen. Nevertheless, my experience working with DI in teaching and research over the years (e.g. Goh 1994, 2000) has further convinced me of its relevance in both areas. Although some have suggested that language learners could not perceive and manipulate prosodic features during spoken interaction, my MA project convinced me that language learners are capable of a lot more than we often give them credit for. In closing, I will highlight two issues I think are pertinent to the continued reinvigoration of DI as a framework for teaching and research. Firstly, with the development of English as an international language, we must be able to justify the continuing use of a model of intonation based on 'prestige' varieties of English. Secondly, we must provide opportunities for younger language educators and researchers to become professionally competent in the theory and applications of DI. While it is possible to continue providing justifications for its use, DI can only remain a viable framework if there are new people with fresh ideas to advocate it.

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It is early evening in June, 1990, in the former East Berlin, near the Brandenburg Gate. An overcast sky gives the city a sombre appearance, as if brooding on an uncertain future. Within the former 'Eastern bloc', English has suddenly become the language of new political freedoms and hoped-for prosperity, and so a huge demand for English language teaching is rapidly emerging. My university in England provides services for ELT development projects, and so I am here with a British Council team, looking at ways of supporting new ELT initiatives. And just as the epochal political events taking place here are about to reshape the world throughout the 1990s, so also (as I later realise) are a number of major new ELT trends beginning to emerge – in teacher training, innovation management and socio-politics.

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The previous decade has seen an explosion of activity in materials development. As the 1990s begin, however, it is increasingly realised that TEACHER development is just as or possibly even more crucial. Although a number of important articles about the latter were published in the 1980s, it is with Wallace (1991) that something of a 'coming of age' occurs in this aspect of ELT. For the first time the field comes to be equipped with a major conceptual model of teacher learning – that of the 'reflective practitioner'. A number of other significant publications, covering a wide range of aspects of teacher preparation, also become available at around the same time and as the decade wears on, e.g. Richards & Nunan (1990) and Freeman & Richards (1996). These items mostly focus on the pre- rather than the in-service level. However, later publications, such as Hayes (1997), remedy this lacuna. In addition, as a way of better meeting the needs of increasing numbers of new teachers and teacher trainers, the 1990s also witness a burgeoning of books of the 'how to teach ELT' variety, such as Harmer (1991).

The second main trend – a growing interest in the lessons that might be learned from the study of innovation theory – also has its roots in the 1980s. In the 1990s itself, because of an ever-growing number of ELT development projects involving innovations in teaching, testing and training, in eastern and central Europe in particular, interest in this aspect grows apace. It is increasingly recognised that the development of sound ELT innovations depends crucially on ELT itself developing an improved understanding of the innovation process. By way of response to this need, various collections of papers documenting a wide range of ELT innovation project experiences around the world begin to emerge, such as Allwright & Waters (1994) and Rea-Dickins & Germaine (1998), as well as important articles such as (Stoller 1994). However, with Markee (1997) comes a capstone to the other items, because of its analysis of a variety of ELT approaches in terms of innovation criteria, its comprehensive synthesis of major concepts from the innovation literature, and its detailed application of them to the analysis of a major ELT curriculum project.

The continuing global expansion in the use of English as a means of international communication throughout the 1990s contributes to the third trend. Out of a concern for the potentially negative effects on other languages and cultures of such a tendency, a succession of critiques of the ELT enterprise emerge, such as Phillipson (1992), Pennycook (1994), and Canagarajah (1999). Based on a 'critical theory' perspective, these items, from a variety of angles, take the view that the English language and/or the 'ELT industry' can be constructed as being in a hegemonic relationship with other (especially local) languages, and that the teaching of English as a foreign language is inextricably bound up with a neo-colonialist discourse, whereby Anglo-American socio-cultural values are promoted at the expense of alternative, local ones. As a consequence, various compensatory policies and procedures, such as a 'pedagogy of resistance', are advocated. Similarly, as an antidote to perceptions of methodological imperialism, books such as Holliday (1994) argue that ELT should be based on the concept of 'appropriate methodology', i.e. the development of approaches sensitive to local cultural, linguistic and teaching-learning norms.

Looking back to that summer evening in Berlin, thus, it is now possible to see that, just as many of the former communist countries of Europe were about to begin the process of being re-integrated into the West, a change that dramatically affected the future of the world, so a 'troika' of major new trends – in teacher training, innovation management and socio-political analysis – was also about to significantly expand the horizons of ELT.

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The new millennium

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On the threshold of the twenty-first century, language teaching has come to be not only big business but an increasing focus of theoretical interest, engaging researchers and practitioners alike in a quest for the 'best' practices to meet the needs of an expanding population of learners. Applied linguistics continues to gain recognition as an academic discipline while undergraduate and graduate language teacher education programs flourish, fueling worldwide demand for faculty, courses and materials in second language acquisition theory and methods.

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Implicit in the quest for the best practices in language teaching is of course the expectation of disciplinary knowledge expansion with pivotal advancement of theory and practice. Hinkel adopts this optimistic stance in her recent overview of current perspectives, identifying trends that she sees as '[beginning] in the 1990s and the 2000s and are likely to influence instruction in L2 skills at least in the immediate future' (Hinkel 2006: 109). Appearing as they do in a special fortieth anniversary state of the art issue of a major journal devoted to language pedagogy, these trends can be seen to reflect a widely accepted mainstream view of where we are today as a profession. Briefly summarized, they include 1) a decline in claims for a universal best method reflecting an increased recognition of the diversity of teaching contexts and goals; 2) recognition of the importance of both bottom-up, meaning focused and top-down, form focused skills in the development of language proficiency; 3) an influence on teaching curricula and content of our increased understanding of English language use by both native and nonnative users, much of it gained through findings of corpus and discourse analyses; and 4) the development of integrated and dynamic instructional models that promote meaningful communication as the means to developing learners' communicative competence.

The elaboration of what has come to be called communicative language teaching (CLT) can be traced to concurrent twentieth-century developments in linguistic theory and language learning curriculum design both in Europe and in North America. In Europe, the language needs of a rapidly increasing group of immigrants and guest workers along with a rich British linguistic tradition that included social as well as linguistic context in the description of language behavior (Firth 1937; Halliday 1978) led to development of a syllabus for learners based on notional-functional concepts of language use (van Ek 1975). At the same time, paradigm-challenging research on adult classroom second language acquisition (Savignon 1972) introduced the term COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE to characterize the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers, to make meaning, as distinguished from their ability to recite dialogues or to perform on discrete-point tests of grammatical knowledge. Today, as Hinkel notes, the appeal of CLT is worldwide even as there persist widespread confusion and debate when it comes to the elaboration and implementation of programs and methodologies to promote the development of functional language ability through learner participation in communicative events (see Savignon 2001, 2005). Models of integrated teaching with a focus on meaning abound, continuing to blur the four skills distinctions with which language pedagogy had become comfortable. Current buzzwords to be found in a proliferation of new or revised teaching materials claiming a basis in ongoing research include CONTENT OR THEME BASED, TASK BASED, and PROJECT BASED.

In his introduction to the *TESOL Quarterly* fortieth anniversary issue, the editor notes that it was only fifteen years earlier that the journal had published its first and only issue to celebrate the 'accumulated wisdom in our field' (Canagarajah 2006: 5). While acknowledging that it appears presumptuous to propose a second such issue after such a brief interval, he justifies the decision by citing social and cultural transformations that have prompted 'fundamental changes in the way we perceive and practice our profession'. Viewed in the broader historical context of classroom language teaching reform, a history that includes not only the recent decades reviewed in this collective retrospective but one that we can trace back over several centuries (see Musumeci 1997), the significance of ongoing social change for pedagogical practice inevitably pales. That the pace of change is PERCEIVED to be changing ever more rapidly, however, is significant as an expression of current enthusiasm and resources enjoyed by applied linguistic scholars.

Central to a representation of CLT, however, is the understanding of language learning as both an educational and a political issue. Language TEACHING is inextricably tied to language policy. The selection of methods and materials appropriate to both the goals and context of teaching begins with an analysis of learning in a given educational setting. Considerable resources, both human and monetary, are currently being deployed around the world to respond to the need for language teaching that is appropriate for the communicative needs of learners. In the literature on CLT, however, teacher education has not received adequate attention. What happens when teachers try to make changes in their teaching in accordance with various types of reform initiatives, whether top-down ministry of education policy directives or teacher generated responses to social and technological change? In a decided shift from earlier efforts to implement audio-lingual methodology through a top-down, theory to classroom approach, an increasing number of language teaching methodologists are turning their attention to the practical understanding of the participants themselves. Empirical engagement with informants serves to validate claims of a pragmatic focus for language pedagogy, bringing it more closely in line with other fields in the general discipline of linguistic pragmatics. A number of recent reports of reform efforts in different nations provide a thought-provoking look at language teaching today as the collaborative and context-specific human activity that it is (see Savignon 2002). Such first-hand observation provides valuable insights for researchers, program administrators, and prospective or practicing teachers who work or expect to work in these and other international settings.

When it comes to methods of language teaching there is clearly no one size that fits all. However, through the careful building of data sets from a wide range of contexts such as those sketched briefly above, researchers should aim to arrive at a more powerful set of theoretical principles to inform practice. As Bygate (2005) notes, the ability of applied linguists to interact with authority in addressing real world problems rests at least in part on the knowledge we accumulate through

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work with participants in a range of contexts. The role of applied linguists becomes clear, moreover, when we consider that 'the functioning of language in the context of real work problems and what we do about it are issues which are not about to go away and which no other discipline is available to address' (Bygate 2005: 579).

That said, the empowerment of language teachers as both practitioners and theory builders is essential in addressing the language needs of the next generation of learners. The extent to which a CLT holistic, interactive and learner-oriented conception of language learning and use can be implemented in classroom teaching practices will depend ultimately on the ability of applied linguists, practitioners and policy makers to work together. Only through a collaborative critique of current programs with systematic exploration of alternative options can there emerge a sustainable evolution of the policies and practice of language pedagogy in the larger cultural context.

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