Number 3 **March 2016**

RADICAL TEFL[1]

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(electronic version)

This issue:

THINKING ABOUT TEACHING SPEAKING

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1. "*Radical*": "forming the root, basis or foundation … going to the roots"
(New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 1993

RADICAL TEFL

http://radicaltefl.weebly.com

An annual forum for probing concepts and assumptions in TEFL, and for exploring and developing understanding of the TEFL classroom encounter.

Number 3
March 2016
Electronic version

Publishing Editor: Alistair L. Maclean

CALL FOR ARTICLES and GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS
Please see pages 4 & 6

FUTURE ISSUES
Issue Number 4 (Publication: March 2017)
Theme: *"Researching and Investigating Student Failure in the EFL Secondary Class"*
(Articles for 30 September 2016). Please see pages 4/5/6, & 44/46

Issue Number 5 (Publication March 2018)
Theme: "*What can EFLT learn from the teaching and learning of other school subjects?*"
(Articles for 30 September 2017). Please see pages 4 & 5

ADDRESS:
This issue, and past issues, are available on this website as a free download:
http://radicaltefl.weebly.com
Email: alistair.maclean@outlook.com

Many thanks to Dr Richard Smith of the University of Warwick, who created and designed the website.
(ERT3 15 / 6TS 68)

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE

(Electronic Version)

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CALL FOR ARTICLES

Radical TEFL **would like to publish work which probes beneath the surface of EFLT: work which examines assumptions, myths or contemporary orthodoxy in our field, or which in some way put under the spotlight some aspect of EFLT. In order for EFLT to construct more secure foundations for its practice and enquiries, it can arguably benefit from:**

- **a closer look at work in education;**
- **more work on the history of EFLT and of ways of doing history;**
- **looking at studies of methods of enquiry, from the philosophy of science;**
- **more work on issues in classroom research, from education.**

Radical TEFL **would like to especially publish articles which draw from these areas, and from the literature and ideas in them, in order to hopefully give EFLT better roots.**

Radical TEFL **would similarly like to publish work which draws on educational thinkers from outside EFLT, whose thought and experience could open up new and fresh approaches to understanding our problems, while related to classroom realities. For example, educators such as John Dewey, Michael Eraut, Guy Claxton and Ernest von Glasersfeld offer numerous ideas and arguments about teaching, in a general educational context, but which have not yet been considered for their specific implications for TEFL. For the coming issues, I propose the following themes - and other, probing, articles will also be welcomed.**

Issue 4 (Publication in March 2017, and articles needed for 30 September 2016:
"Researching and Investigating Student Failure in the EFL Secondary Class"
This could include short reports from teachers on a lesson which *failed*, or a student who *failed*, with lessons drawn (for more details, see page 6, overleaf). It is often said that one can learn more from failure than from successes. Articles could also discuss issues of, for example, research design, or methods of enquiry adopted for a research project into understanding failure to learn. 'Research' could be understood in a broad sense:

- **not necessarily including mathematical data, and/or**
- **including a substantial 'reflective' component, in order to make sense of experience. (See pp 44-46 of this issue)**

Issue 5 (Publication in March 2018, and articles needed for 30 September 2017:
"What can EFLT learn from the teaching and learning of other school subjects?"
This could include discussion of different approaches to TEFL (and Modern Language Teaching), or approaches to designing TEFL materials, in different countries, and differing local contexts.
(Would anyone like to guest edit this issue?)

Issue 6 (Provisionally)
"Histories of EFLT and ways of doing EFLT History, in order to better understand our past, and our present"

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This issue
Both articles in this issue (as well as the article in *Radical TEFL* 2) explore fresh ways of understanding EFL teaching and EFL materials. They offer approaches to teaching (and materials) which do not depend on a 'scientific' starting point, but rather starting points of local problems and contexts. The ideas discussed in these articles are linked to each other in all proposing for thinking in EFLT a 'craft' or 'practical knowledge' approach to teaching and materials. These are the kind of probing but classroom-based articles that *Radical TEFL* wold like to publish.

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Guidelines for contributors
Articles should, so far as possible:

1. **Start from a clear research question, or from a problem met in practice;**
2. **Try to probe under the surface of the question addressed; and**
3. **Be grounded to the EFL classroom, normally by use of examples and by being based on experience.**

To help others to follow up your work, when citing sources please, as far as possible, specify chapters or page numbers where the experience or idea you refer to can be found. Copyright of articles will belong to the author, and your article will be published in both a print version, and be available as a free download on the *Radical TEFL* website, at:

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Alistair Maclean, January 2016

RADICAL TEFL

WANTS TO PUBLISH

YOUR SHORT 'ARTICLE-REPORT' ON

WHAT *DIDN'T WORK* IN A LESSON

(especially by secondary teachers)

- **Can we learn more from 'failed lessons' than from successful ones? Wanted: article-reports of about 1000 words (to fit on a double-side). Bibliography and references are not needed.**

- **Your article/report could be written under these headings:**
    1. **State what you wanted your students to achieve;**
    2. **Give information about your students' previous learning;**
    3. **State what you did;**
    4. **Describe what happened (or didn't happen), and;**
    5. **Reflect on what you learned from the mismatch between intention and result;**

- **In all cases, be as specific as possible in your report, maybe focusing on just one student. Give information about materials.**
- **Send your article in WORD to: alistair.maclean@outlook.com**

Your article will appear in the print version of *Radical TEFL*, and on-line at:

http://radicaltefl.weebly.com

Deadline for receiving articles: 30 September 2016 (for March 2017 publication)

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(Acknowledgement: with thanks to Graeme Porte for suggesting this idea)

LANGUAGE TEACHING AS TECHNOLOGY: THE IMPORTANCE OF PEDAGOGIC DESIGN

Alan Waters
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ABSTRACT
The question of to what extent 'theory' vs. 'practice' should form the basis of language teaching pedagogy is a recurrent theme in professional discussion. However, one dimension which appears to be missing from such argument is the issue of 'proportionality', i.e., the extent to which either theory or practice might be seen to dominate pedagogical decision-making. This paper takes the view that, by conceptualizing language teaching as 'technology', it is possible to argue that, in pedagogical design, 'know-how' will inevitably tend to outweigh matters of theory. The argument begins by identifying the defining characteristics of a technology in contradistinction to those of a science, and discusses what characterizes the technological design process. These ideas are then illustrated by a representative 'worked example' of pedagogical design, along with a related analysis, and the paper concludes by considering the implications for research and further theorising.
Introduction

INTRODUCTION

In a recent journal exchange, Ur and Hunter (Ur 2013a & b; Hunter 2013) debated, in essence, the extent to which language teaching pedagogy should be based on 'situational realities', i.e., contextual factors of one kind or another, on the one hand, and, on the other, the role that academic theorizing might play in the matter. The overall conclusion that emerged from their discussion was that, of course, both main elements are of potential importance.

While this seems entirely reasonable, it nevertheless leaves open the question of *proportionality*, i.e., to what extent can it be said that each of the two sets of influences is likely to predominate in any given language teaching setting? In other words, might it be possible to say that language teaching pedagogy can typically be seen as primarily concerned with the practical application of theoretical principles (the model assumed by much of applied linguistics for language teaching), or, rather, that it is instead best viewed as mainly based on an understanding of the constraints and potential of the teaching situation (the perspective frequently adopted by the language teaching practitioner)?

The answer will obviously vary from situation to situation, but it is contended in what follows that, nevertheless, there is an underlying, overarching professional 'Occam's razor' that can usefully inform thinking in this respect, and which should be articulated and invoked a good deal more frequently than tends to be the case. In the next section, therefore, the nature of this overall distinction will be outlined. Its application will then be illustrated in the form of a 'worked example'. In the last part, some overall conclusions for research and theorising will be drawn.

1. LANGUAGE TEACHING AS 'SCIENCE' vs. 'TECHNOLOGY'

1.1 The general differentiating principle in question can be formulated by distinguishing much more clearly than is usually the case between what constitutes the two activities of 'science' and 'technology'. The pair are often confused in common parlance. For example, we frequently hear of 'scientists' having launched space rockets or satellites. But this is to traduce the proper meaning of the term. Science (whether of the 'hard' or 'soft' variety) is concerned in overall terms with attempting to make significant discoveries – identify 'laws' - about particular kinds of natural phenomena (Polanyi 1973; Medawar 1969). In the particular case of the science of linguistics, the main endeavor is to attempt to provide answers to the question: 'what is the nature of language?'.

Technology, however, is concerned with a quite different matter, that of attempting to effect practical improvement in some kind of real-life procedure – in other words, with how to make a device of some kind work in a more efficient manner (Firth 1965). The overall concern of language teaching is similar: it attempts to answer the question 'how can pedagogy be designed for a given setting so as to maximize the potential for learning?'. Its overall orientation is therefore more akin to technology rather than science.

It follows that the purposes of a science such as linguistics and a technology such as language teaching are quite different, and it is a major contention of the rest of this paper that the failure to properly differentiate the two spheres of activity in this way has led to a lack of clarity about the potential role of linguistic theorising in language teaching pedagogy.

Of course, a technology such as language teaching may well make use of insights from a science such as linguistics. But just as designing a more efficient machine may involve a knowledge of the laws of thermodynamics and other scientific principles, it is also clear that scientific knowledge by no means constitutes the sum total of understanding required for technological design (Polanyi 1973; Eraut 1994; Firth 1965). This occurs in the particular case of language teaching pedagogic design because, as Larsen-Freeman 2008 (cf. Lightbown 2000) puts it:

> […] in the sciences, an absolute set-of-laws theory may be desirable, [but] in a field such as TESOL, where human consciousness and intentionality are central, top-down directives are likely to fail. Nor should our expectation be that a theoretically informed research agenda will eventually yield a definitive list of factors which might, if properly

> specified and isolated, comprehensively account for the behavior in which we are interested … . Instead, the role of theory in TESOL should be to increase our awareness and to encourage the quest for greater understanding, on the part of teachers and researchers, all the while acknowledging that we will have to be satisfied with findings that point to tendencies, dynamic patterns, and contingencies which need interpretation, rather than absolute proscriptions and prescriptions (293).

In other words, for the reasons Larson-Freeman advances, theoretical ideas of themselves offer insufficient guidance for their implementation. The implication is that there must also be significant forms of other knowledge at play for effective application to occur.

1.2 Most obviously, a variety of real-world 'contextual' factors, i.e., the conditions under which language teaching pedagogy takes place, and their effects, also have to be taken into account. However, this information will not of itself yield an answer to the overall question of what, in the given circumstances, might constitute the optimum form of pedagogic design (cf. Harmer 2003). Rather, this can only be resolved (if at all) by the application of designers' creative insight, i.e., their ability to consider and synthesize what configuration of a large range of variables is likely to be most effective with respect to a given pedagogic goal. As already mentioned, this 'gestalt' is likely to make some reference to both 'propositional' as well as 'experiential' kinds of knowledge. However, it may quite possibly also involve subliminal understandings of language, language learning and language teaching – 'know-how' - not yet disclosed by scientific enquiry (Polanyi 1973; Eraut 1994), but which can nevertheless be accessed in the form of 'tacit knowledge'. As Chomsky 1988 (in Cumming 2008: 287) points out:

> People who are involved in some practical activity such as teaching languages, translation, or building bridges should probably keep an eye on what's happening in the sciences. But they probably shouldn't take it too seriously because the capacity to carry out practical activities without much conscious awareness of what you're doing is usually far more advanced than scientific knowledge (180).

Cumming (ibid.) says of Chomsky's views: *'This remark is telling… the practices of teaching English constitute their own kinds of knowledge'*. In other words, when language teaching is viewed from a technological perspective, it is clear that pedagogy typically involves understandings which extend well beyond what has so far been revealed about language and language learning in theoretical terms, ones of a nature more akin to those occurring in technological design.

In the next part of this paper, I will attempt to illustrate how this can occur, via a real-life case study of the pedagogical design process.[2]

[2] Although the illustration is in terms of the teaching of English, it is also seen as equally relevant to other forms of language teaching, *mutatis mutandis*. Also, the pedagogic procedures which follow

2. A PEDAGOGICAL DESIGN CASE STUDY

In the interests of representativeness, the case study chosen involves preparing a lesson for a class of 14 year olds in a state-sector setting, the kind in which most of the world's language teaching takes place (Smith & Knagg 2012). Also, again for the sake of representativeness, the focus of the lesson is on the main day-to-day preoccupation of classroom work in the majority of such language teaching settings, i.e., the teaching of aspects of 'language system knowledge', such as grammatical structures, as well as providing related practice in using such knowledge for communicative purposes.

The students in question had been studying English for two years and are around the 'low-intermediate' or 'B1' level. The teacher is considering whether to use a text with them of the following kind, concerning the advantages as workers of robots over humans:

ROBOTS – THE IDEAL WORKERS?[3]

> *We hear many complaints about work in factories: the work is often boring, heavy and repetitive; the workers do not have to think about the work; they get no job satisfaction.*
>
> *The answer: a robot. For many jobs a robot is much better than a human… It never gets bored; it works at a constant speed; it doesn't make mistakes … Robots can be designed to do almost any job. You can't change the human body, but a robot's arms, for example, can be made to move in any direction...* (etc., plus some pictures of robots at work)

2.1 The text is 'naturalistic': to this extent, thus, deciding to use it can be seen as being influenced by views from linguistics about the nature of language as communication, i.e., the importance for pedagogy of exposing leaners to 'real' language (Carter 1998). However, of course, for such a text to be truly appropriate in terms of pedagogical design, several other dimensions also have to be considered.[4] Most obviously, both the language and content knowledge need to be at an appropriate level for the learners, matters which can only be decided through familiarity with the kind of learners in question and the ability to make informed judgements on the basis of this information.

2.2 Then comes the vital question of motivation in learning, a factor which has received plenty of attention in the social sciences over recent years, but which pre-dates such studies, having long been a central part of pedagogic 'lore', as manifested by, e.g., the traditional Chinese saying 'Motivation is the best teacher'. In other words, the text also needs to be one which is judged as likely to interest the learners

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illustrate only one possible approach to the design of the lesson in question, and are not intended to be a model of any kind.

[3] Full text = c. 175 words

[4] Not all of them can be discussed, for reasons of space.

(cf. Bell & Gower 1998: 128). In this case it might be argued that the overall point of view the text puts forward is so obviously uncontroversial as to make it relatively uninteresting and/or unsuitable because of the rather depressing economic message it conveys. On the other hand, from a more pedagogic angle, the text can be seen as rather one-sided, and therefore involving a potential 'opinion gap': students might be stimulated, it could be argued, to express counter-arguments concerning, for example, the advantages as workers of human beings over robots.

2.3 But the most important pedagogical factor that needs to be weighed up is the extent to which such a text lends itself to being used for the primary purpose of the language learning classroom, i.e., to create language learning opportunities. In other words, the main pedagogic question will be 'what kinds of language learning activities can be generated from it?'.

In order to determine the potential of the text in this respect, it can be seen as useful to think first of all in terms of an overall communication 'task' (i.e., a problem-posing activity in which language is used naturalistically) which the text might lend itself to, once again in order to prioritize a view of language as communication of the kind that has received so much emphasis in modern-day applied linguistics.

Also, starting out by attempting to identify a task to go with the text can also be seen as being influenced by theorizing in (educational) psychology about the importance of 'holistic', 'experiential' activities for learning (Samuda & Bygate 2008: Ch. 2). However, even here, an important, separately-motivated rationale for choosing a communication task to form the initial focus of the design process can be detected, grounded in pedagogic 'facts of life'.

2.4 By beginning the design process in this way, one can establish first of all the overall 'destination' of the learning, making it much more feasible to subsequently work out the 'journey' towards it.

Furthermore, beyond the decision to formulate an overall task of some kind to go with the text, there is no ready-made 'scientific' calculus to guide the next stage of the design, i.e., determining what specific form of task might work best. Instead, it is necessary to think creatively about the matter, on the basis of one's previous experience of working with the class, with other similar classes, one's general educational and language teaching-specific pedagogical beliefs, and so on. Thus, as part of this stage in the process, one might weigh up the pros and cons of a variety of outline potential tasks, such as the following:

1. Describe the kinds of jobs robots are likely to carry out in the future.
2. Discuss whether you think robots are going to create more or fewer jobs.
3. List the advantages of human beings over robots.
4. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of vehicles vs. animals as a means of transport.

- No. 1 of these ideas, although related to the 'input' text in terms of being concerned with 'robots' and 'jobs', suffers from the drawbacks of i) leading to ideas based only on speculation, and ii) generating rather different language from that in the text (e.g., 'I think robots will … (etc.)).

- No. 2 is also obviously related to robots and jobs but, rather than just speculation, would be capable of generating logical argumentation, and in both directions (i.e., it is equally possible to make a case that robots will create more jobs as well as the reverse). However, once again the main language produced would differ considerably from that of the text, being involved with the expression of cause and effect (e.g. 'If… , then…', etc.).

- Like no. 2, no. 3 lends itself to the generation of a set of logically-argued ideas. But it is also quite clearly closely-related to the text, both in terms of content and language.

- No. 4 would likewise generate language similar to that of the input text, both in terms of the expression of advantages and also in the form of disadvantages, their 'mirror-image'. It can thus be seen as a suitable task in terms of its relevance to the language of the text, and arguably more so than no. 3, given its dual focus on expressing disadvantages as well, not only advantages.

2.5 However, on the face of it, its subject-matter seems rather remote from robots and jobs. On the other hand, at the level of underlying ideas, both the text and this task can be seen to be concerned with comparing the possible pros and cons of 'inanimate' means of carrying out jobs (robots and cars) with animate ones (human beings and camels), and to therefore be closely linked in their content in this way. In addition, because the context of this task is no longer exactly the same as the one in the text, greater variety of subject-matter is created while still maintaining thematic coherence, and this is also obviously pedagogically advantageous.

Furthermore, as in task no. 2, it is possible for a logical set of ideas to be developed along all of the main dimensions involved (i.e., for and against the car vs. the camel), but this time there are four of them, double the amount that task no. 2 lends itself to. Students might initially assume that the case for animals as a form of transport would be more difficult to make in the modern age, but as they went deeper into the topic, they should be able to see that this is far from the case. In this way this task can be seen as also having considerable general educational value, another important pedagogical consideration.

2.6 Finally, having decided on a choice of task in this way, the remainder of the lesson can be designed by attempting to work out what aspects of the knowledge required for carrying out the task the learners may need instruction in, i.e., what additional activities may be required for the 'journey' towards the 'destination'. A practical expedient in this regard might be to attempt to do the task as the typical learner might. The results of this output can then be analyzed to identify its main features, and those of them which it is felt the learners are likely to need further work on can provide the basis for exercise topics. For example, it is likely that in doing task no. 4 students would need to produce sentences such as 'A car can carry more

people', or 'A camel doesn't need roads'. It might therefore be felt that, to prepare them for such a task, students could benefit from first of all doing exercises on topics such as the use of 'can', comparatives such as 'more' and negative forms such as 'doesn't'.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 The overall point to emerge from this account of pedagogical options for exploiting the sample input text is that the majority of the design decision-making has involved the use of 'pedagogical imagination', based primarily on 'technologically'-oriented reasoning of the kind discussed earlier, whereas 'scientific' ideas have been invoked only to a very limited extent. It is true that the choice of a naturalistic text and the decision to include a communication task were influenced by scientific ideas about the nature of language as communication and learning as a communicative process. However, the decision to begin the design process by exploring the potential of the text to lend itself to a viable communication task had the 'tacit' pedagogical design advantage of first of all attempting to establish what the end-point of the pedagogy might be.

Then came the issue of how a suitable task in this respect might be identified. As the discussion above of the design process indicates, two main implied pedagogical criteria were invoked for this purpose, viz: is the task sufficiently creative and challenging, and ii) is it closely enough related to the text in terms of language and content? The second of these criteria ensured that the overall pedagogical design would be coherent and relevant in terms of the input text. The design of the task in these terms gave rise in turn to the possibility of identifying, by an analysis of putative task output, what forms of support learners might need to enable them to proceed successfully from the text to the task. By approaching pedagogic design in this intuitive way it was possible to anticipate the learners' needs not only as language users but also (and just as or more importantly) as language learners.

Finally, it should be noted that the pedagogical design process employed here, on the one hand, and the resulting pedagogical product in terms of the actual teaching sequence on the other, are based on two different 'logics'. The former proceeds from text to task to exercises, for the reasons which have been explained; the latter, however, goes from text to exercises to task, thereby creating a logical teaching sequence, in which preparation precedes application. This 'counter-intuitive' difference in the sequencing of the two processes can be regarded as a manifestation of the operation of a further 'tacit' pedagogical design principle.

3.2 In overall terms, thus, the lesson design process was primarily influenced by, on the one hand, contextual factors, in the form of perceptions about the psychology and needs of the learners and, on the other, by the designer/teacher's own individual intuitions about how to maximize, in an organized way, the potential for classroom-based learning. The role of 'scientific knowledge' was much more marginal. Of course, the particular proportions of the types of knowledge involved in the design of lessons of this kind are bound to vary somewhat from case to case. However, it also seems reasonable to assume that the overall picture will be similar in the majority of instances, given the fundamental and pervasive nature of the pedagogic factors adduced, and the representative type of language teaching situation involved.

CONCLUSION

The case study has attempted to show how the workings of the pedagogical design process can be thought of as much more akin to a technology than a science. Such a stance by no means diminishes the importance of scientific information as a vital part of the pedagogical design 'armoury', of course. But it can be argued that a better sense of proportion is needed in this respect. In other words, there should be a clearer recognition of the limits of basing pedagogy on 'scientific' ideas, on the one hand, and, on the other, of the need for much more attention to and exploration of the 'technological' factors involved.

It follows that there should be equal or greater concern with developing a research agenda that looks at language teaching not only from a 'theoretically informed' perspective but much more in a truly 'theorising from the classroom' fashion. As Batstone (2012: 466) puts it, 'such research would need to be bottom- up: the researcher's interest would be in what actually happens in class, without taking a pre-emptive stand' (cf. McDonough 2002; Waters 2012). It would seek to identify and understand the rationale for pedagogical practices, without pre-judging them in terms of academic theorizing, and would also be open-minded about the possibility that in doing so, 'science' might learn a good deal from 'technology'. In many respects such a configuration would be a reversal of currently prevailing assumptions, and as such also invoke a better sense of proportion about the main kinds of understandings involved in pedagogical practice.

September 2015

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Until his recent retirement, Alan Waters was a Senior Lecturer and Director of Studies of the MA TESOL and MA TEFL programmes in the Department of Linguistics and English Language at Lancaster University, England. He has taught EFL in Sierra Leone, Kuwait, and the UK, and trained teachers in Thailand, the UK, Hong Kong, and several other parts of the world. He has published a number of books and papers on a range of ELT topics. His main ELT interests are language teaching methodology and materials, managing innovation, teacher learning, and the discourse of applied linguistics for language teaching.
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***Radical TEFL,* Issue number 3, March 2016**

WHAT IS TEACHING SPEAKING?

Alistair L. Maclean

Abstract Michael Swan writes *We don't seem much nearer to answering the central (questions) "What happens in people's heads when they learn languages, and how can we make it happen more effectively?"* (2012: 59). I will argue that an appreciation of the role and significance of materials is the key to confronting Swan's questions, and for helping us to better understand our students' problems - and so be able to help them '*more effectively'*. Section One probes 'teaching', and its relationship to materials. Since I conclude that teaching cannot be understood without some understanding of learning, I look at 'learning' in Section Two. Sections 2.6 and 3 propose implications for materials and pedagogy.

This essay[5]. is a 'report' on both my own classroom experience and of some relevant education literature.[6] For many years, teaching EFL in Poland, I did not have easy access to libraries, but I hope that this distance from debates within EFLT might provide a fresh perspective for tackling the core problems which Michael Swan identifies above. I use 'she' to refer to the teacher, and 'he' to refer to the student. The argument is linked to a teaching activity, '*Magda's Week'* (on page. 38 here), which puts into practice ideas discussed in the text. There are three other teaching activities (with permission for photocopying and use in class), from pages 66 to 75 here, with teaching notes on page 64.

Introduction EFLT is by definition concerned with teaching, and although 'methods' have received attention in the past (Richards 1984) EFLT lacks a tradition of enquiry, drawing from education, into the concept and specifics of classroom teaching. This lack is, firstly perhaps, for historical reasons (White 1989: pp. 83-84) [7].

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[5] This essay is the second part of a four-part enquiry into why EFL students fail to learn to speak. See Appendix [B] for a summary of the argument presented in the four essays, on page 47 here. The first essay (in *Radical TEFL,* **2**, March 2015*)* can be downloaded at***http://radicaltefl.weebly.com***

[6] Some relevant discussion in the education literature, and from which I draw below, is as follows: (NB A number within square brackets indicates the section in which I refer to these sources): Claxton [2.1 footnote]; Nuthall (2005) [1.]; [2.7] & [2.4.1 footnote]; Elliot (1987) [1.2 footnote]; Cooper & McIntyre (1966) [1.2.1]; [1.9] & [2.8]; Ollin (2008) [1.2 footnote]; Dewey (1910) [1.2 footnote] & [2.3]; Mortimore (1999) [1.4.2]; Calderhead (1997) [1.9]; Hager (2009) [2.2 footnote]; Piaget [2.2 footnote]; Von Glasersfeld (1991 & 1995) [2.2 footnote]; also (1994) [2.6] & [3.1]; Ausubel (1968) [2.4.1] & 2.4.2]; Maltby et al [3.1]; Skemp (1986) [3.2]; & esp. Hirst [1.4; 2.1; 2.2; 2.4; 2.5 & 2.7note].

[7]Ron White's argument is summarised in my (2015, sec. 5.1). See J. Richards (2007: 155-56) for some pedagogical principles. Also see: Ur (2013); Waters (2016, which is published in this issue of *Radical* TEFL); Ellis & Shintani (2014: pp. 39-49; 186-91; 332 & 335); & Ellis (2012: ch.11). See, most importantly Michael Swan (2012: Articles 4,5,6,8,14,& 15; Pages 11, 17, 26, 48-54, 90, 102-03, 112, 132-33, 159, 165, 171-73), OUP. Swan's thinking, presented in journal articles over 30 years, collected

A second reason why 'teaching' has not been studied in the EFLT literature might be that, in order to describe the complexity of teaching, we need to capture a practice which is always local; with many variables, and interactions between those variables; and those variables are often inaccessible to the observer, and so perhaps *unspecifiable*. The classroom researcher Graham Nuthall (2005:899) writes of:

> *" the enormous interactive complexity of teaching (with) an almost infinite variety of permutations and combinations of behaviours dependant on the multiple contexts in which it occur"*

A third reason why 'teaching' has been neglected in TEFL is perhaps because of the move to learner-centredness, making 'teaching', with its connotation of a controlling interventionist teacher rather taboo: there is an apparent (but arguably not real) contradiction between emphasising teaching, and emphasising learner-centredness. Some further problems in researching pedagogy are outlined and discussed in Appendix [D] below, on page 62.

My arguments in Section One will be that:

1. Materials and the pedagogical aspect of 'teaching' are each an extension of the other, i.e., they make up a continuum, and from the student's point of view, cannot be understood in isolation from each other. [Secs. 1.7 to 1.9 below]
2. Materials can take on the function of the pedagogical aspect of 'teaching'.
3. In a larger class, students relate more to materials in order to learn, and not to teacher. (1.4 & 1.4.1 below)

I use the word 'materials' in a broad sense of including the teacher's spoken input, her board work, material in the student's memory, etc. (See [1.5] below)

1. WHAT IS TEACHING ?

1.1 TEACHING FROM AN OBSERVER'S STANDPOINT

If we observe a class from a corner at the back, and focus on what the teacher is doing, we will notice three distinct kinds of activities by the teacher:

- classroom management activities;
- 'professional' activities; and
- activities which lead to learning (pedagogy).

Classroom management activities. These will include: preventing and addressing discipline problems; room arrangement; time management in the class; consistency in treatment of students; getting the ventilation in the classroom right; giving out books; using a reward system; etc. These activities do not directly contribute to learning, but seem to create the conditions for pedagogy to be applied, i.e., without these classroom management activities, the teacher and students cannot begin their substantive work.[8]

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in his (2012), is strongly influenced by education. Swan acknowledges the influence of Catherine Walter (ibid: dedication), who teaches at the University of Oxford Department of Educational Studies.

[8] On classroom management see for example, see Michael Marsland's *The craft of the classroom*. Books on classroom management can be found in the education section of academic bookshops.

Professional activities. The second aspect of teacher behaviour will include: testing and keeping records of progress; monitoring students with problems; and keeping other records. These activities do not help to manage the class, and they do not directly lead to learning. Generally, they are required by school management to help them with their own work of following legal requirements, liaising with parents, etc.

Pedagogical activities. Pedagogical activities include: writing models of the work being studied on the board; allocating to students practice material; asking questions to students in order to identify their understanding, etc. [Section 1.2 below]

In the secondary classes which I have experienced, classroom management and professional activities can easily take up half of the time, and the more difficult the class, the more time will be required for these activities *which do not lead to learning.* A demarcation criterion to separate pedagogy from classroom management and professional activities might be therefore that pedagogy leads to learning opportunities, whilst classroom management and professional activities do not.

1.2 PEDAGOGY

Having taken care of classroom management and professional activities, the teacher can then focus on pedagogy – the learning has a chance of beginning. Pedagogy seems to include principles, strategies and tactics which a teacher uses in order to set up learning opportunities. It is perhaps impossible to give a complete list, as different pedagogical principles and activities may be relevant for differing local contexts of teaching. I have taken the following list from Swan (2012): [9]

1. The need by beginners for a simple (grammatical) foundation (Swan 2012: 11 & 109). Return to basics when needed. Careful distinction between early and later stages of leaning (ibid: 90)
2. Importance of working from targets (ibid: 159)
3. Teaching is in two stages: isolating structures before combining them in more realistic teaching work (ibid: 17)
4. Start from what students know, and not from what they 'need' (ibid : 26)
5. Avoiding overload (ibid: 11)
6. Focus on teaching the language rather than teaching strategies (articles 6 & 15)
7. Providing sufficient input (ibid 132-33)
8. Providing enough output opportunities, with the condition that mistakes are not being reinforced (ibid 132-33).

[9] Some of the following are covert principles, or strategies, and some are overt activities, It would take the discussion too far to attempt a classification on these grounds. I have not found a literature in education on the specifics of pedagogy (although see below on the work of Richard Skemp in Mathematics Education), perhaps because pedagogy is handed down in unwritten traditions in schools, and in the teacher-training practicum, rather than being taught in colleges and universities. For John Elliot, *"Pedagogical principles derive from practice ... "*(1987: 151). This reflects the nature of pedagogy as a *craft*, and crafts are 'owned' by the practitioner rather than by the academy. However, there is work in education on *teaching as craft*, which I draw on below (Section 1.9). When pedagogy is discussed in the educational literature (e.g., by Mortimore, MacIntyre, Calderhead - all of whom are cited below), discussion does not normally refer to the teaching of specific school subjects, and is at a rather general level. I do not know of any discussion in the education literature on the pedagogy of second-language teaching, but there exists an extensive literature on pedagogy in Mathematics Education: see some citations below [section 3.2 below, final footnote, on page 36].

I will focus attention in this essay - and in the activity *'Magda's Week'* (see p. 40 here) - on Swan's pedagogical principles given above, and on these four further pedagogical strategies:

9. Allowing students to learn in their own way, and in their own time (which leads to the final three principles given below):
10. The teacher knowing when not to intervene, this including respecting *the silence* of the student, so giving him space to work through, in his own way, concepts, connections and difficulties of EFL. [10]
11. *Differentiation of level* of materials (this links to silence, as if materials are differentiated, students work through materials at their own speed, and students each have their own space to work through different exercises and problems) [11] . [Please see footnote]. These last three pedagogical principles can be encapsulated as:
12. Plenty of on-task time, allowing students to work things out for themselves. [12]

A close reading of the twelve pedagogical principles above shows that many are almost inseparable from materials. At times, they seem to be so closely linked to materials that we perhaps need to introduce a fresh 'hybrid' concept of 'materials-pedagogy'. (Toulmin 1972: 203). A conclusion I will work towards in this essay is that the concepts of pedagogy, materials and learning (Section Two) make up a network, and that none of these three concepts can be fruitfully understood (or investigated) in isolation from the other two.

1.3 The need for local contextualisation.

A criticism of the lists offered above might be that they define pedagogy in general terms. Cooper and McIntyre (1996: 12) make the point that discussion of pedagogy needs to be subject specific. This implies that it is a mistake to study 'pedagogy' and only then, and separately, try to apply the insights offered from education to TEFL. Rather, they suggest, one needs to start from a specific school subject (and from the skills or abilities being taught), and only then turn to what pedagogy can offer. [13] It may be that different skills require differing (but overlapping) pedagogical principles, and so it is misleading to talk of 'pedagogy' in general. Rather, we might need to talk of 'pedagogy for listening' or 'pedagogy for speaking'. (See Ur [2013] on local contexts).

However, what exactly are we asking when we, for example, ask '*What is teaching?'* Perhaps *'teaching'* first needs to be separated into parts, which might be quite different from each other, not having much in common. In other words, more

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[10] On the student's need for silence, see Ollin (2008: esp. pp. 265-72). John Dewey writes concerning the need by the student for silence: *"A silent, uninterrupted working-over of considerations by comparing and weighing alternative suggestions is indispensable for the development of coherent and compact conclusions"* (1910: 210). This silent thinking, as a condition for learning to take place, links to a 'constructivist' understanding of learning, which is argued for in sections 2.4.2 & 2.5 below.

[11] **See Appendix [A] on the key concept of differentiation as used in education, on page 46**.

[12] The student's need for time is argued for in Krashen & Terrell (1983: 18-20).

[13] But is speaking a 'skill'? The apparent skill of speaking (or of playing a musical instrument or sport) is surely a manifestation of a deeper 'disposition': so, are students, in fact, learning 'dispositions'?

progress on understanding pedagogy within specific teaching areas might be made by breaking the question down, contextualising it, and then by asking, for example:

- *"What is teaching speaking at the stage where students have understood the teacher's examples on the board (or in the coursebook), but have not yet tried to produce those patterns (or other target language) themselves, even in a mechanical way?"*
- *"What is teaching speaking at the stage where students can use the language (or pattern) in a predictable context in a controlled environment, but cannot yet apply the target language to real problems as in an unpredictable, real-time simulation or role-play?"*

It may be that the kinds of teaching (pedagogy) required in these two examples are quite distinct. However, treatment of these questions will be left aside, as it seems more important to understand the learner's place in teaching.

1.4 A key insight from Education which contributes to an understanding of what happens in a learning (or non-learning) classroom is that 'teaching' cannot be considered without a consideration of 'learning'. Paul Hirst writes, as a conclusion to his paper "*What is teaching?":*

> " *(if) the intention of all teaching activities is that of bringing about learning (then) the concept of teaching is totally intelligible without a grasp of the concept of learning ... Until we know what learning is, it is impossible for us to know what teaching is"*

(Hirst 1971: 105, my emphasis. Hirst's paper is discussed in Appendix [C] on page 48 here) The question "*What is teaching?"* needs therefore, if we follow Hirst, to first ask the question "*What is learning?".* If Hirst is right, we will make little progress on the question 'What is teaching?' unless we start from the learner's perspective.(Section 2 below).

Introducing the learner's standpoint. If we continue our observation of a large EFL class which is learning to speak, but now focusing on the students rather than on the teacher, we notice that the student is normally *relating to,* or *interacting with*, or *engaging with* materials, and that:

1. the student is *relating* more to materials than to the teacher (see 1.5 below).
2. each student is often alone in his learning, *engaging with* material available to help him; ('materials' understood in a broad sense – [1.5] below.)
3. Each student has a different starting point, that is, different prior knowledge, and a different history of learning EFL, meaning that students are at different levels of understanding and production. (developed below in sections 2. & 3.)

1.4.1 The learner's relationship with materials So, when trying to learn, in a large class, learners seem to spend much of their time in relating to, interacting with and engaging with *materials*, and if one observes an EFL lesson, through the student's eyes, one sees at each stage that, in a productive lesson, the classroom work done is not generally in fact teacher-centred, but materials-centred. The student will relate mainly to the teacher at the classroom management stage of the lesson referred to above, and for professional aspects. This is my experience, both in secondary mathematics and secondary EFL teaching. In smaller classes a closer relationship can

exist between teacher and individual students, but this is partly because there are fewer students to relate to, allowing a more relaxed atmosphere with more opportunities for interaction. In the large class however (of more than about 16 students), in my experience it is the material which the student chiefly interacts with. In a large class, an individual student spends the lesson working from his coursebook, or maybe the student is listening to a cassette, or referring to the teacher's board work. In every case here, the student has related to materials, not to the teacher – even when the teacher is speaking, the teacher's English gives listening practice.

In this sense materials seem to be able to *perform the function of teaching* and are setting up the needed learning opportunities. I will cite two experiences as evidence for this claim. Firstly, in my first teaching post (secondary mathematics), the students worked from a self-study programme, and with good results, and from this I concluded that materials can do the work of a teacher. Secondly, when I recently taught in the private sector in Poland (where secondary students often follow English courses in private language schools after normal school lessons), the '*Callan Method'* (which is a Direct Method) was often the course of choice for parents. In the Callan Method, the materials seems to be *an extension* of the teacher, and the teacher's role is largely instrumental, transmitting the intentions of the materials writer. Results, at foundation levels, were good. A conclusion which I draw from these experiences is that a teacher does not, alone, take care of pedagogy. Below, I argue that she *cannot* take care of pedagogy in a large class which is learning to speak, but she can allow her materials (insofar as the student is able to productively interact and engage with them), to perform much of the function of pedagogy.

A clear case of the 'teacher handing over to materials' is where *differentiation of level* (see App. A) is designed into materials (1.2.11, above). In a large class, and where students have different prior knowledge and understanding of the topic being studied, students will have different learning problems as they interact with the same material, and so it is difficult to see how, without differentiation built into materials, the teacher can help everyone, with their different problems and questions. (Developed in 2.7) [14]

1.4.2 Pedagogy about student outcomes, not teacher actions. A productive entry point for understanding pedagogy might be that pedagogy should not be regarded primarily as about a teacher's *actions,* but as about *outcomes*; that is, not about what the teacher *does,* but about the outcomes she is hoping for. In this non-action sense, pedagogy is something with the connotation of 'over-to-you', i.e., carrying the idea that the teacher has set learning aims which the student must then complete for himself. (I develop this idea in 1.9 below, with the help of work done in Education.) Mortimer et al define 'pedagogy' as *'any conscious activity by one person designed to enhance learning in another'* (Mortimore 1999: 3). (Consistent with this definition, the 'one person' here need not be a teacher, and could be a materials writer.). Mortimore et al, who are educators, believe that pedagogies need to have built into them a way of encouraging learners to better take control of their learning.

[14] In research surveyed by Clarke (1989) on materials and communicative theory, although materials are discussed by researchers in some detail, the pedagogical issues involved in working from materials are neither acknowledged nor discussed by those researchers, at least, not on the work which Clarke reviews. See below, Appendix C, section 2.2. (page 56 here)

1.4.3 It seems important to constantly bear in mind - when considering the question 'What is teaching?' - that an understanding of teaching is dependent on an understanding of 'learning' (from Hirst, beginning of 1.4. above). In this sense, the concepts and practice of teaching and learning cannot be treated in isolation from each other. If, as I argue in this section, materials cannot be understood separately from teaching, then we have an interacting network of materials, teaching and learning to address. One cannot treat one of these three concepts in isolation from the other two. (See App. C, p. 55, on the idea that concepts in education form a network)

My argument, and my experience, have led to both a materials-centred and a learner-centred conception of pedagogy. But how exactly can this be achieved, and be put into practice? I have found that, when teaching speaking, it can be achieved by giving the student greater space to relate to and interact with materials. [Sec. 3 below]

1.5 'Materials'

From the student's standpoint, I propose that materials include:

1. Teacher input (when speaking in the target language);
2. Printed material in front of him
3. Board work (teacher's written input)
4. What is in the student's memory from prior experience, this including:
5. Misconceptions from previous experience

(I discuss the significance of numbers 4 & 5 in sections 2.3 to 2.7 below)

From a student's standpoint I have found, from teaching large secondary classes, that a teacher – once the lesson is under way - is of minor relevance compared to the primary factor of materials which a student interacts with. As a result of my early secondary-school teaching experience, I saw that *the materials do the work*. Transformed into a teaching strategy this becomes the motto: "*Let the materials do the teaching work"*. In my experience of working with student-teachers, however, inexperienced teachers intervene too much: they want to be helpful, but in reality they often distract students from their learning.

I have observed in my teaching that the learner - if given the needed space - works out his own learning and *makes his own connections* (Section Two below). Appropriate materials seem to set up the environment for this self-learning to happen. A condition for this to happen however, I have found, is that the following two of the pedagogical principles given above (section 1.2 above, numbers 9 to 12) need to be respected. I state the principles again:

- Teacher knowing when not to intervene, respecting the silence of the student and giving him space to work.
- Differentiation of materials (this links to silence, as if materials are differentiated, students need time and space to work through different exercises and problems) (See Appendix A, p. 46)

Why should these pedagogical principles seem to work? Perhaps the student needs time and space to 'construct' his understanding, and move through his 'learning route', or 'concept formation route' [argued for in 2.7. below]. It is perhaps only through materials that the student can do this learning - with the material performing the function of 'teaching'. This is explored in Section Two, where I address Swan's question: *"What happens in people's heads when they learn languages?"* In Sections

2.6 & 3, where I propose pedagogical implications for materials for teaching speaking (which derive from the study of learning in Section Two) where I address the second part of his question: *"How can we make it happen more effectively?"*

1.6 Implications. The above argument implies that:

- materials need to be more substantial than perhaps sometimes thought, 'substantial' in the sense that activities need to be longer (allowing space for questions which are differentiated in their level) [Appendix A]
- the pedagogical role of the teacher is chiefly *strategic:* for example, selecting appropriate materials and deciding when to stop an activity
- materials and teacher share the pedagogical work – but it is materials, not teacher, that students are *interacting with*: **and so:**
- if (taking the student's point of view) it is the case that pedagogy in large-class teaching is very closely connected to material, it then follows that discussion of pedagogy without considering materials will be incomplete.

1.7 Materials perform the function of pedagogy

I refer once again to the pedagogical principles which, I propose, allow materials to take over the teacher's work: (1.2 above, numbers 9 to 12)

- *differentiation* (this also links to silence, as if materials are differentiated, students each have their own space to work through different exercises and problems) [See Appendix A]
- *knowing when not to intervene*: Respecting silence of the student, giving him space to learn, this implying deliberate non-intervention from the teacher.

What is the connection between the pedagogical principles above, and materials? The link is that *differentiation of level* (both for input and expected student output), in a large class, can only be achieved by materials, since a teacher can only pitch student input (her output) at one level, whilst differentiated practice materials can provide differing levels of input in the form of examples, exercises and problems to work on, which lead to differing levels of output from students. (Appendix A, see page 46)

Secondary-school mathematics textbook exercises generally try to satisfy different levels in a class by being steeply graded (i.e., differentiated in level): weaker students have plenty of practice at a lower level, and stronger students quickly move through the easier questions and reach more challenging work at the end of the exercise. The same grading of an exercise (see *Magda's Week* and the three other teaching activities in the electronic version of this article) can be used when writing pairwork material. In this way, appropriate material takes on the work of providing differentiation of level.

1.8 Summary of the discussion above and restatement of the theses argued

- Materials and pedagogy are each an extension of the other, and from the student's point of view, cannot be understood in isolation from each other.
- In a larger class, students relate more to materials in order to learn, and not to teacher, and so:
- Materials can take on and perform the function of pedagogy.

1.9 Conceiving Teaching as craft

To support my argument and conclusions concerning the close link between materials and teaching, derived from experience, and given above, I will introduce here an argument from Education, supplemented by some work by Michael Polanyi, which taken together indicate a close link between teaching and materials.

In responding to the question "What is teaching?", Cooper and McIntyre propose that teaching is, in part, a craft. For them, a teacher's craft knowledge is:

> "*rooted in practical experience, it arises from and informs what teachers actually do, it is developed through the process of reflection and practical problem-solving (and) this knowledge is often not articulated"*. [15]

However, what is meant by 'teaching as craft'? Cooper & McIntyre propose that it includes:

- *Tailoring* (as a tailor does with material), according to individual needs
- Any kind of adjustment or adaptation to a situation, leading to:
- Appropriateness *('goodness of fit')*
- Takes account of time, materials, conditions, pupil experience (prior knowledge) and administrative requirements

Calderhead understands the following as aspects of craft (1984): [16]

- Planning
- Monitoring work
- Anticipating and so preventing problems

'Craft' has the dual connotations of 'creating', and of some 'endpoint' (as seen in a partial dictionary definition of craft: *"activity involving construction"*). We have the idea of the teacher, in some way working with the students to help them, with the endpoint in view of constructing their English. Both process and endpoint need to be taken into account in understanding teaching.

Michael Polanyi explores this idea of a craft at work (although he uses the word 'technology'), and he argues that 'craft/technology' is inseparably connected with *the tool required to do the job.* Polanyi argues that the tool is an *extension of the craftsman,* and some examples will show that, indeed, a craftsman's work cannot be fully described, or understood, outside of the context of this image of the tool working for the craftsman. *"the tool ... forming part of ourselves"* [17] . For example, farmer (plough and harness); metal worker (bellows and hammer); healer (herbs); forester (axe and saw); mason (chisel).

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[15] Cooper & McIntyre (1996: 13-15; ch. 4; 153-57). Donald McIntyre was Director of the PGCE course at Oxford University and then Professor of Education at Cambridge University. See Professor Widdowson's The Theory of Practice (2003) for an opposing view of teaching, and which argues that a teacher should draw from 'theory'. By comparison, see my (2015: secs. 1; 2 & 4) for an argument that a teacher should take, as starting points for her practice, student problems and classroom problems.

[16] See Calderhead (1997:12), on craft knowledge for a teacher. See Jarvis (2002: 30-32).

[17] See Polanyi (1957) *Personal Knowledge*, sections 4.5, 4.7, 4.8; and pp. 175/176 in section 6.8. For a fuller statement by Polanyi of his thinking (which draws from his experience in researching, and reflecting on research) see the sections of *Personal Knowledge* which are cited in the bibliography here. Polanyi's thinking is often referred to in mainstream education.

If it is conceded that a craftsman's work cannot be conceived separately from his tool (which are both an extension of himself and which seems to do the work for him), and if it is also conceded that teaching (in its pedagogical aspect) is to be understood as, at least in part, as a craft, the questions arise: "*What are the teacher's tools, which we need to understand, in order to understand the teacher's work?"* I propose as an answer: '*materials'*, with 'materials' conceived in the broad sense proposed above of boardwork, textbook, teacher's spoken output, etc.[1.5 above]. For the teacher, her tools are an extension of her work (the exercises extend the board work, the cassette player extends the teacher's voice, etc), so we cannot separate teaching/pedagogy, and materials.

Another but complementary approach to the question of materials could be as follows, drawing from Dick Allwright's work, where he asked (paraphrased): *"What is the function or role or purpose of materials? What job do we want them to do?'* (1981: 5-6). This line of questioning can open up fresh perspectives, as follows. The stonemason selects a specific tool for a reason. He will want a particular chisel to work in a way which gives the desired result. He will choose the chisel needed, starting from the result required, and the kind of stone being worked.

The secondary teacher, as 'craftsperson', will similarly want materials to work in a way which allows the secondary student to construct his understanding of a part of the language, and generally with a test or an exam in mind. For the mason, the result will be a block of stone, carved as required by his employer's instructions. For the secondary teacher, the result will be a learner who, through an interactive process with materials, has constructed a part of his English, ready for a test, or for the real world. (In Polish secondary schools, where I taught EFL (2009-11), students are often tested about 5 or 6 times a semester, as continuous assessment, meaning that work is normally done with a test in view.)

1.10 'Magda's Week' The claim made here, in the context of teaching speaking, that teaching and materials are very closely linked, comes from my own teaching experience. (See *"Magda's Week* on page 38 [18]). *'Magda's Week'* does the teacher's work of introducing pedagogical strategies of silence and differentiation, as well as some of the pedagogical principles given by Michael Swan in section 1.2 above. The teacher who tries out this activity will find, as I did, that the materials are doing the 'teaching' for her, although it is not quite accurate to claim 'materials teach': in fact the mind behind the design and writing of materials has done much of the work of 'teaching', with the teacher contributing in strategic and timely ways. From the student's standpoint, the materials and materials designer (not the teacher) *are providing the learning opportunities* - once the teacher has set up the activity.

'Magda's Week' practises the simple past tense for students who can already use this tense under controlled conditions, and the activity provides a link from controlled practice to spontaneous production. Students work in pairs, asking and answering

[18] With teaching notes, and with permission to download, photocopy and use in class. There are three other pairwork activities reproduced in this electronic version of this issue of *Radical TEFL*. They similarly exemplify the argument presented here, and can be used in class. Free download at ***http://radicaltefl.weebly.com***

questions, and patterns become gradually more complex. About five minutes is spent at each level of complexity, giving the pairs the time that they require, and at their own speed, to ask perhaps twenty questions to each other, using the same form. There is a model dialogue available for reference for those who need it: however, I find that students will only use this support if they really need it.

There are thus plenty of practice opportunities, but as the patterns become more complex, the contrived dialogues start to become more difficult and real, resembling the unpredictable world of oral interaction. From a learning perspective, the students are in the process of *transferring* passive understanding to active, freer creative use, and this can culminate, for the strongest pairs, with completely free practice at the last stage (see point 7 in the teaching notes, printed on page 41, opposite the activity) [see 2.4 below on 'transfer'].

There are differentiation opportunities built in, for example, weaker students can be asked to write dialogues to get more practice on the basic pattern of the simple past tense. They can also spend plenty of speaking time on the basic question and answer patterns, as there is no pressure to move onto other forms. Students can take their own time, and pause and be silent as much as they want. Stronger pairs can move, orally, through the seven question forms more quickly, and if they have had enough of the activity they can talk about next week, or next weekend.

My main role while activities such as *'Magda's Week'* are being practised is either to move pairs onto a more complex level, or direct weaker pairs to practice more at the same level. With a cooperative class the activity can be used for up to about 30 students (15 pairs), provided that the class has done similar activities, and understand the procedure of this kind of activity. With a more difficult class about 12/16 students is the maximum number. (See Teaching Notes: pp. 39 & 64/65)

A sad reality of secondary classes is that there will often be students who don't want the class work, and who hinder or stop the work of students who are eager to learn. This is the teacher's main problem, because if she doesn't solve it the learning cannot start - or it must be purely transmission-style and mechanical: copying from the board, etc. Uncooperative students who disturb others are normally the weakest, and they can be asked to write the dialogues, instead of speaking them, which gives practice opportunities at a controlled level. Activities such as *'Magda's Week'* are differentiated, allowing students to work at their own speed and level of ability.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this activity is not the visible language practice, which an observer in the room can easily see, but that *students are working out, for themselves and invisibly their understanding.* (Below in sec. 2 , and see p. 61, sec 3)

1.11 We have now discussed pedagogy and teaching at some length, however, a problem which could undermine that discussion is that the word 'teaching' can only be understood, or meaningfully discussed, in reference to the concept of 'learning', as seen in Mortimore's definition of pedagogy quoted above (*'any conscious activity by one person designed to enhance learning in another'* [1999: 3]), and also in Hirst's understanding of 'teaching' (*"the intention to bring about learning"*). (Sections 1.4.2 and 1.4 above)**.** We have met a regress, and so our problem becomes to better understand 'learning', before we can return to an attempt to understand 'teaching'.

2. UNDERSTANDING LEARNING

Key words: *Schema; constructivist*
See text from sections 2.4.1 to 3.2

2.0 Method of this section From what standpoint can we most usefully approach the idea and practice of 'learning'? Since this essay is, in part, trying to answer Swan's question "*What happens in people's heads when they learn languages*?" that question will be our standpoint and our starting point –leading to an attempt in this section to suggest fresh approaches for understanding the learner's internal learning experience. Swan's question is a very helpful one, as it immediately takes up to the heart of the matter – the learner and his subjective experiences and problems as he learns. (See Hammersley [1989: 4 & 68-69] on investigating subjective experiences).

At the same time as doing this, I will try to make use of the argument in my (2015: sec. 2), namely, that the way in which understanding (or knowledge) grows is to first identify a 'doubt', or problem-situation, and to then take that uncertainty as a starting point. Clearly, the primary problem in understanding learning is not the teacher's, but belongs to the student. The most striking aspect of any secondary class which is working well is that most students are striving *to solve problems* (See Dewey 1929: 178-83). In the youth private sector, this is not always the case, as the students, normally being away from their normal school, expect a more relaxed approach.

Therefore, in this second section, I will try to understand 'learning' from the standpoint of '*what happens in people's heads* in the sense of *problems which learners need to address and solve.* In this section I will also be looking for connections between learning and materials, in order to develop the argument begun above that pedagogy materials and learning make up an inter-connected network.

2.1 Learning as problem solving. However, as a student progresses through a new pattern (or structure, or new difficulty), from passive understanding to active use, he will have quite different problems to solve at each stage, as problems in understanding are not the same as problems in bringing into use. It follows that the student is not dealing with only one kind of problem for a given fragment of the language, but with different kinds of problems (as seen in *Magda's Week*). For a given concept, or pattern/structure in English, the student is trying to solve one kind of problem at the controlled practice stage, and another kind of problem at the free use stage (called in education 'the transfer stage', see 3.1 below).(See Bygate 1987: 55)

The teacher's work in understanding the student's **language**-learning problems (so allowing her to see when, where and how to intervene – and when not to intervene) needs some working understanding of 'language'. I follow here Crystal's summary of Saussure, who understands language as a *"vast network of structures and systems"*. (Crystal: 1971: 163). The teacher's main work, together with her materials, I would argue, is to guide the student through these 'structures and systems', to the point where the student can *then launch into freer practice* (as in *Magda's Week*, [page 38 here] and other pairwork activities in Appendix E [pages 64-75 here]).

This guiding work by the teacher, at the early stages of learning, is not a social or cultural task [19]. The teacher may create a positive atmosphere in the class, with good affective conditions, but the student's core task remains *to navigate his **own** way* through the internal 'logic' of the school subject (Hirst 1973). Further, if we combine this insight with a constructivist theory of learning, which I argue for below, the student is truly on his own, because a constructivist theory of learning claims that concepts cannot normally be transmitted from one person to another [20] [21].

I will next introduce six hypotheses about learning, and then explore their implications for guiding a student's learning. The common factor uniting the hypotheses is that each present a challenge for the student (and for pedagogy-materials): the challenge in each case is a problem that needs to be solved.

2.2 SIX HYPOTHESES ABOUT LEARNING

My approach in the following discussion will be to draw on six hypotheses about the learning process (which I have learned from my teaching experience and then I found, when researching this essay, argued for in the educational which literature I cite below). I will then explore how far these hypotheses can take us in their pedagogical implications for teaching speaking (Sections 2.6 & 3 below) . The discussion will eventually return my argument to the same twelve pedagogical principles given in [1.2] above, and I will argue that this consistency of conclusions – 'theory' apparently confirming practice - provides some evidence to support the six hypotheses which are now presented below:

The hypotheses (which are not intended to be complete) are:

1. New learning starts from prior knowledge[22] and 'doubt' [2.3 below]
2. In learning, some *interaction* and action are present (see von Glasersfeld 1995: 56, quoting Piaget)[23] (On interaction, see 1.4 & 1.4.1 above)

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[19] It is for this reason that I do not discuss in this essay recent work by Oliver & Philp (2014) and others, which treats the teaching of speaking as teaching 'oral interaction', and from a point of view which has been extensively explored in the literature: I try to present here an alternative perspective.

[20] Bygate (1998: 20) asks how second-language speaking develops. However, in the research which he reports on and summarises, the student is quite lost sight of by those researchers. The standpoint of the work reviewed is directed towards *language*, and processing of language. See Appendix C, sec. 2.2 here, on page 56 for a discussion, drawing from Dewey, of the limitations of this approach.

[21] See von Glasersfeld (1994)(ed.), *Radical Constructivism in Mathematics Education*. Von Glasersfeld (1995: ch. 3) discusses Piaget's theory of learning, based on several years study by him of Piaget.

[22] Paul Hager proposes an understanding of learning as a *"renovation and expansion of previous knowledge via the experience of dealing with new situations in new settings*" (2009: 620), in other words, learning starts from adapting to prior knowledge. For Piaget: *" ...no behaviour, even if it is new to the individual, constitutes an absolute beginning. It is always grafted onto previous (knowledge), and therefore amounts to assimilating new elements to already constituted structures "*, quoted in von Glasersfeld (1995: 62) If acknowledging an element *of adapting* old knowledge to new problems, then questions arise as to how this adaptation is achieved by the learner, and of how the teacher can assist. In order to do this the concept of *schema* (below 2.4.1 & 2.7) seems to be helpful. Popper, who was a school physics teacher in Vienna, writes: "*All learning is a modification (it may be a refutation) of some prior knowledge"* (From sec. 10, on language learning, of his, Unended Quest [1976:52]). Also see Dewey 1929: *The Quest for Certainty*, ch. 8, and also see pages 60/61 in this text which discusses some implications of that chapter, and of Dewey's work, for understanding learning.)

3. Students learn, in part, in different ways, following differing 'learning routes' (See Brumfit 1984: 59; Hirst: 1973) [discussed in 2.7 below]. Also see Naiman et al (1995 new ed: 228, and the preface by Brumfit.)
4. The student makes his own knowledge. (See Dewey 1929: ch 8 on knowledge, and see the final section 4 of Appendix C, here [page 60], for a summary of that important chapter, on knowledge as *made in action*)
5. Practice (with certain conditions present) results in successful *transfer* of what has been learned to real situations, as in real-life problem solving.
(Maltby et al : 1995: ch. 8, discussed below)
6. Concluding hypothesis: students construct their understanding through a perhaps unspecifiable process of: **hypothesis formation**; **hypothesis testing**; and **confirmation**[24] *through interacting with materials* [25].

These are complex ideas –and learning and teaching speaking is a complex enterprise.

2.3 John Dewey on learning [This section is developed on page 60 below]

In his work Dewey argues for these ideas about learning:

- New learning starts from prior knowledge and 'doubt' (1 above)
- Student tests out and confirms hypotheses about new concepts (6 above)

Dewey writes: *" the origin of thinking is some perplexity , confusion or doubt ... given a difficulty, the next step is (some) suggestion of some way out ... the entertaining of some (hypothesis) which will (help towards) some solution for the problem. The data at hand cannot supply the solution; they can only suggest it. What, then, are the sources of the suggestion? Clearly past examples and prior knowledge ... (without prior knowledge or experience) confusion remains mere confusion. There is nothing upon which to draw in order to clarify it"* (Dewey 1910: 12. Or see Dewey (1916: 46-47, EMEREO reprint) [26]

Following up these insights Dewey writes, concerning the presentation of a new concept to students, that the teacher's problem is as follows:

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[23] By the word 'interaction', I do not necessarily mean social interaction. 'Interaction' can be **engagement with materials** (argued for below), as for example reading is often understood as relating to and engaging with a text. The idea of 'interaction-with materials' has not been explored for learning speaking, so far as I know. For example, the study by Naiman et al , *The Good Language Learner*, (1978, 1995 new ed.) which tries to understand successful language learning does not discuss student interaction with materials, but only overt interaction in the classroom. Covert, or invisible, interaction with materials is, also, not referred to in work which is reported on by Bygate (1998).

[24] The question as to how integration of new knowledge to old is achieved is considered by Polanyi (1964: 138/39). For him, integration always seems to be *subliminal*, and so cannot be studied through normal observation. Also see von Glasersfeld (1991: xiv; and 1995: 62/63). Also see Brumfit in Naiman et al (1978, 1995: vii – ix). See especially the citations in the following two footnotes.

[25] These hypotheses seem to have received some validation in Mathematics Education, in Skemp's teaching material, which is notable for having extensive examples and exercises, and also for the grading and differentiation in exercises. See Dewey (1916: chs. II & VI) for a fuller inventory of processes and strategies which seem to occur in learning (esp. pp. 24, 43 & 50 of the EMEREO reprint, which is pp. 88-89; 172 & 197-98 of the original edition.) [Discussed on page 60 below]

[26] See Dewey (1910: 12; 13; 26; 204 & 210). Also see Dewey 1929: 149-50. Or see Dewey (1916) for a fuller statement, in ch. VI, pp. 183-197 [which is pp. 46-50 of the EMEREO reprint]. Also see the first three sections of the Introduction to (ibid), and ch. II of Dewey (1916).

"How shall I present the matter so as to fit economically and effectively into their present equipment? What activities of their own may bring it home to them" (1910: 205, my emphasis)

Dewey argues (ibid: 212-13) that mechanical exercises (for EFL this would imply the controlled practice stage) allow the student to confirm understanding, that is, to confirm their own hypothesis about the new concept they are learning.(Assumption 5)

2.4 Ausubel on concept formation. What is language? David Crystal, quoted above and summarising work by Saussure, views language as an interconnecting network. Crystal writes: *"We have here then, the basis of a concept of language as a vast network of structures and systems"*(Crystal 1971: 163).[27] This view of language has been challenged in the last decades. Brumfit, for example, has surveyed other understandings of language (1984: sec. 2.1), but in my own teaching experience I have not found the socio-cultural understandings of language which he summarises relevant for helping *lower-level students* solve their problem of navigating their way through to the target language. (Again, see Hirst 1973 or, more accessible, Pring 2007: 97-103). I have found that, on the contrary, an overly sociolinguistic component in materials can easily distract students from their core problem of *learning the language*. (See Swan' Language Teaching is Teaching Language, in his 2012).

Especially, I have not found a sociolinguistic understanding of English helpful when working with adults who were puzzled by English and failed to learn it when at school. This was my experience from teaching on many remedial intensive courses for adults in Belgium in the 1980s. My students (with their history of failing to learn) wanted a clear map of basic English, in other words, a simple and clearly understood foundation which they could build on later, as needed. A sociolinguistic understanding of English offers neither a clear map nor a clear foundation for students' future learning, in my experience. [See 2.7 on schemas below]

What are the implications of Saussure and Crystal's 'network' understanding of language (which I follow) for teaching and learning EFL? One implication would seem to be that the student's problem is to understand and then apply this network or map. Failure occurs if this map is not learned, or is misconceived or misunderstood.

2.4.1 For Ausubel, in a preamble to his discussion of the learning of concepts (1968: 505-08) he follows philosophy in proposing that our way of seeing the world is in terms of 'concepts', which taken together, make up a '*schema*' allowing us to claim an understanding of the world, although the price we pay for this understanding is that it will be partial, as our chosen concepts are only one possible way of seeing the world: they are 'constructs'. How is this achieved? Ausubel writes: (508- 09)

"conceptual development involves a continuous series of reorganisation in which existing concepts are modified as they interact with new

[27] Note that this summary of Saussure by Crystal addresses the question "What *is* language?", and not the deceptively similar question "What is the *function* of language?", which can be perhaps answered by the statement "The basic function of language is communication." (Joseph Greenberg). The frequent conflation of these two questions, when combined with conflation with a third question "How is language to be learned?, has often resulted in a confused understanding that we need to (and can) *teach communication*! Do we? *Can we?* The lesson to be learnt is perhaps to be clear about what questions one is addressing when making a claim about learning and teaching. See Appendix C here (section 1.4.1 , pages 53/54) for an expansion of this footnote.

(information ... and*... the second-language learner) learns to perceive, analyse and acquire new meaning selectively in terms of classificatory schemes available to him in his mother tongue"* (my emphasis)[28]

Schemas (conceptual networks or systems for an area of knowing)
Schemas belong to individuals. But how, specifically, is the 'selective' and 'classificatory' work actually carried out? Ausubel's answer (ibid: 510) includes: hypothesis generation and generalisation with the hypotheses from *"existing concepts' of propositions in his cognitive structure"*.(his emphasis). Although Ausubel (who seems to draw on Dewey) does not offer a discussion of second language learning one can suggest two implications:

1. Learning a second language is more complex than simply adding to existing knowledge, and so an 'acquisition metaphor' is too simple. The student needs to go into his existing understanding (i.e. schemas or maps) and try to integrate new understanding to that prior knowledge which is more complex than adding new building blocks. (The idea of the student's schema is explored by Skemp for maths learning, below).[29]
2. In order to learn, the student must: "*go through a process of abstracting, differentiating, hypothesis generation and hypothesis testing and generalising"*[30]

It seems clear that no one can do this very complex work for the student – and which in any case seems to be subliminal. Also, different student are at different places in doing this work, as each starts from different prior knowledge, and maybe different misconceptions . So, the student must do the work for himself, in his own way, in his own time.[31] The learning problem becomes even more complex if we agree with Ausubel (who here introduces the problem of 'transfer' of learning) that:

"It is obviously one thing to acquire a concept and quite another to use it in learning related to new meanings and in solving problems"(ibid: 509)

2.4.2 So**,** Ausubel emphasises the need for the student to anchor the new concept into his existing conceptual schema (ibid: 518), as well as the need for practice opportunities giving opportunities for verbalisation of new understanding, with opportunities to test out hypotheses (ibid: 523). This would imply that to go straight

[28] On cognitive learning see Skehan (1998: 1-11; 260-65); Claxton (1996) & Illeris (2006). Swan asks *"Why is so little attention paid ... to what students already know?* (2012: 26)

[29] Herbert Seliger argues that learning is an example of the growth of knowledge. There is an important passage in his (1983: 180-81), which is relevant to the argument presented here. In this passage, he tries to understand the learner's subjective experience. He argues that the learner is constantly searching for patterns, connections and hypotheses.

[30] Hypothesis 6 above, which draws from Dewey's work on thinking processes: see footnotes in 2.3 above). This series of steps given here would also seem to be compatible with an aspect of Piaget's learning theory, which von Glasersfeld summarises, acknowledging Piaget: *"cognitive change and learning ... take place when a scheme, instead of producing the expected result, leads to a perturbation, and perturbation in turn leads to an accommodation that maintains or re-establishes equilibrium (1995: 68).* (3.1 below, and the first footnote in that section)

[31] Graham Nuthall (although not specifically referring to EFLT) writes, after a career researching the classroom: *"students already know at least 40% of what the teacher intends them to learn (and) this prior knowledge (varies with) individual students"* (2005: see the interesting passage from 910 to 922).

into free practice (which belongs to the transfer stage of learning a new concept) is to risk a wrong hypothesis being reinforced. Ausubel emphasises that the student *needs time and space* to do his reorganisation work (ibid: 526). Without this space, he will be pressurised into premature confirmation of a possibly wrong hypothesis. For EFL, an implication of the student's constant reference to his first language is that the student will need adequate space and time to go through the concept learning-and – teaching process, in order to leave behind him his first language. (1.2 and 1.7 above)

2.5 In secondary mathematics learning (I draw on my own experience here) , the teacher typically introduces a new concept by writing on the board some examples of the new concept, in the context of solving a question. From her experience, the teacher knows that to try and *explain*, or transmit the new concept to the class, does not help the individual student to grasp it – at least, not until the student has seen examples, and attempted some questions himself. From the examples given on the board and in his coursebook, however, the student, in his own time, seems to fit the new concept into his schema of prior knowledge. The experienced teacher will know at what point to give the class a rule which confirms for students their provisional grasp of the concept, although this is a difficult decision because different students will be at different stages in their 'concept formation route' (Hirst: 1973).

However, the problem for the language learner is more complex than for the mathematics learner: The second language learner has two starting points for his prior knowledge, *two available schemas* of language – the target language and his first language, and he cannot be sure which one to rely on as a starting point. If he knew, he would be half-way to understanding the target language. [32]

Relating to affective factors, Ausubel points out that the more anxious students will want to quickly move to premature closure, to remove their anxiety, with the risk of misconceptions being confirmed, and that this 'tendency-to-premature-closure' can be discouraged *by giving the student space and time* to make connections. In this way, the affective issues have not been neglected. Ausubel's cognitive approach, therefore, respects the importance of affective factors. An appreciation of the student's problems in his internal learning process learning, as presented above, helps the teacher to relax the student, by giving him enough time and space to do this very complex work. In my experience, however, secondary teachers typically move through work *too quickly*, pressurised by the need to 'cover work' or by an impending test or by stronger, more demanding, students who become restless when they think they 'know' the work being done, even though other students need more time on it.

2.6 Implications and restatement of the argument We can't begin to help our students unless and until we know what their learning problems are, and in the above sections I have tried to begin to understand their problems, in order to address Swan's question: *"What happens in people's heads when they learn languages, and how can we make it happen more effectively?"* What might be some practical implications of these insights into the student's 'internal' problems (as outlined above) in order to understand the student's learning needs? I have proposed above that he needs:

[32] See Naiman et al *The Good Language Learner* (1995: 24-26), on the student using his first language as a reference point. Also see Krashen & Terrell (1983: 40-42) for a short discussion of this problem. See Claxton (1996) for thinking on issues in the paragraph which follows this one.

1. Time, space, opportunities to make his own connections
2. Appropriate material which allows him opportunities, in his own mind, to try out hypotheses, perhaps find they are wrong, formulate a fresh hypothesis, test a new hypothesis,etc. (The idea that learning is a process involving several stages in found in Dewey. See below p. 61 sec 3)

As a corollary of the above, if the above two conditions are absent, the student's problem will be proportionally greater. Further, without these conditions, and opportunities for anchoring the new concept within his schema, false confirmation may arise within his schema instead of true understanding. (Ausubel [ibid: 519/20], and 2.5 above, last paragraph.). [33]

I conclude: if the above summary of aspects of the work of Dewey and Ausubel is accepted, then we see that their arguments lead to similar pedagogical principles as given in [1.2] above, discussed in Swan (2012), with the addition of the need for time and space for the student to do this work [1.2, numbers 9,10 & 11

2.7 Schemas (i.e. maps) and student learning routes

The idea of continual reorganisation of the student's schema or schemas, referred to above, implies that an understanding of learning which relies on a model of 'acquisition' (in the sense of simple addition to an existing store or knowledge) is too simple. This is because the student is not simply *adding* to his understanding, but that he is *constructing and reconstructing* his understanding in an extremely complex way which includes reconceiving what he has already grasped. (On the complexity of the learning process see Dewey (1916: ch. 2; & ch. 6: *Some stages of logical thought*). It seems quite possible that the details of these processes are ultimately unspecifiable.

There is a clear presentation of the concept of schema in Maltby et al (1995). These writers understand schemas as maps, and remark:

> *" the best ways in which to develop and use maps are not known. You have to experiment ... (they) provide a way of understanding of how the mind experiences information ... they are existing mental structures which allow us to learn new information"* (ibid: 267)

Concerning their relevance to the assumption that all learning necessarily starts within the context of prior knowledge they write:

> *" ... (schemas) contain states into which we fit our experience ... the schemas (which the students) bring to an instructional situation are as important as the actual oral or written message which makes up instruction. When new instruction fits an existing schema, it is more easily remembered"* (ibid: 267, 269. My emphasis)

This idea seems compatible with the pedagogical principle given by Swan: "Start from what what student's know" [1.2.4]. (Also see James 1906: 21-23)

In a discussion of pedagogy by Jack Richards (2007) some of the principles and strategies which he proposes (ibid: 155-56, # 2, 3, 5, 7 & 9) seem, to me, to be compatible with a constructivist understanding of learning. (I do not know of a discussion of constructivist understandings of learning in the EFLT literature, but see Seliger [1983:180-81], & Barbara Jaworski [1994] for maths education).

[33] What is 'understanding'? Skemp proposes: *"To understand something means to assimilate it into an appropriate schema"* (1986, 2nd ed.: 43).

Learning routes[34] If we assume that a student follows an individual learning route (Hirst 1973) based on his prior knowledge and his own preferred learning strategies (hypotheses 1 and 3), it seems to follow that in order to assimilate and benefit from new knowledge the following principle applies:
"New work needs to be introduced at a time when a student can appreciate the link between that new work, and with where he currently is in his learning route."
Illeris writes:

> *"learning ... always concerns something new being linked to what was already in place – and that which is already in place differs from person to person"* (2006: 38, my emphasis).

Graham Nuthall, in an important paper, understands that different students are at different places (Nuthall 2005) [35] , and both Illeris and Nuthall understand that a teacher who is working with a large class cannot possibly take into account where each student is on their own learning path. In this sense pedagogy is, by definition, out of the teacher's hands. What the teacher can do, however, is to introduce work and materials in *such a way* which allows as many students as possible to extract something from it. What might 'such a way' imply, or consist of? Can some general conditions be stated?

One condition might be that work and materials should be introduced in a non-intrusive way which allows students to, in their own way, extract what they need. This would, in practice, seem to imply space and time given to the student, and brings us back to a pedagogical principle of minimum teacher interventions, and so minimum teacher-talking-time. It implies materials which are differentiated in level, as given in the list of pedagogical principles above (1.2, numbers 9-11).

2.8 Finally, according to Cooper and McIntyre (1996: 22), *"students who control their learning are likely to use previously learned skills when acquiring new ones"*. If this is so, it would imply that pedagogy and materials require to be presented to the student in such a way that students are *in control of their learning, i.e.,using their own individual, established and preferred learning strategies*, this requiring from pedagogy and materials space, time, differentiation of level and practice opportunities, taking account of different student learning styles and speeds. Once again, this returns us to some of the pedagogical principles in section 1.2 above.

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[34] In referring to a student's 'learning route', Hirst (1973), who I follow, does not propose that each student has a completely individual one. It may be that, for all EFL learners, certain concepts need to be mastered in a certain order (ibid: 120-26). However, this can still leave the student freedom to learn material, following his own route, which can be constructed around a main framework. Problems/difficulties are going to come when either, firstly, concepts from the L1 interfere with acquisition of L2 concepts, or secondly, when a concept which depends on an earlier concept cannot be grasped because the earlier concept has not been grasped. The second problem is referred to in Hirst (ibid). One implication of this very interesting paper (briefly referred to by Brumfit [1984: 15]), and of the ideas presented in it is the following: If there is not one unique order in which some (non-key) concepts must be mastered, and granting that the students will be doing the concept construction work in their own way, then the teacher's work is not to get in the way of students, because they will be at different places on their routes. This last idea has been explored in Mathematics Education. (3.2 below, & essay in preparation). Also see Illeris (2006).

[35] The paper by Nuthall cited here (2005) is a key paper on methodological assumptions in doing classroom research, and also provides an alternative perspective to an understanding the classroom in exclusively social terms. See especially: the abstract; pp. 899-905; 910-913 & 916-22. Also see Nuthall (2004). Graham Nuthall researched the classroom for 35 years, in New Zealand and Australia.

3. IMPLICATIONS FOR PEDAGOGY AND MATERIALS

3.1 Maltby et al explore the implications for teaching of *'transfer'*(1995: 289-91). (They do not refer to Modern Language Teaching). In EFLT, this would mean the stage of moving from controlled to freer practice. They suggest for example:(302-06):

1. Make the training situation as similar to the real-world situation as possible, and let the problem selected be *"messy and complex"*, as the real world is;
2. Provide lots of practice on the (mechanical) tasks, and do this before you ask students to transfer their learning to more realistic situations;
3. Watch for negative transfer (i.e., misconceptions);
4. Provide the students with conceptual models (i.e., examples);
5. Provide a great deal of practice on related problems (so allowing students to develop a schema to incorporate a new concept through analogy)

An implication, for materials, of a constructivist theory of '*knowing'* (note the active *constructing* connotation of 'knowing', contrasted with *'knowledge'* and the fixed, passive connotation of the word 'knowledge') is that the language in materials *"does not **transport** knowledge, it must and can be used to **orient** a student's own conceptual construction*". [36] (von Glasersfeld 1991: xiv, my emphases). Materials become a 'pointer', a 'helper-on-the way', assisting a process and not providing answers.

Michael Swan, in a different context, but perhaps with the same idea in mind, has used the metaphor of material as 'a bridge'. A common thread, again, in these pedagogical suggestions is to give the student space and time to work things out. We see that a constructivist metaphor of learning returns us to pedagogical principles, deriving from a craft tradition, which are given by Swan (2012). Why should this be? I believe that we have this consistency - of pedagogical principles matching with the view of learning I have summarised - because a constructivist view of learning matches well the practicalities and realities of learning. [37]

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[36] This understanding of 'knowing' as being created *in action* is argued for by Dewey (1929: **esp. ch.8**. Also see chapters 1 & 7. See page 60 of Appendix C here for a summary of chapter 8.) However, Dewey is only part of a long tradition of understanding 'knowledge as made by the knower'. [See Randall (1960) on Aristotle], leading to Ernest Von Glasersfeld, who writes (1991: xiv, the emphases are his): *"Radical Constructivism, I want to emphasise, is a theory of **active knowing**, rather than a traditional theory of knowledge or epistemology. From this standpoint , as Piaget maintained fifty years ago, **knowledge serves to organise experience**, not to depict or represent an experience – independent reality"*. An underpinning for this statement, in the context of the history of philosophy, is given in ch. 2 of Glasersfeld (1995). Also see the Introduction by Marjorie Grene to Polanyi's collection of essays Knowing and Being (1969), RKP, and see the eponymous essay by Polanyi in that collection. See page 60 in this text for a summary of Dewey's understanding of knowledge (Dewey 1929: ch. 8), and for a discussion of the implications of that Dewey's thought on 'knowledge' for understanding learning.

[37] In a survey of 'Methodological Issues in the Teaching of Speaking' by Burns (1998), the work which she surveys does not seem to consider whether students are able, for themselves , to transfer first language skills to their target language. The assumption by researchers is generally that students need to be guided in this process by their teacher. But is this assumption justified – would appropriate materials allow the learner to make this transfer for themselves, for the reasons argued in this essay?

3.2 Some work in Mathematics Education

Richard Skemp believed that an understanding of a student's schemas was a key entry point to understanding the learning of mathematics, and so for understanding the occasions when intervention is required, and not required [38]. Skemp notes:

- New experience which fits into an existing schema is much better remembered (1986: 41);
- Because schemas are '*reluctantly abandoned'* by the learner, they can be an impediment to new learning (ibid: 41). This is why reconstruction of a schema is often required (ibid: 41/42). (An example would be that when students [at about the age of 11/12] are introduced to negative numbers, they need to reconstruct their schema of their understanding of number.)
- Skemp (ibid) argues that an implication of a constructivist theory of learning: *"would seem to be to try to lay a well-structured foundation of basic mathematical ideas on which the learner can build in whatever future direction becomes necessary: that is, to ... help one's pupils to find the basic pattern"*

Turning now to specific pedagogical implications, Skemp approaches the problem with this question: 'How are new schemas to be introduced by the teacher?' He proposes:

- The gap between the new idea and the existing schema should not be too great, implying that …
- Learners may need intervening steps (ibid: 76). (See the pedagogical principles above [1.2.1 & 1.2.3] from Swan, on breaking down learning into manageable steps)
- *"never put before the learner anything which does not relate by easy steps to what is already known"* (ibid: 77)(Again, see [1.2] above).
- Allow for reflective activity (ibid: 77). This relates to the pedagogical principle of giving the student time, in order that he may carry out this reflection
- Help the student to see structure (ibid: 78/79)
- Elementary processes need to become automatic (ibid: 83).

These pedagogical implications, and the ones given in (3.1) above, match well, once again, with those proposed in Section 1.2 by Swan and myself for EFLT. [39]

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[38] Richard Skemp, before working at the University of Warwick in the 1970s, was a Mathematics teacher. His thinking attracted a following amongst educators interested in how the mathematics student learns. (Tall 2002; Gray 2002). His main work is the short book, *The Psychology of learning mathematics* (2nd. ed. 1986, Penguin). See Simon (2000) on constructivist ideas of learning in maths.

[39] Skemp concludes this chapter: *"English and mathematics have both been described by Bruner as '*a calculus of thought'*, and it is their symbol-system which makes them so".* It goes beyond the scope of this essay to consider how these ideas from Mathematics Education are applicable to EFLT, and I must leave aside further discussion of Skemp's work, and of some work which has built on both his ideas, as well as of work of von Glasersfeld, who gives a lot of attention to mathematics learning using a constructivist understanding. See Tall (2002); Malcolm Swan (2001); Orton & Wain eds (1994); Orton (1987); and Frobisher (1994). Especially see Skemp (1976); von Glasersfeld (ed, 1991, 1994 & 1995 ch.10); Steffe (2000) & Simon (2000). **See especially Barbara Jaworski (1994: chs. 2 & 11),** which is a clear exploration of applying ideas from a constructivist understanding of learning to a school subject. The work for EFLT suggested by this work in Mathematics Education would seem to be an exploration of how far an analogy between mathematics and second language learning (and failure to learn) can be argued for (essay in preparation).

4. CONCLUSIONS AND FOLLOW-UP WORK

4.1 The above study of a constructivist model of understanding language learning led us back to a focus on the interaction the student has with materials (see 1.4 & 1.4.1 above). Also, it seems to 'uncover' a neglected tradition of teaching speaking, which was an approach based on a cognitive understanding of learning EFLT (Richards 1984: 9), and which was arguably eclipsed by post-1980 ideas.

4.2 Drawing on philosophy, Ausubel (section 2.4.1 above) pointed out that our understanding of the world can only be partial, as we relate to the world through a prism of concepts and assumptions which are necessarily incomplete. In addition, since materials, teaching and learning seem to make up a closely linked network, I further conclude that our understanding of teaching and learning must be incomplete and partial so long as we view these concepts in isolation from each other. We need to understand in particular the connection between materials and pedagogy, as argued in Section 1. (For a discussion of issues underlying this approach, see App. C, p. 55)

4.3 It could be objected that the discussion of teaching and learning above is too technical, and has neglected the affective, social and cultural aspects of learning a language. I have not focused on these aspects because, firstly, it would have made the argument offered more complex, and secondly, because the student's 'technical problems' of learning have been neglected since about 1980. Thirdly, there is no reason why, having explored both technical and social aspects of learning, the two cannot be integrated. I argued for these points above [1.10; 2.1; 2.4; 2.4.2; & 2.5].

4.4 We can now try to answer Swan's question

- *"How can we make learning happen more effectively?"*

and at the same time propose an answer to the question

- *'What is teaching speaking?'*.

The answers are perhaps:

1. "By using materials with appropriate pedagogical principles"; and then
2. "By not getting in the way of learning".

The corollary follows that, if we do not meet these conditions, learning may not occur, or may not be effective.

4.5 Suggestions for follow up work

1) How can we study and research student learning processes? How can we investigate and understand why, and where, they break down? This is the theme proposed for the next (2017) issue of *Radical TEFL*: (see pp. 44-46)
"Investigating student failure to learn in the secondary classroom".

2) What might some implications of the arguments offered here be for the teaching of other aspects of EFLT: vocabulary, writing, etc.?

3) ***"****What can EFLT learn from the teaching and learning of other school subjects?"* (which could include different approaches to EFL in different countries). This is the theme proposed for the March 2018 *Radical TEFL*.

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E-version, January 2016/ 6TS 68
(With some minor amendments and corrections from the print version, and additions to footnotes)

MAGDA'S WEEK

(It is now Sunday – so use the simple past tense)

	From 8 to 8.45	**From 8.50 to 9.35**	**From 9.40 to 10.25**	**In the Afternoon**	**In the evening**
Monday	Have/ English	Have / free a lesson	German	Stay in / phone friends	Watch television / Do some homework
Tuesday	Have maths	Go to the library / Do maths homework	History	Do/ homework	Have a bath/ Go to bed early
Wednesday	Have chemistry	Have a free lessson	Maths	Go/ swimming Update/ Facebook	Do English homework/ Read/ Go to bed at 9.30
Thursday	Have a free lesson / Get up late	Religion	Physics	Cook/ supper/ with/ mother	Do maths homework/ / Phone friend .
Friday	Go swimming with my class	More English/ writing lesson	Biology	Look after / brother	Watch/TV Play / computer
Saturday	Stay in bed	Have a shower/ Have breakfast	Help with shopping	Meet my friends. Go shopping in town	Go to/ cinema/ Go to bed late

VERBS TO USE

- to have maths / chemistry / English
- to go swimming / to go shopping /to go to the cinema
- to do homework / to phone a friend
- to have a free lesson
- to look after my brother
- to help with shopping
- to have a shower / a bath
- to go to bed at 9.30 / late / early

MAGDA'S WEEK / Teaching Notes

(See pages 64/65 for more teaching notes)

- This activity practises the simple past tense for students who can already use this tense under controlled conditions but not for more creative and real-time use. This activity provides a link from controlled practice to spontaneous production.
- Students work in pairs, and about five minutes can be spent asking and answering questions for each stage: (Work is gone through on the board as required, also)

1) First, one student takes the role of Magda, and her partner asks questions as follows:
   "What did you do on Monday from eight to eight forty-five?"
   Answer: *"I .... "*

2) Followed by five minutes on the question form:
   "What did Magda do .....?"
   Answer: *"Magda ... .. "*

3) This is then followed by five minutes on the question form:
   "What did Magda and her friend do .... ?"
   Answer: *"They ... "*

4) And next, combining the last two questions.

5)`The following forms can be practised:
   "Did you ... ..?"
   "Did Magda ...?"
   "Did Magda and her friend ...?"

6)`Other varieties can be practised:
   "What else did Magda do on Monday?"
   Answer: *"She also ... "*
   "What did Magda and her friend do on Friday evening?" etc
   Answer*: "They also "*

7) Finally, the stronger students, who have worked through the material, can ask each other questions for free practice:
   "Ask your partner about:
   her day yesterday / last week at home / last year's holiday"
(Differentiation opportunities: Weaker students can be asked to write dialogues to get more practice on the basic pattern of the simple last tense. They can also spend plenty of speaking time on the basic question and answer patterns; there is no pressure to move onto other forms. The stronger students can talk about next week: See App. A)

Some questions sound unnatural, but the aim of this activity is to give plenty of practice on the patterns: once students have got these 'fixed' they can then use them in freer and more natural situations. It is arguably a strategic mistake to go too quickly from controlled to free work. The teacher's work is to tell students when to move onto more advanced questions, i.e., to organise the pacing. The materials will take more than one lesson to use. The grid can be used for practising other tenses. Using this activity helped my students in a Polish secondary school to move from passive understanding to real use in the simple past, and in other tenses.

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Sources of evidence for the argument offered
My main empirical sources for the ideas and argument offered here are: my experience of teaching Mathematics in secondary schools; of teaching EFL in secondary schools and; of teaching in the private sector to adults who failed to understand and learn English at school. Other sources are my PGCE course, and working with pre-service teachers, in Poland, during their classroom research.

About the author
Alistair Maclean studied Physics, Chemistry and The History and Philosophy of Science, and graduated in Philosophy. He has taught Mathematics in secondary schools in England and secondary EFL in Poland, and has also worked with pre-service and in-service EFL teachers. He was a research student with Christopher Brumfit in the 1980s, and tried unsuccessfully to link Philosophy with EFLT. He lived and taught in Poland for 20 years, and edited *The Polish Teacher Trainer* (1993-95, 10 issues published). He taught *Theory of Knowledge (TOK)* for the International Baccalaureate (Bilingual) Diploma, in Poland (2009-2011). *Radical TEFL* is his retirement project. Correspondence: alistair.maclean@outlook.com

APPENDICES

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***Radical TEFL*, 3, March 2016**

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APPENDIX [A]
ON DIFFERENTIATION OF LEVEL IN MATERIALS

The word 'differentiation' in education is used to mean that work which the student is asked to do is available to him at different levels. I argue in this essay that the teacher, alone, cannot provide sufficient differentiation opportunities in a large class, and that she needs her materials do this for her, making materials an extension of her work. (See the 4 EFLT activities, '*Magda's Week*' [page 38], and 3 others in Appendix E [pp. 64 -75] for examples of how differentiation can be designed into activities.) The concept of differentiation, and of the need for it, is not normally discussed in the EFLT literature.

There are two aspects of this difference in level. Firstly, for example in mathematics education, a typical situation in a class is that some students have not understood newly presented work, and so need more practice at a basic level (from earlier work, on which the new work relies). At the same time, stronger students will have grasped both the new work and the previous foundation work, and would benefit from advanced extension work, allowing them to be 'stretched' into new trying to understand, on their own, new concepts, difficulties and connections (without such challenges they will become bored, restless, and 'underachieve'.) The second aspect of the need for differentiation is that for all students, it is beneficial to work on practice material which is graded in difficulty, as this allows foundations to be secure before trying more advanced work which relies on a good understanding of those foundations, with some 'overlearning' to make secure these foundations.

Differentiation can be designed into material when the new difficulty to be practised can become more complex and so the technical difficulties greater (e.g., as in progression through the difficulties in using the simple past tense). This differentiation can be seen in any well-designed activity. In "*Magda's Week*" (page 38), the differentiation is clearly seen as the questions progress both from simple to more complex, but also in the answers required (e.g., more complex verb forms, and/or the response needs to be more creative).

> (NB: Now please refer to the following three activities, designed for teenagers, which are only in the electronic version: *Checking into a Youth Hostel* [p. 66]; *Booking a Holiday* [p. 69]; and *Asking about an English course* [p. 73]).

Another form of differentiation is seen in "*Checking into a Youth Hostel*", where the situation which needs to be resolved becomes more unpredictable and realistic in the later questions, as the traveller needs to deal with unanticipated problems (the hostel is full, or the traveller can't use his sleeping bag, etc). The successful student has now transferred his understanding to real-life use.

In the 3rd and 4th activities, (*"Booking a Holiday*" and "*Asking about an English course"*), the situations are straightforward at the beginning, requiring only straightforward information requests and answers. However, surprises are introduced in the more difficult questions towards the end of each set of questions, and there the person who asks the questions may need to start answering them, as the responder needs to ask questions to clarify the situation – as in a real-life situation.

A problem with functional-notional-communicative approaches is that it is difficult to create activities which are long enough to design differentiation into. Since it is difficult to write a long activity based on notional-functional-communicative syllabuses, the students gets less on-time practice opportunities than when doing more traditional spoken exercises. The problem for the publisher is how to write material in a way which cannot simply be photocopied. It may be that it is because of a fear of photocopying that many EFLT activities are too short, and 'bitty', to allow differentiation to be designed into them.

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APPENDIX [B] SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT OF THE FOUR ESSAYS

This essay is the second part of a four-part enquiry which attempts to understand why students fail to learn to speak in a large secondary-school class. The first part (my 2015, How can a teacher grow her knowledge?) argues that the entry point for new understanding or knowledge about the classroom encounter is to start from a clearly understood problem. This essay also argues for a recovery of 'practical' knowledge for teaching, or pedagogy. In this second part, What is teaching speaking? (which develops section 4 of the first part), I start from the student's problem of relating to materials, in order to better understand the role of teacher and materials.

But how can we better *investigate and enquire* into the student's learning problems? In the third part (in preparation), I argue for a broadening of the concept of research, to meet the special methodological problems involved in researching the classroom and the learning process. How can we 'get inside' the student's learning processes? Do we need to understand EFLT learning processes, and understand where they break down and fail, in order to understand a failing student? [See p. 77 below]. The fourth part (in preparation) tries to learn from Mathematics Education which has similarly tried to understand the student's problems. It will focus on student interaction with materials as a key to understanding success, or failure to learn mathematics.

In order to grasp student failure, I believe that one needs to draw from outside the literature and thinking which EFLT normally cites and uses as a source of ideas. The first essay draws on epistemology and studies of how knowledge grows. This second essay draws from literature in education. The third part will draw on discussion of research methods, and methodological issues in doing educational research, especially on classroom research methods in education (e.g., the work of Wilfred Carr and Martyn Hammersely). The fourth part will draw from literature in Mathematics Education (Richard Skemp and followers; Ernest von Glasersfeld; Steffe and others). That essay will argue, by analogy, that we can anticipate and prevent failure by learning lessons from Mathematics Education.

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***Radical TEFL* 3, March 2016**

APPENDIX [C] (Bibliography on page 41)
ON THE METHOD OF THE ESSAY "What is teaching speaking?": HOW CAN ONE ANALYSE AN EDUCATIONAL CONCEPT?

An attempt to investigate a topic or problem in a systematic way involves epistemological assumptions about knowledge and about how knowledge grows, as well as methodological assumptions about research procedure. These assumptions can be looked for and then examined at different depths – or not looked for or examined at all. Because my main and underlying interest in writing these essays is to explore foundations for enquiry in EFLT, and because I am interested in exploring roots and foundations for practice in EFLT, I am publishing this appendix for those similarly interested in the foundations of practice and enquiry into EFLT.

INTRODUCTION. The underlying method used in this essay, leading to claims about pedagogy, is based on evidence from three sources:

1. **Experience:** my own teaching experience (combined with working with and observing teachers), especially secondary-school teaching experience. The first section includes a classification of teaching into three separate aspects [Section. 1.1], based on observation of the classroom, and then of observation the learner as he learns. [Sec. 1.4]
2. **Literature in Education:** citations and quotes from work in education which has given attention to pedagogy and learning. [Footnote 6 on p. 16]
3. **An argument** which, starting from some pedagogical principles derived from experience [section 1.2], then explores 'teaching', and via a digression into learning, presents an argument which returns to the same pedagogical principles introduced at the beginning.

The standpoint adopted is that of the student [sections 1.4; 1.4.1; & 2.0 in the text].

In the opening sections, the essay is, at first, a study of the concepts and practice of 'teaching'. The argument led to a study of 'materials [section 1.5], and of 'learning' [section 2] – and of the relationships between those three concepts. The following questions underlie the study, which I will explore here, in turn:

> **Question 1**: How does one enquire into a concept or idea? [p. 50]
> **Question 2:** If concepts cannot be studied in isolation from each other – as argued in the main text – how can we study the network which they make up, that is, the relationships between them? [p. 55]
> **Question 3:** Rather than studying concepts in an ahistorical or fixed sense, do we need to study their evolution? [p.56]

As an introduction to addressing the three questions given above, I take as a starting point for discussion Professor Paul Hirst's paper, *What is Teaching?*, which raises several methodological issues and presuppositions of how one can enquire into, or analyse, a concept. It is relevant that Hirst (Professor of Education at the University of Cambridge from 1971 to 1988) was for five years a secondary mathematics teacher, and so was able to integrate into his academic work an understanding of the problems and questions surrounding the secondary-school teaching and learning of a skills subject. My text builds on Hirst's paper.

Hirst's paper *What is Teaching?* (1971)

How does one begin to enquire into the meaning of an idea such as 'teaching', or 'learning' or 'speaking'? Hirst's paper, directed at the concept of teaching, provides a good example for similar attempts, both for the way it proceeds and for what it perhaps neglects. Hirst's paper can be summarised as follows:

> Teaching seems to be the intention to bring about learning, however, we cannot properly study the idea of teaching unless and until we have a better understanding of learning.

I start from this paper as Hirst here seems to lay the foundation for any study on the idea or concept of teaching.

Hirst begins his paper with an exercise in classification, by citing examples of teaching, as I have done in my Section [1.1]. He then carries out an analysis of 'teaching', in the tradition of linguistic analysis in philosophy which was then available to him. Hirst concluded, at the end of his analysis, that any attempt to understand teaching requires an understanding of learning (see quote by Hirst at the beginning of my section [1.4]). In this sense, he does not propose an answer to his question 'What is Teaching?', but however, he directs our attention to *learning*, as an entry point for understanding teaching. I have followed Hirst here, and section 2 of my text looks at learning (from the standpoint of the student) before returning to 'teaching', and implications for teaching.[secs. 2.6 & 3]

However, arguably lacking in Hirst's paper (one can suggest, at a distance of 45 years) is that:

1. firstly, he does not incorporate a social or a cultural dimension to his discussion. However, as an ex-teacher, Hirst was primarily concerned with the student's learning problems (see Hirst 1973), and I follow him here;

2. secondly, he does not have a 'standpoint'. (In attempting to stand back from his theme, he was working within the 'objective' tradition of linguistic analysis, which was soon to come to a close.) I believe that the lack of standpoint is a fair criticism, although thinking that argued for standpoint had not yet appeared within the philosophy of education, which was Hirst's field. I have taken the student's standpoint, or more precisely, the standpoint of the learning problems which an individual student has. I argue for this in the text (1.4; 1.4.1; & 2.0)[40].

3. A third criticism of Hirst's analysis might be that he did not look at the actual, local *context* of teaching, and tried to be general (and this is a problem with much literature in education – it is normally not subject-specific).

4. Fourthly, he did not look at the word 'teaching' in the contexts in which it was *actually used*, or in the context in which teaching was carried out in

[40] However, an attempt to investigate or research the student's standpoint raises methodological problems, as one cannot observe the learner's subjective state, nor his inner processes. I discuss these problems in the third essay in this enquiry [see Appendix B], in the next issue of *Radical TEFL*. I will argue that the problem can be addressed by adopting a broader conception of research/enquiry.

this paper. (The emphasis on both context and use were introduced by the later work of Wittgenstein, in reaction to the claims of value-free linguistic analysis made by positivist philosophy, discussed in [1.3] below). I have looked at teaching speaking in the context of secondary education, although even then the problem of what is meant by speaking requires further sub-division [section 1.3 in my main text, page 19 above], however, discussion of this would have taken my argument far away from the student's standpoint;

5. A fifth problem is that although he started to provide a list of what is going on in teaching, he did not go on to attempt a classification of the aspects of teaching which he identified (I have tried this in my section [1.1]). For Stephen Toulmin (1972: 211-12), *"the recognition of new principles of classification may be a precipitating factor in the development of a concept ... which can result in new and clear questions being presented."*

6. Finally, and I follow Toulmin again, Hirst did not introduce the idea, argued at length by Toulmin, that a concept can evolve, that is, can change and develop over time: this can include a concept merging with another one, which I am especially interested in, as part of my thesis is that we can profitably understand teaching as a 'hybrid' concept combined with materials. [See sec. 3.1 below on the growth, decay and merging of concepts]

Bearing these six opportunities for further exploration in mind, I will now offer a discussion of how one can proceed to analyse a concept such as 'teaching', as I have attempted in my text. I now address the three questions given in the Introduction above, p. 48.

Question 1: **How does one investigate a concept or idea?**

1.1 Why enquire into a concept or idea? The value in doing this is not to obtain an answer, but to get a better understanding of the reality which the concept claims to capture. John Dewey argues that concepts are not fixed, and I follow him here (section 3 below). Also, since the later work of Wittgenstein on the philosophy of language, Wittgenstein's idea that language cannot capture reality has become widely taken up.[41]

Focusing on a concept without a context or a standpoint (which was the mistake made by linguistic philosophy) is probably rightly regarded as a sterile exercise. However, following the work of the later Wittgenstein, I will argue that it is through:

- examination of concepts *in a context* (especially in a social context – in this case, trying to understand failure to learn), as well as [see 1.3 below]
- examining relationships between concepts [section 2.2 below]

that we can create foundations for EFLT. The analysis of concepts, as I have tried to do here with 'teaching' and 'speaking', requires to be done in a context, otherwise we risk getting generalisations separated from practice.

[41] See for example Finch, H.L., (1995) *Wittgenstein*, Element, or any study of Wittgenstein's thought.

Concerning conceptualisation and also the need to 'look outside the box' for fresh perspectives, the editor of *Language Learning*, Alexander Guiora (2005), in his outgoing address, wrote: *"The greatest challenge, I submit , is to reconceptualise or refine what we mean by language and learning"*. Guiora raises the need for conceptual analysis, but does not show how it can be done, nor does he refer to literature in education which might help [42]. The significance of clarity concerning concepts, *in the context of investigating the classroom*, is argued for by Martyn Hammersley in two key papers: Scarth & Hammersley (1986), and Hammersley (1990: ch. 7 *Measurement in Ethnography*). Hammersley argues that without a clear understanding of the concepts used in a classroom research project, the researcher cannot claim either accuracy, or content or construct validity (1990: esp. 120-122) In this paper Hammersley also, very helpfully, identifies issues concerning conceptualisation which a classroom researcher needs to take into account (ibid: 114ff.)

1.2 Back to the Greeks In section 1 of the main text I offered an analysis of the word 'teaching' and 'materials', and here I would like to discuss some issues involved in attempts at analysing ('defining') a word. The problem was addresses by Socrates, who asked people what they meant by 'courage', good', 'knowledge' etc. His interlocutors often began by imagining that they understood the word which was being analysed, but through discussion found that the problem of assigning a meaning or definition to commonly-used words was not at all straightforward, although the effort was nevertheless worthwhile as they firstly at least realised that they understood less about the word than they had thought (which is a kind of progress), and secondly they ended up with a firmer grasp of the problems in using a word, or the concept which it represented. The Plato scholar Myles Burnyeat has argued that the value of conceptual analysis is that it can draw you into a problem, and although "*you (may) not end up with a firm answer, you (will have) a much better grasp of the problem than you had before"*

One difficulty in defining a word is that a proposed definition often simply presents us with another word requiring definition, and so no progress is made. (See, for example, the end of Section 1 in my essay where I note, following Hirst, that in trying to answer the question *What is teaching?* we met a regress, as 'teaching' seems impossible to conceive without an understanding of 'learning', and so our problem becomes to better understand learning, before returning to a study of 'teaching'.)

Arguably, a flaw in the approach of Linguistic Analysis was that it wasn't specific enough: instead of asking *"What is teaching?",* it should have asked, in attempt to localise the question, for example: "*What is teaching a secondary class to move from controlled practice to free use speaking?"* This localised, context-based approach, was the conclusion Wittgenstein came to in the second half of his career - that context is key. [43]

[42] See for example, below, Scriven (1988). Also see on the concept of 'teaching', see Passmore (1980: 19-23) Also see Seliger (1989: 56-61

[43] A further flaw in the approach of linguistic analysis was that it assumed that a concept was static, and did not evolve. I explore this below, in part 3 of this Appendix.

If this line of thinking is followed, our task then becomes to subdivide the question *What is Teaching?* into the sub-question of, for example '*What is teaching speaking?'*, and see what progress can be made. (See Ur [2013] for a recent reminder of the importance of starting, in EFLT, from local situations) Working from my *own* local experiences and resulting understanding of teaching, pedagogy and materials, I have explored the concept of 'teaching' with the understanding that this concept is in fact a 'cluster concepts': technically, the concept of 'teaching' is made up of a set of other and more specific concepts, with the characteristic of these specific concepts sometimes overlapping and sometimes not (1.3 in the text). I base the argument in the text on the belief that there are different concepts of teaching of which we can legitimately ask, for example, "What is teaching in the specific context of X?". Again, this methodological insight can be found in Wittegenstein, who proposed two rules which can be employed in the discussion of a word:

- The meaning of a word should be looked for in its use, in the context in which it is used: (Philosophical Investigations: 43) which leads to;
- Don't look for the meaning of a word, but for the meaning of the sentence in which it is used.

I have tried to follow those rules. I give some further suggestions from the American philosopher of education Michael Scriven, below (1.4).

1.3 Some criticisms which have been made of Linguistic Analysis are, however, perhaps analogous to criticising Pure Mathematics because it doesn't apply itself to social problems.[44] As a result of such criticisms (sometimes from people without an understanding of the limitations of philosophy), the tradition of Linguistic Analysis has been eclipsed since about 1990 by post-modern criticism, which has not always appreciated that Linguistic Analysis is simply a tool. In Hirst's (1971) paper, and in this essay, linguistic analysis has been inroduced in order to try and clarify the concepts of 'speaking' and 'teaching', as *preliminary* work for studying failure to learn.

For Wittgenstein, issues of value and social relevance are incorporated when analysis of a word is done in a living context, in the context of a real human problem. Concerning this need for a social and cultural context, my context is the failure of many secondary school students to learn English at school, which is a context of failure, alienation and low self-esteem.

1.4 But how does one analyse a concept?

Conceptual analysis proceeds, for the most part, by asking questions, and in doing conceptual analysis, the American philosopher of education Michael Scriven suggests some questions to ask, and gives some advice: (Scriven 1988: 144)

1. Why do I need this piece of conceptual analysis?
2. At what level of precision?
3. What distinctions am I trying to make?
4. Can I settle for a more limited kind of definition?

[44] For a reply to the criticism see Hammersley (2000b and also 2000a: pp. 1-15). Martyn Hammersley until his retirement last year was Professor of Educational and Social Research at the Open University.

5. In *what area* am I doing analysis?

and he makes some suggestions:

6. Don't try to encapsulate the whole meaning
7. Look for analogies rather than precision
8. Work from particular instances of a concept.
9. Work by analogy from a similar concept, identifying elements in common

In attempting to clarify the concepts of 'speaking', and of 'teaching speaking' it seems important not to over-simplify these concepts. On the contrary – and this is how analysis works – the complexity of the concept analysed may turn out to be greater than had been supposed, if only because when scrutinising an idea it turns out not to be '**an** idea' at all (the problem lies in the article '**an**'), but is a cluster (i.e a set) of ideas.

1.4.1 Pitfalls in doing conceptual analysis.

Taking as an example the concept of 'language', what traps lie in wait for the unwary when doing conceptual analysis? There are many, and the work by Scriven (ibid: 134-56) is the most helpful which I have come across for giving warnings of what can go wrong in analysing an educational concept (Also see: John Wilson 1972; & Seliger & Shohamy (1989: 56-62)). One false trail is to confuse:

- questions about the *essence* (i.e., the 'intrinsic form' of a concept); … with
- questions about the *function* of the concept.

For the concept of 'language', by isolating and keeping apart the two questions:

1. What *is* language? and
2. What is the *function* of language?

we can see that they are quite separate and distinct questions, and so we can avoid conflating them. Such conflation has arguably happened in Applied Linguistics for Language Teaching (ALLT), with knock-on effects for pedagogy which is influenced by these ALLT studies, in the following way:

A fair answer to the **first question** [*"What <u>is</u> language?"*] would seem to be Crystal and Saussure's proposal that language is *"a vast network of structure and systems"* (2.1 in the text, Crystal [1971: 163]). However, the answer to the **second question** [*"What is the <u>function</u> of language?*"], offered by the linguist Greenberg might be: *"The basic function of language is communication."*[45]

The second question, [*"What is the <u>function</u> of language?*"], has

1) dominated thinking and 'best practice' in EFLT since about 1980, especially at the expense of the first: and

2) the *function* of language has been confused with the *'intrinsic form'* of language, meaning that *language* is not taught, but *the function of language is taught.*

However, students already know the functions of language, in their first language, and in my experience, can fairly easily extrapolate the functions of language (which seem often to be common to different languages) from their first language to their target language. They can do this themselves, and without a teacher. (On this question, see Swan 2012: articles 6, & 14 on 'teaching pragmatics. Swan writes (ibid: 26), and quoted earlier, *"Why is so little attention paid … to what students already know?"*

[45] Greenberg, Joseph H, <u>*Essays in Linguistics*</u>, (1957: 61), University of Chicago Press.

A lesson to perhaps learn here is that it is well worth asking questions of the type:

- *"What is X?"*.

However - although the insight and understanding which can arises from such questions may be deeper than from questions of the type

- "*What is the function of X?"*,

the latter type of questions have the advantage of keeping discussion close to description (rather than claims to explanation), and also close to practice. However, it does not help the student if the practice which these 'function' questions lead to are based on faulty understanding of underlying views about the conception of language.

I would argue that this confusion lies beneath a huge and negatively influential mistake made in EFLT thinking since about 1980 –an understanding which neglected the *'intrinsic form' of language* (which would help us better to understand our students' problems in learning a second language, and which was studied in the contrastive linguistics movement) at the expense of only studying, and then trying to apply in the classroom, ***the functions of language***. [See the footnote in section 2.4 in the main essay]. This is perhaps the root conceptual confusion embedded in 'the communicative movement'.(Again, see Swan (2012: esp., chs. 1 & 2)

1.5 What about personal 'constructs' – haven't they replaced 'concepts'?

Concerning the position, often adopted now, that each teacher works with her own personal constructs, as one cannot go beyond one's subjectivity (sic), one could reply as follows:

1. firstly, each teacher has the right to follow her construct of 'teaching', but often one's construct is often derived from one's own learning experience, or a construct is influenced (unknowingly) by dominant conceptions in a social group. This means that the concept in the form of 'construct' in fact has not been constructed at all, but rather adopted from convention, or from current ideology and/or assumptions.
2. secondly, the use of 'construct' as a synonym for 'belief' or 'set of assumptions' is arguably a wrong use of the word 'construct', as this word was introduced into education to mean that a learner, at the end of a process, builds some understanding for himself, in some systematic way. The word 'construct', however, often seems to be taken to simply mean 'belief '. In these cases, the word 'opinion' would be more apt than 'construct'.
3. A further problem with individual 'constructs' is that it is difficult to have a dialogue with someone if each person means different things by the words he is using, and even more difficult if the participants in the dialogue do not realise that they are using the word in different ways.

Toulmin writes concerning this question: (1972: 35) *"Each of us thinks his own thoughts; our concepts we share with our fellow-men ... the language in which are beliefs are articulated are public property"*. For this reason it is not possible for individual constructs to substitute for public concepts: they each perform different functions, with constructs being *private*, and concepts being public, shared, and social, and so allowing discussion.

Question 2: How can we profitably study the relationships between concepts?
If concepts cannot be studied in isolation from each other – as argued in the main text – how can we study the network which they make up, that is, the relationships between them?

2.1 Martyn Hammersley claims (with education in mind):

> **"*All concepts form part of networks, and it is on the basis of their relationships with the other concepts involved in these networks that their sense depends*" (2000b: 153)**

There are probably dozens of variables and unknowns in foreign language learning, which accounts for the complexity of teaching, and of investigating teaching. In addition, these variables are often interacting with each other, and so cannot even be usefully studied in isolation. For this essay, the two variables which I looked at, in their interacting sense, were pedagogy and materials, within the restricted context of teaching speaking, in the limited context of helping students at the stage of speaking where they move from mechanical controlled practice, to the spontaneous handling of real-time unpredictable situations. A conclusion which I arrived at from my observation of the student, and from experience in teaching [section 1.4], and incorporated in this essay, is that materials and pedagogy should not be regarded separately from each other, but rather for the student who is learning to speak EFL, need to be seen as a continuum, or network. I have further argued that materials cannot be usefully understood until they are conceived as an extension of pedagogy.

For several scholars in the early twentieth century (John Dewey, Saussure, [46] and Whitehead), and now in environmental sciences and elsewhere, phenomena can be profitably studied in terms of relations between phenomena. [47] Physics does that in its Laws (which relate phenomena), and the Human Sciences do the same when they look for correlations in statistical terms. [See Hammersley 1989: pp. 17; 73 & 102]. But does EFLT realise the significance of doing this? John Dewey (1929: 80-86) tried to understand what is the common factor in all enquiry. For him, enquiry is, at one level, an attempt to *identify connections between phenomena*

So, scientists and researchers are looking for interactions and connections, and trying to quantify or define them. Dewey follows a tradition in philosophy that studying a phenomenon in isolation is bound to be partial, and that insights and fresh understanding will come when phenomena are studied in relation to each other. He writes: (ibid: 83 & 84)

> *"The first step in knowing is to locate the problem which needs a solution (and then) the search for* ***extrinsic relations instead of intrinsic forms***

[46] The idea of studying relationships between concepts can be seen in for example the work of Saussure. See (Culler 1976: Introduction, ch.2 and the first part of ch.3

[47] See Whitehead (1925), who presents an argument from philosophy (ch.4) that events and ideas cannot be treated in isolation in isolation from each other. He then (ch.5) discusses implications and criticisms of the idea of a world which can be analysed piece by piece. The idea of looking, in an intellectual field, for 'relations' has become common-place now, however, this search has often unfortunately become combined (and so confused) with socio-cultural assumptions, and the relations which are looked for are often exclusively *social*. I have argued in my essay that we need to explore, in the context of learning speaking, the relationship the student has with materials [secs 1.4 & 1.4.1 in my text], as has been done in work on the teaching learning of reading in EFLT, on decoding and encoding text.

*constitutes the aim of science … **relations** constitute the proper objects of science."* (my emphasis)

2.2 I have argued (following Hirst) that the study of 'teaching' cannot be understood without an understanding of 'learning', and so the two phenomena require their *relationship* to be studied, rather than being studied as '*intrinsic forms'*. If one accepts Dewey's argument, it does seem to follow that studies of learning in second language acquisition studies, although they try to make connections and establish correlations (in a technical-reductive way) as a mathematical science does, that such studies are sometimes incomplete in not taking into account the relation of the 'learning' to materials, and to pedagogy. These relationships or connections cannot be easily observed and recorded, and cannot be statistically captured, and so are not investigated (See Appendix D below on researching pedagogy.)

For understanding language learning, the standpoint of researchers is normally directed to *language* (an'intrinsic form') and not to the *student's interaction with materials* ('an extrinsic relation') I have tried in my text to take the latter standpoint, in the context of understanding students' problems in relating to materials (discussion to be continued in the fourth essay in this enquiry – see Appendix B,. p. 47 here). In researching this essay, and especially in reading surveys of research by Bygate (1998), as well as the study by Naiman et al (The Good Language Learner 1978, 1995), I found that investigators' study of learning was *not linked to materials, and especially not linked to pedagogy*. In Clarke (1989), where research on materials in teaching speaking is reviewed, pedagogy is not considered, according to Clarke's survey.

In researching this essay and significantly especially in reading reviews of the work of others, I neither came across:

- any work which tried to treat the three factors of learning, materials and pedagogy together; and neither did I
- locate studies of the *network* of learning, materials and pedagogy, as Hammersely above argues is required.

Research is often reductionist, apparently selecting for study topics and questions those which will allow statistical treatment – and so omitting what does not lend itself to such treatment. [See Appendix D below, p. 62]. One could summarise these omissions as follows – 'second language acquisition research is often looking in the wrong place for its answers'.(I develop this argument in an essay in preparation)

Once a *relationship* is subject to study, new and fruitful questions will occur. Hammersely (1989: 119), following Herbert Blumer, the American sociologist, writes: *"a concept gets its significance, and its usefulness, from being related to other concepts"* Blumer writes (in the 1930s) concerning sociology: *" Perhaps, like other sciences in the past, we await a conceptual framework which will orientate our activities into productive channels*" (quoted by Hammerlsey 1989: 123). Perhaps what Blumer believed applied for sociology then applies to EFLT now.

That is the work I am trying to do here: to re-conceptualise the idea of both teaching and materials, with the aim of looking for help for addressing the main question of *'Why do students fail to learn'*. For it seems to be that we cannot address that question until we are clearer about *what* students interact with in their learning. It

may be that the student's most important and key interactions are not social or cultural, but that a student's interaction with a *materials-pedagogy continuum* is the key to understanding why he learns, or fails to learn.

By proposing how pedagogy and materials are, *for the student,* part of the same concept, that is, a 'hybrid concept' (See Toulmin 1972: 203), we have opened up a way to understand the student's problems, and so to understand our teaching task better.

Question 3: Rather than studying concepts in an ahistorical or fixed sense, do we need to study their evolution?

3.1 The above discussion would only seem to apply to concepts which remain stable over time, and do not evolve. The idea that concepts evolve, in for example language, was explored by Saussure (Culler 1985: 35ff.). The study of the history and evolution of concepts in EFLT, and of the relationships between concepts, seems to be a largely unexplored field. There is perhaps something to be learned from linguistics, which distinguishes between a historical (diachronic) and ahistorical (synchronic) approach to the study of languages. [48]

In the philosophy of science, a major study by Stephen Toulmin (*Human Understanding Part 1*, 1972) proposes that the concepts which form the building block of an intellectual field are not stable, but evolve: they emerge, merge to form hybrid concepts, and can die. (ibid: 200-212, see esp. the diagram on p. 203). If Toulmin is correct, then it follows that, when taking a broad and historical view of a field and its development, one must not assume that the concepts and ideas one is studying remain stable over time. What is the significance of the notion that new concepts can *emerge?*

One value of studying the history of a field is that we can see how concepts, categories, assumptions and myths change and develop, and so introducing and then solving new problems. For Toulmin (ibid: 208)

> *"(New concepts) will frequently explain old phenomena more exactly, and new phenomena for the first time: involve the realignment of conceptual boundaries, both within a single discipline and between neighbouring disciplines".*

In the middle of a key passage on the emerging and dying of concepts (ibid: 200-13), he describes (based on his own reading as a Historian of Science) how two concepts can merge to create a new 'hybrid' concept (ibid: 203). This is the work I am trying to do in the essay published here, suggesting that materials and pedagogy can merge to form a new concept, and doing work for EFLT which Toulmin describes, in general terms, in his (1972). [49]

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[48] Culler writes in his *Saussure*: *"the history of language is full of examples of concepts shifting, changing their boundaries"* (ibid: 22). So, we see that studies of language have been open to the idea that, within languages, concepts develop, and are not stable. Also see Culler 1985: 35ff. Also see Toulmin [ibid: 340-43] on evolution in languages

[49] Stephen Toulmin, although he moved to the USA early in his career, was perhaps the leading British-born philosopher of science in the second half of the 20th century. His magnum opus is *Human Understanding (Part One)* (1972). In this study he was interested in how the concepts which define an intellectual field evolve: are subject to change and develop, emerge, perhaps merge with other concepts to form hybrid concepts, or disappear.

An example of a new concept (and which is found in education but not, so far as I know, in the ALLT or EFT literature) and which might be helpful in understanding the relevance of 'communicative teaching' to the secondary school situation is that of *'teacher survival'*. A teacher's desire to 'survive' in her difficult classes may explain why she uses transmission-style approaches such as asking students to copy from the board, and in other ways isolating them from each other so that some work can be done. A difficult class - and there are many in secondary schools - can easily destroy a teacher's attempts to do interesting work. Since communicative approaches require student-student interaction (which is always risky in a large class of teenagers), the teacher will therefore avoid such approaches if the class has restless students. This was my experience in working in secondary schools. However, modified forms of communicative approaches, which take into account the teacher's survival needs, could be designed – but the teacher's real problems need to be taken into account.

In other words, the concept of *'teacher survival'* could perhaps help us to move forward an understanding of how 'communicative' teaching can be made feasible for secondary schools. The problem of survival is not a factor in private language school teaching, and so it is not taken into consideration by those who have only worked in that sector - and then later perhaps give courses to secondary teachers[50].

3.2 A study of how other fields of enquiry develop, that is, a study of their history, shows that a condition for understanding their success in moving forward, and for solving problems, lies in tracing and understanding the development of the concepts and assumptions which they start from. For example, in the history of understanding planetary motion, the old concepts which were used to explain phenomena needed to be replaced by new ones of momentum and gravitational force. It was not until these concepts had been introduced that the problems of planetary motion could be solved – and the problems could not even be defined clearly without these concepts. [51] The question is raised – what new concepts do we require in EFLT to move understanding forward?

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[50] Hammersley (1989), summarising work on 'naturalistic research' by Herbert Blumer, describes how a research project can lead to new understanding of a concept (ibid: pp. 160; 165; 169).

[51] See Koestler *The Watershed* (1959: ch. 2 & esp. ch.6; & also pp. 220-222, or see the same texts in his *The Sleepwalkers* (1959; section 4.6 & pp. 399-401, of which *The Watershed* is an extract. Koestler, sometimes dismissed as a scholar, received the German Kepler prize for *The Watershed,* perhaps the definitive biography of Kepler. Also see Kuhn (1959) , The Copernican Revolution. TS Kuhn has explored in his The Copernican Revolution (Kuhn: 1957, ch. 4 & esp. ch. 7) how a development of an old and exhausted concept can present new ways of seeing old problems, as well as opening up a fresh set of problems allowing the field to move forward. In a complementary study, the Historian of Science Herbert Butterfield (1957: ch. 8) traces the history of the concept of gravitation, from the ancient Greek idea of 'returning home', to Newton's synthesis, and the eventual concept of 'universal gravity'. Between these two conceptions of gravity, the additional concept of 'force acting at distance' was required These studies relate well to work by Toulmin (1972: 200ff) on the history of concepts, and the value of working with fresh concepts to invigorate a field. (Also see Toulmin 1972: 96-130 for an important critique of Kuhn's famous and arguably over-influential book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions)*

The Copernican Revolution (which took place over 150 years) is often referred to as an example of concept change. Kepler was able to propose his laws of planetary motion because he saw that cosmological problems need to be considered *in terms of* physical forces, which no one else had seen, that is, he saw that there must be a *relation* between cosmology and force. Only be making that connection was progress made. In astronomy, Kepler could not arrive at his conception of the laws of planetary motion whilst he was trapped within unhelpful concepts. He needed two new concepts – 'momentum', and 'gravitational force' before he could develop his laws.

We can see (through Koestler's reading of Kepler's detailed description of how he worked, in Koestler 1959: ch. 6) that a field, as Toulmin (above) argues, sometimes cannot move forward without introducing needed concepts, with the corollary that an outdated or exhausted concept or conceptual framework, can hold back an intellectual field. An example of a concept required by EFLT, in order to integrate communicative ideas for teaching speaking into the secondary school, is perhaps the concept of *'teacher survival'*, as argued above

3.3 Conclusions

Firstly, a lesson to learn from the Copernican Revolution example given above (and from others in the history of intellectual fields) is that a concept can evolve, and develop its meaning (this idea is extensively explored in Toulmin ibid), and in doing so, can account for more phenomena, as well as generate new questions. I suggest that the *way* in which science and other fields develop their concepts may have lessons for EFLT, if we want to move our field forward. Again, the work of Toulmin (1972) is very helpful here (see ibid: General Introduction; 35-53; 115-30; 148-50; 183-91; 183-91, & 300-343) [52].

Secondly, the above ideas are in themselves sterile unless they can be helpfully applied to the solution of real problems. The possibility that a broad perspective as discussed above can be useful has been an underlying consideration in my essay in exploring the idea of 'teaching'. I suggested that 'teaching' is closely and perhaps inextricably linked – for the student - to materials, this suggesting that a concept of 'teaching' focused on the teacher is incomplete, as it does not allow us to understand problems of learning This old concept of 'teaching' is now an uncreative, exhausted and unproductive concept, and it does not allow fresh understandings and approaches to the classroom encounter.

Some of the above ideas are exemplified immediately below, in a postscript on John Dewey, who re-conceptualised the idea of 'knowledge' from a passive 'spectator' understanding to an active 'knowing'. This is relevant for the idea of 'learning', as learning is inextricably linked to the idea of 'coming to *know*'. Dewey links 'knowing' and 'learning', and by exploring the relationship between the two, moves forward our understanding of 'learning' and this has provided the starting point for section 2 of my essay, 'Understanding Learning'. This work by Dewey and followers has been taken up and brought into mathematics education via von Glasersfeld (1994) and by Barbara Jaworski (1994), but not yet by EFLT, so far as I know.

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[52] I explore these ideas further in an essay in preparation on the History of EFLT. For a broad survey of the history of ideas by a philosopher, and which offers an evolutionary perspective, see Richard Tarnas (1991), *The Passion of the Western Mind*, Pimlico, esp. pp. 1-2; 55-72; 248-290; 395-407 & 341-65.

John Dewey, 'knowledge' and 'learning'

(Bibliography on p. 41)

[Postscript to Appendix C of "*What is teaching speaking?"*]

Dewey had been an authority on the psychology of learning at the end of the 19th century before turning to education, educational reform and philosophy. If one is to choose an educator to draw from, Dewey - with his understanding of traditions in philosophy concerning knowledge and knowing; his experience of problems in understanding learning; and his social interest in educational reform – seems a good starting point. Dewey's influence in the USA in the 1930s was very strong, and he was the founder of the 'learner-centred' movement.

1. In The Quest for Certainty (1929) (where Dewey argues that that looking for certainty is a misconceived ambition), he argues that the idea that that knowledge is 'out there' is a huge philosophical and historical mistake. Put simply, Dewey challenged the assumption that knowledge is something 'out there' waiting to be found (ibid: ch. 1). Further, Dewey argues that an 'out there' view of knowledge led to an intellectual heritage which influenced enquiry in many fields, and where 'knowledge' was *split from action*, resulting in a divide between 'spectators' who 'find knowledge' (normally working in the academy), and practitioners who put 'knowledge' into practice. In my (2015: sections. 1 & 5) I have identified this split between Applied Linguistics, and language teachers. Dewey, as epistemologist, recovers (with some other nineteenth century thinkers) a tradition of knowledge as 'made in action', which can be found in Aristotle, but which was eclipsed and lost. [53]

How does this relate to a study of 'learning'? A student is clearly learning to *know something.*. 'Learning', for John Dewey, means ***'knowledge coming to be'.*** [54]. Dewey considers the relationship between learning, 'knowledge' and 'knowing', and in his important book The Quest for Certainty (1929 ch. 8) he offers an argument that:

- *"Knowledge is a constructed, existentially produced object"* (168). Dewey claims: *"... all knowledge involves experimentation"* [1916: penultimate para.], which implies that a learner is **experimenting.** See the footnotes in sections 2.2 and 2.3 of the main text above [pp. 28-29] for more relevant citations.
- knowledge *cannot be separated* from action, nor from its implications in practice;
- *"knowing is seen to be a participant in what is finally known"* and
- *"knowing is ... a case of specially-directed activity (resulting in) the dislodgement of the old spectator theory of knowledge"* (ibid: 163).

2. It is a short step from this reformed conception *from 'knowledge' to 'knowing'* towards a fresh understanding of learning where a student *makes/constructs his own knowledge* and understanding, and for EFL, makes his own language – and not an ideal model of the target language. [55] If one observes a student learning to speak, it is clear that he does not always arrive at some 'model English' which is the 'correct version', but that he comes to *his own English*, which may or may not match the 'ideal' version. It is, perhaps in part, for this reason, that a language can grow, and assume different forms. It is quite possible to communicate in English using a different 'English' from one's interlocutor.

In (1929: ch. 8), Dewey also argues that knowledge starts from *problems or 'doubt'*, and this uncertainty in set in the context of prior knowledge being the starting point (see my text sec. 2.3; he also argues for this in his How we Think [1910, 1933], and in [1916: opening of ch. VI). For Dewey, 'knowledge' is a misleading word, and in trying to understand knowledge and help our students build knowledge we should focus on the *process and method* of know***ing*** involved (ibid: ch. 9). In these ways, Dewey's ideas imply a challenge to those who

[53] See John Hermann Randall (1960), *Aristotle*, Columbia University Press, pp. 90-105 & 165-70.
[54] From Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic*, (1916), Section II of the Introduction.
[55] See my text from 2.4 onwards.

claim to be building theory about language learning through research, but whose standpoint is *the language* rather than the relation, or *interaction, between student and language/materials* (as argued in the text of the essay) Further, researchers, often not being specialist practitioners themselves, cannot be expected to appreciate the complexity of the process and individual struggle by which *a knowing* of language is actually constructed, with all the problems which the teacher and student must take into account and solve.

An exploration of the implications of these insights is the alternative perspective of 'learning' which I offer, drawing on Dewey and Ausubel, in section 2 of my text, although not as a challenge to socio-affective considerations in language learning, but as a complement. It is worth emphasizing again that Dewey, before he turned to education, was an authority on learning, and that it was issues raised in his study of learning that helped to lead to his conception of knowing which I have summarized here.

3. Learning as a process

Reading Dewey, it seemed to me that Ausubel; Maltby et al; and Skemp draw on Dewey's thinking, or on thinking influenced by Dewey, on the learning process. (Secs. 2 & 3 of the main text above) In his [1916] Dewey understands learning as a *process* which includes:

> **guessing; classification of new information; reflection against other data; *"running over various ideas; developing new suggestions; comparing with one another*", carrying out *"thought experiments"*; experimentation and trial and error; hunting for insights and for unifying principles; looking for analogy with what is already known; comparison; and abandoning attachment to an idea.**
>
> (ibid: pp. 24, 43, 46 & 50 of the EMEREO reprint)

However, in his work which I have read, Dewey does not expand on these suggestions. In his work (1910; 1916; 1920 & 1929), and in those sections where he seems to draw on his earlier studies of learning, he does not really explore implications for the classroom. However, if his conclusions were to be followed by EFLT through they would seem to have wide-ranging implications for TEFL (sec. 2.3 with footnotes, in the main text). As an example, Dewey writes concerning the importance of prior knowledge: (1920: pp. 3 & 6) (My emphasis)
"Incidents are rearranged till they fit the temper of the tale people are governed by memory rather than by thought ... memory is not a remembering of actual facts but is association.."

As another example of an idea not developed, in his (1929: 181) he writes: *"knowledge is the completed resolution of ...the doubtful"* and he writes of *'knowledge as clarification of a problem, progress made away from uncertainty, doubt'* (ibid: 183). Dewey's work is scattered with such observations, which are however not followed up with their classroom implications.

4. I conclude that Dewey is a founder and source for 'constructivist learning' [56]: I suggest that learner-centred implications which follow from Dewey's ideas were effectively hi-jacked by a strong form of the humanist language learning movement (which had no real roots in Education, and was strongly criticised by Brumfit in the early 1980s), and that implications for *learning* and for *understanding learning* of work by Dewey and others were at that time left aside by EFLT, neglected by the 'new toy effect', and cosy appeal of other ideas - and were not explored. This essay above is an attempt to begin that exploration. In Mathematics Education his ideas have been taken up (see footnote in section 3.2 of my text [page 36] for some citations of this work). (It may be that the a good way to take Dewey's thought into EFLT is not by going to his books, but through the work of those in education who have followed him, for example, in work in mathematics education which has applied his ideas.)

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[56] According to von Glasersfeld (1995: ch. 3), Jean Piaget is also an importance influence on constructivist understandings of learning. Piaget wrote in French and his work, apart from his studies of cognitive development in children, is not well known. Von Glasersfeld studied Piaget for seven years.

APPENDIX D (Bibliography on page 41)

FOUR MAJOR DIFFICULTIES IN RESEARCHING PEDAGOGY

How can one set about investigating and researching pedagogy? There are several methodological difficulties and pitfalls, four of which I will outline here.

(1) Firstly, there are **issues of conceptualisation** – knowing what we mean when using key terms. Scarth & Hammersely (1986), in the context of pointing out some difficulties in conceptualising the word 'task', raise and discuss these problems. (Also see Hammersley 1990 ch.7; McIntyre [1998 & 2005]; and for EFLT, see Chaudron 1988: 10-11 & 15-16). These issues and problems include: categorisation of what is being measured; identifying the task (allowing it to be demarcated from similar tasks); then, distinguishing one task from another; knowing if the task is in fact a task, or needs to be broken down into smaller tasks, and; who decides the classifying decisions and the answers to the above problems?

(2) A second difficulty is that, in order to describe the complexity of pedagogy we need to put into words, and capture in concepts and generalisations something with so many variables, and **interactions between those variables**, which sometimes seem to be quite daunting to describe, often inaccessible to the observer and so perhaps *unspecifiable*? The classroom researcher Graham Nuthall writes of:

> *" the enormous interactive complexity of teaching (with) an almost infinite variety of permutations and combinations of behaviours dependant on the multiple contexts in which it occurs "* (2005: 899)

Donald McIntyre, a leading classroom researcher, Director of the PGCE programme at the University of Oxford and Professor of Education at the University of Cambridge, wrote:

> *" it is difficult to envisage ways in which ...quantitative and comparative research (can) take account of so many interacting variables"*

(3) Thirdly, **the "invisible" nature of student interaction with materials** will create difficult methodological problems for the researcher. Scarth & Hammersely (ibid.); and Cohen (1984); Nuthall (2004: 273-79 & 292-95) discuss difficulties of observing, measuring and recording a pedagogical task. For example, the teacher's thinking processes as she formulates for herself questions to put to her students cannot be observed – but her question can. Researchers will generally choose for study what is visible, and amenable to analysis. Because of problems of observing and recording what is not manifest, the "invisible" aspect will often be simply neglected by empirical investigations. For example, student-teacher interaction can be observed and recorded, but the arguably more significant thinking which led to those interactions is invisible to the researcher. In other words, what can be observed and measured receives priority in research, but such work tends to be more superficial, by definition, than work which studies underlying processes. One can make inferences from the visible to the unseen but such leaps raise new methodological and epistemological questions.

(4) Fourthly, and concerning analysis of data, there are **problems with using statistics** . Hammersley (1989: 113-17), following the 1930s Chicago sociologist Herbert Blumer, raises some problems in analysing statistical data in the human sciences. Problems cited by Blumer and Hammersley are: (Hammersely ibid.)

- statistical methods can only be applied to "*static situations and **not to processes** developing over time"*;
- *"statistical methods are only appropriate when behaviour is routinized"*;
- statistical analysis gives information about an aggregate, and so the methodological problem arises as to whether one can generalise from a group to the individual;
- statistics offers correlations, not causal relationship or explanations (although correlations are often extrapolated, unjustifiably, to imply a causal connection);

- the problem of selecting and identifying variables (related to issues of bias).
- Further, variables can be shifting, and *"(variables) gloss over the real operating factors in group life, and the real interaction and relations between such factors"*.
- exceptions are not taken into account, and easily dismissed as outliers or aberrations, but it may be the unusual result which is the starting point for fresh understanding.

ADDRESSING THE ABOVE PROBLEMS

How, then, can a teacher set about growing her knowledge and understanding of pedagogy? I have discussed the first two problems above in Appendix C. The third and fourth difficulties can perhaps be circumvented by eschewing a quantitative approach and using a case-study approach (Nuthall 2005: 902-17), adopting a broader understanding of research which does not include the perhaps unnecessary rigour of pubic validation, but which remains experimental in approach (essay in preparation). Can pedagogy be 'researched' using the word 'research' in the sense of looking for and then analysing data? I avoided that approach in my essay.

The problem of understanding pedagogy, and the classroom encounter is complex, and arguably involves more than a social standpoint (which is the current orthodoxy). In addition to researching something which is often perhaps unspecifiable (above), the teacher's problem is in fact *his students' problems*, and it is them we, as teachers, need to investigate and understand. Our standpoint needs to be that of the student [see p. 27 of the main text].

For David Scott (2000: 36), it is doubtful if the variables involved can be accounted for and controlled. Chaudron (ibid: 10-11 & 15-16) has also questioned whether one can even provide acceptable categorisation of the concepts involved in pedagogy (issues such as teacher silence, teacher expectations, and student learning). Nuthall proposes that: *" we should first find out what kind of knowledge would be most useful for informing teachers' thinking and guiding their practice"* (2005: 900, my emphasis). However, much of a teacher's practical knowledge , in the context of *'knowledge as action'* (Dewey), is perhaps unspecifiable.

David Nunan, writing a generation ago, observed that there were few formal classroom research studies of pedagogy, and that research, when done in the classroom by professional researchers, was focused more on language acquisition than on pedagogy (1991:250). In other words, the emphasis in second language acquisition classroom research was generally (at that time) not on the learner, or his problems, or on the teacher and her role, but on language. Pedagogy has not been researched in the EFLT literature as language acquisition studies have, which is perhaps due to the above four problems: language acquisition is easier to research than pedagogy because it is more 'measurable' (sic). However, 'language acquisition' is arguably a concept in need of scrutiny itself (difficulty 1 above). Further, if the argument I have made in my essay for a constructivist understanding of learning is accepted, then an 'acquisition' and a 'constructivist' understanding of learning seem, in part, to be incompatible. Methodological problems in researching both pedagogy and learning may have much in common, and so work done in one of these areas can perhaps be relevant to the other.

What seems clear is that measuring and researching pedagogy is complex. Maybe investigating pedagogy requires some fresh approaches: rather than try to record and measure pedagogy (and which can only capture a part of the complexity), perhaps we need to approach the problem from another standpoint, by getting inside the problem in some way. Perhaps this is how other professionals work - by getting inside a problem and using some unspecifiable 'intuitive' route to an understanding, as a doctor carries out a diagnosis. However, such a process employs a different conception of knowledge and of arriving at claims to knowledge. (See the note on Dewey, pp. 60 & 61, above).

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APPENDIX E
EXAMPLES OF TEACHING MATERIALS

Four activities which can provide input, language models, prompts with differentiation of level built in, and with space for student silence.

1. **"MAGDA'S WEEK"** (On page 38 after the main text)
   Simple past tense, used with time, and time phrases

2. **"CHECKING INTO A YOUTH HOSTEL"** (Page 66)
   Asking mixed questions

3. **"ASKING ABOUT AN ENGLISH COURSE"** (Page 69)
   Practice in asking mixed questions. Times, dates, money/prices. Spelling out names etc. aloud.

4. **"BOOKING A HOLIDAY"** (Page 73)
   Different present tense questions, mixed. Dates, times, negative answers

Notes for the following material:

- Acknowledgement: activities 3 and 4 are adaptations of ideas and material in *Pairwork* by Watcyn-Jones (1980), Penguin. Activity 2 uses a role-play approach which I found in *English for Travel*, John Eastwood (1980), OUP

- The activities are all pair-work, using the idea of students exchanging information with each other, and especially practising questions. Language is first presented on the board, and through a dialogue, followed by about 20 minutes pairwork, finishing with writing. Dialogues give a model of the language to be used.

- The activities assume a prior accurate understanding, and controlled use, of the language and structures needed. The aim is to bring these structures into creative and real-time use, in a lifelike situation which student might later meet.

- **Differentiation of level**: each pairwork activity has 5/6 tasks, each requiring several questions from one of the students. Note that the unpredictability increases as the work proceeds, meaning that students can rely progressively less on controlled ability: the language required becomes more real

- Language focus: students are supplied with all the language required (either in a dialogue, or in questions attached). Sometimes the language is built into the role-play/simulation material, which they students must transform into questions

- Each pair works at the own speed, with no pressure for completion of the work. Very weak students, unable to manage the activities, can be asked to write the dialogue, this giving more controlled practice on the structures.

- Strong pairs, when finished, can repeat the activity, changing roles. The stronger students tend to ignore the language prompts (on the board and in the dialogue), whilst weaker ones use it for help as they need it

- Classroom management: students who won't cooperate or won't use English (normally weak students) can be asked to write the dialogue.

- Summary: the materials give plenty of practice at different levels. A weak pair will focus on the basic patterns required, a stronger pair will forget about the structures, and begin to use language quite spontaneously. When a pair is working without any real problems, they are completely left alone by the teacher, allowing them to work out their language, *as well as their communicative strategies,* for themselves.

- Learning theory assumed: students, starting with a passive understanding of the language, and the ability to use it under controlled conditions, but they need opportunities for free practice in order to bring the language into use.

- When there is an odd number of students, make one group of 3

- For struggling students, ask them to write

- At the end of the lesson, I ask everyone to write (individually) a dialogue, which helps students to reinforce what they have practiced, and allows me to check understanding (and also, I can give a mark, which students request in Polish schools, as this counts towards their continuous assessment)

- I integrate this kind of work with practice in sentence stress patterns

Notes for anticipating discipline problems and for classroom management:
Pairwork is easy to do in a small group, but in secondary class problems can quickly arise, and need to be anticipated. My second-language teaching colleagues did not use pairwork, they told me, because their students would immediately revert to their first language. I find that this can be avoided by selecting appropriate materials, and by careful preparation for the activity. What conditions need to be satisfied in the materials, and preparation, in order for students to work in English? I have found that some conditions are:

1. Thorough preparation at the input stage of the language focus is needed, as well as clear language targets; (boardwork is very important here)
2. Input material which gives a model of the language required, in the form of a dialogue, and which if necessary weaker students can use as a prompt, allowing them to remain at a safe, controlled level, in the freer practice stage
3. Provision for stronger students to use freer language
4. Plenty of concrete information to work from, with a clear target outcome in the form of a manageable and concrete task. Abstract or ambiguous topics are avoided (it is easier to speak in a second language around concrete issues than general ones)
5. Clear and unambiguous classroom management in setting up pairs: there must be no uncertainty in the students' minds as to what they need to do

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CHECKING INTO A YOUTH HOSTEL / 1

Dialogue/1: K = Kasia and her 2 friends
Y = Youth hostel worker

Y: Hello, can I help you?
K: Yes, we reserved 3 beds for tonight
Y: What's your name please?
K: Kasia Kowalska
Y; Can you spell that please?
K; You spell it K-A-S-I-A- space K-O-W-A-S-L-K-A
Y: Yes, we received your reservation. You reserved by e-mail. Can I see your youth hostel card please?
K: Here you are
Y: Good, that's OK. That will be £24.60 please, for 3 people.
K: Can I pay by credit card?
Y: Yes, can I see your passport please?
K: Here you are
Y: Oh, you're Polish! That's a very difficult language! Your room is 34. It's on the third floor, you can take the lift. Here is your key.
K: Thank you. What time is breakfast?
Y: Breakfast is from 7.30 to 8.30, in the breakfast room, downstairs

Dialogue/2: T = Tomek (travelling on his own)
Y = Youth hostel worker

T: Do you have a bed for two nights?
Y: Did you reserve?
T: No, I don't have a reservation
Y: Then I'm not sure. I must look and see if there are any beds.
T: I am a Youth Hostel Association member, here is my card.
Y: Oh, that's good. But I'm sorry, there are no free beds
T: Where will I sleep?!
Y: If you wait until ten o'clock there might be a bed, if someone doesn't come
T: OK, I'll come back at 10. But maybe you know a cheap hotel near here?
Y: No, hotels are all expensive in England. Come back at ten, and we will try to find somewhere for you.
T: OK, thanks, I'll be here then.

CHECKING INTO A YOUTH HOSTEL / 2

Traveller

For every question, ask about:

- Somewhere to sleep?
- Price? Payment methods?
- Can you use your sleeping bag?
- Supper?
- Breakfast?
- Information about the town

QU::	**Explaining your problem and what you want.**
1.	Give your name, and say that you reserved by fax. With your friends you are a group of 4. Ask if breakfast is included in the price. What about supper?
2.	Give your name. You didn't reserve. You are travelling alone. You need supper and breakfast. Ask if you can pay in Polish zlotys.
3.	You are a group leader, with 28 students from a school. You reserved in advance, including breakfast, and you paid in advance. You want a single room, and separate rooms for boys and girls.
4.	You are travelling on your own, without reservations. Ask if there is a room for you for one week. You only have a credit card for paying, you need breakfast and supper, but you want a quiet single room. Ask if you can hire a bike
5.	You don't have a reservation, and you need a bed. Show you card.

QUESTIONS TO ASK FOR THE TRAVELLER

1. Do you have a bed for me/us?
2. What's the price per night?
3. Is breakfast included?
4. How can I pay?
5. Can I use my sleeping bag?
6. Is there a kitchen where I can cook?
7. Can you give me some information about the town?

Youth hostel worker

For every traveller, ask about:

- Reservation
- Youth hostel card
- Payment
- Breakfast
- Sleeping bag

QU:	**Finding out what the traveller needs.** **Explain how the youth hostel works, and answer questions.**
1.	Ask for first and last names. Ask if the person reserved a bed . You find the reservation, for 2 girls, and give them a room with 2 beds. Breakfast is £2.30 extra per person There is a kitchen for cooking..
2.	There are enough beds for tonight.. The traveller can use the kitchen for cooking supper, or there is a Chinese restaurant opposite the hostel. It isn't allowed to use your own sleeping bag in English hostels, the traveller must hire sheets. Payment in pounds.
3.	A school reserved for 30 people, a month ago. They didn't pay for breakfasts and for hiring sheets, they must pay now (=£52.15). There are no single rooms.
4.	Someone wants to stay for a week, 3 nights is the maximum. You prefer payment in cash. There are no single rooms, but tomorrow there will be. Single rooms are £4.40/night extra.
5.	You don't know if there will be a bed later, you will try to help. Look at the card. It is out of date! (not valid) The person must pay £14.40 for a new one!.

QUESTIONS TO ASK FOR THE YOUTH HOSTEL WORKER

1. Do you have a reservation? / Have you got a reservation?
2. How did you reserve?
3. How many people are there altogether?
4. For how long do you want to stay? (maximum is 3 nights)
5. How will you pay?
6. Do you want breakfast?

ASKING ABOUT AN ENGLISH COURSE / 1
DIALOGUE

„A" = English student,looking for an English summer course

„B" = „The Oxford Language School" in England

(„A" is phoning „B")

A: Good morning. **I'd like** some information about your English summer courses. I live in Poland.

B: Good morning. Please wait, and I will connect you to our „Student Services" department.

A: Thanks.

B: Good morning. Can I help you?

A: Good morning. **I'd like** some information about your English summer courses. I'm Polish.

B: What kind of course do you want?

A: **I'd like** a general course, to improve my speaking. No grammar please!

B: In our school, the grammar exercises are spoken, not written.

A: Can you give me some information, please – prices, dates?

B: **First of all**, we need to know your level.

A: I can speak simple sentences in English.

B: You speak nicely, but not very clearly! I think you need our intermediate level course.

A: Can you give me some information about that course?

B: Of course. No problem. What do you want to know?

A: When does the course begin?

B: The next course begins on July 5, and lasts for 2 weeks.

A: **What's the price?**

B: **The price is** 420pounds. **The price includes** material, but **the price doesn't include** accommodation.

A: When do lessons begin and finish? I want to relax in the afternoons.

B: Oh! The course will be just right for you! Lessons begin at 9 and finish at 1. The afternoons are free.

A: How old are the students?

B: We have courses for children, teenagers and adults.

A: **How can I** pay?

B: **You must** pay two weeks before the starting date. **You can** pay by credit card or bank transfer.

A: Good. **I'd like to** book two places for the intermediate course for teenagers, starting on July 5.

B: What's your name please.

A: My name is Miroslaw Koniorczyk.

B: **Can you spell that**, please?

A: **You spell it** M-I-R-O-S-L-A-W K-O-N-I-O-R-C-Z-Y-K.

B: Can you repeat that please?

A: You spell my name M-I-R-O-S-L-A-W space K-O-N-I-O-R-C-Z-Y-K

B; What's your address? Can you spell it slowly, please?

B: My address is U-L-I-C-E space D-A-B-R-O-S-K-I-E-G-O 25 new line 44 dash 100 comma G-L-I-W-C-E space P-O-L-A-N-D

(Author -Alistair Maclean)

ASKING ABOUT AN ENGLISH COURSE / 2

ROLE PLAY – Student „A" (English Student)

You are looking for an English summer course in England for you and your 13-year old daughter. You will phone five schools. Ask for information, and write the answers in the boxes. Ask about:

1. **starting dates, and length of courses.**
2. **price**
3. **what does the price include?**
4. **times of the course each day**
5. **age of the students**
6. **accommodation**
7. **payment methods**

	School A THE OXFORD LANGUAGE SCHOOL	School B THE OXFORD INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH	School C THE OXFORD „ENGLISH FAST!" SCHOOL	School D OXORD SUMMER COURSES	School E OXFORD UNIVERSITY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
1.Starting dates?					
2.Price?					
3.Included in the price?					
4.Course times?					
5.Age of students?					
6.Accomm-odation?					
7.Payment methods					

ASKING ABOUT AN ENGLISH COURSE / 3

ROLE PLAY – Student „B" (Language School)

You work at a language school in Oxford. Answer the questions which student „A" asks. Only give information when student „A" asks a question.

	NAME OF YOUR SCHOOL	INFORMATION ABOUT SUMMER COURSES
A	The Oxford Language school	Courses start on July 12 and July 26. All courses are for 2 weeks. Price – 450 pounds.Price includes photocopied materials. Course times:8.30 to 11.30 and 2.30 to 4.30, including Saturdays. Courses for teenagers only. You must look for your own accommodation. Payment by bank transfer 1 month before .
B	The Oxford Institute of English	Courses start on July 5, and August 2. Courses are for 4 weeks.Price – 820 pounds.Price includes textbook.Course times: 9 to 11, 11,30 to 1.30, 2 to 4 Mon – Fri.Courses for all ages.The school will book accommodation (extra).Payment by credit card or cash on the day the course starts.
C	The Oxford „English Fast!" School	Courses start on June 28, July 5, July 12 and August 9.Courses are for either 1 week or 2 weeks. Prices are 185 pounds and 350 pounds! You must pay for materials. FRIENDLY TEACHERS!. 6 hours of lessons every day, SMALL CLASSES! Courses for all ages! The school will book accommodation! Not expensive! Payment in cash (no receipts given!)
D	Oxford Summer Courses	Courses start on June 21, June 28, July 12, July 26 and August 23. All courses are for 2 weeks.Price is 350 pounds. Lunch and learning materials are included in the price. Course times: 9-10.30; 11-12.30; 2-3.30.Courses for teenagers only.Accommodation – 40 pounds a week per person.Payment on first day of course.
E	Oxford University English Department	Courses start on July 1 and August 1. The courses are 1 month long. Price is 950 pounds. Price includes materials, meals and accommodation (residential course). 20% discount for Polish teenagers. Course times: Mornings: 7-8.30;9-10.30;11-12.30; Afternoons: 1-2.30; 3-4.30; 5-6.30 and 7 to 8.30 Courses for adults only. Payment–the university sends an invoice

BOOKING A HOLIDAY / 1

Student „A": ASKING FOR INFORMATION: You want to book a holiday
Student „B": GIVING INFORMATION: You sell holidays :

DIALOGUE / (At a travel agent's)

A: **When does** the holiday in Crete **begin?**
B: **It begins** on 8th August.
A: **When does** it **end?**
B: **It ends** on 22nd August?
A: **When does** the flight **leave**?
B: **It leaves** at 22.30 on 8th August.
A: Oh! A night flight! That's no good.
B: We have a day flight to Crete, to Chania, if you want.
A: **When does it leave?**
B: **It leaves** at 8.30. And **it arrives** at 11.30.
A: Do you mean at 11.30 in the morning?
B: Yes, and you will be in your hotel at 2 in the afternoon.
A: **When does** that holiday to Chania **finish**?
B: **It finishes** on 18th August, that's ten days.
A: **When does** the return flight **leave**?
B: **It leaves** at 22.30.
A: But **I don't want** a night flight to return!
B: But that means that **you will spend** all day on the beach!
A: OK. **What's the price of** that holiday?
B: **The price is** 413 euros for two people.
A: Are meals included in the price?
B: **You will have** a good breakfast, but **you won't get** other meals.
A: **Will we have** a quiet room. **We don't want** to be above a bar!
B: Yes, **you will get** a very quiet room.
A: OK, **I'll book** that holiday!
B: Good! What's your name, please?
A: Oh – **is there** a swimming pool in the hotel?
B: Yes, **there is** a swimming pool, of course, here is a photo.
A **Is there** a restaurant and bar in the hotel?
B: **There's** a bar, but **there isn't** a restaurant.
A: OK, my name is Zdadek Grzegorzslowski.
B: **Can you spell that please?**
A: Yes, **you spell it** Z-D-A-D-E-K - G-R-Z-E-G-O-R-Z-S-L-O-W-S-K-I
B: OK, and how do you want to pay?
A: Cash, please! Here you are!

BOOKING A HOLIDAY / 2

ROLE-PLAY / Student „A" (Asking for information)

1. Ask about: (Make questions)
2. What day / holiday/ begin and end?
3. What date/ holiday / begin and end?
4. What time / flight / leave and return?
5. Price?
6. What / included / price?
7. Restaurant / bar / swimming pool?

Holiday 1 / Crete • • • • •	**Holiday 4 / Oslo** • • • • •
Holiday 2 / Spain, Benidorm • • • •	**Holiday 5 / Greece (Kos) (Teaching English)** • • • •
• **Holiday 3 / Italy (Sicily)** • • • •	**Holiday 6 / Brighton (UK) (Learning English)** • • •

BOOKING A HOLIDAY / 3

ROLE-PLAY / Student „B" (Giving information)

Here is information about six holidays. Answer the questions which student "A" asks:

Holiday 1 / Crete • Begins and ends on a Saturday • July 12 – 19 • Flight there: 10.30; return 15.45 • 2215zl New hotel!! • Price includes breakfast, bus to beach • No restaurant. Bar. Swimming pool – not ready yet.	**Holiday 4 / Oslo** • Begins and ends on a Friday • July 11 – 18 • Flight there 22.30. Return at 03.15 • 1913zl (cheap hostel) • Price includes mountain guide • This is a walking holiday
Holiday 2 / Spain, Benidorm • Begins on Fri and ends on Tue • August 13 – 23 • Fight there: 14.15; Return at 16.15 • 2450zl • Breakfast and supper included in the price • There are hundreds of bars in Benidorm!	**Holiday 5 / Greece (Kos) (Teaching English to refugees)** • Begins on Wed and ends on Sun • August 11 – 21 • Don't know about flight times! • This holiday is free • Includes all meals • No swimming pool
Holiday 3 / Italy (Sicily) • Begins on Tue and ends on Sun • August 10 – 21 • Morning flight there and back (exact time not known yet) • 1950zl plus charges • Included – trip to Mafia country! • No swimming pool or bar at hotel (old "rustic" hotel)	**Holiday 6 / Brighton (UK) (Learning English)** • Begins and ends on a Wed • August 11 - 25 • Computer doesn't say about flight times. • Price 4525zl. English course included. • 6 hours/English/every day • This is a learning holiday!

HOW CAN WE INVESTIGATE STUDENT FAILURE?

The next issue of *Radical TEFL* will have as a theme: (see pages 4-6)
"Researching and investigating student failure in the EFL secondary classroom"

LIMITATIONS OF 'QUANTITATIVE' RESEARCH
What are the limitations of quantitative research (empirical/experimental research which collects data with defined and isolated variables) ? For what kinds of problems is it suited to, and for which kind of problems is it not suited to? How far can a mathematical treatment of information from the classroom be relevant, or helpful? What is this approach unable to capture? How do other fields of enquiry, whose subject matter cannot be easily quantified, solve methodological problems of research?

LIMITATIONS OF ACTION RESEARCH (AR)
Does AR risk focusing too much on the teacher's problems, rather than the learner's? What are the methodological and epistemological foundations of AR? Where, in the AR literature, have the methodological and epistemological assumptions of AR been scrutinised? Can these assumptions and claimed foundations stand up to scrutiny? What are the limitations, and traps, of AR?

THE PLACE OF REASON IN RESEACH
What is the function of reason and reflection in research? Historically, there have been two approaches to enquiry – experience/empiricism, and reason/reflection – and these are normally combined, so strengthening each other. Has the significance of the value of a dual approach to enquiry been appreciated in EFLT?

THE FAILING STUDENT
What distinguishes the fail*ing* student from the succeed*ing* one? In what respects is a failing student failing - where in the learning process? Why and how in the learning process? What can we learn from Mathematics Education materials and learning about failure to learn – on where failure occurs in the learning process?

INVESTIGATING THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT
If research is about understanding individual students (who may learn differently from each other) should we be researching individual students? How can we observe and record a process which is internal to the student? How can we capture and understand the student's subjective experience? What methods and tools do we need to do this?

DO WE KNOW WHAT WE ARE RESEARCHING?
Do we need a working assumption about learning in order to research failure to learn? How can we research learning if we don't have some assumptions about what we are looking at? What *are* our assumptions about how learning takes

place? Do we need to adopt a stance here, about learning, in order to know what we are looking for?

LEARNING AS A PROCESS ? (See p. 61, sec 3)

Is learning a *process*? If so, how do we research a process? Where, why and how do processes *fail?* Is it possible, in principle, to observe, record, describe and make specific the process of learning, and of failure to learn? How can we research and investigate something which is perhaps *unspecifiable*, or subliminal? How do other 'process' fields – chemistry, biology, chemical engineering – approach enquiry into what is invisible and ongoing (e.g. growth) and which is perhaps irreducible to analysis?

Why do processes in practical fields fail or break down? Are there key stages in processes which need to be 'got right'? Are there *conditions* for successful processes in a given field, which need to be understood and fostered? Do we need to renounce attempts at descriptions or explanations of learning, and instead focus on identifying and encouraging conditions for the process of learning? How much detail about learning is required, and how far will general models of learning suffice?

TRAPS IN DOING RESEARCH

How can an investigator know that her work is not distorted by *bias* in some way? What are the sources of bias? How can her work be checked (by herself or others) for bias? Can researchers be sure that they know and understand their own motives and ideological bias which they bring to classroom research? What, precisely, is the question which one brings to an investigation? What assumptions are embedded in one's question? What are some commonly held myths or assumptions, or fallacies about research which the teacher needs to be aware of? What can we learn from the literature in Education on classroom research? [57]

RESEARCH BY TEACHERS

In what ways can the teacher better understand the classroom, and in what ways is the observer at an advantage to understand the classroom? What exactly is the aim of teacher classroom research: to improve a teacher's practice? If so, don't we risk diluting that aim by requiring formal design, systematic data collection, and dissemination to others teachers through publication? How can we encourage research to be on-going and integrated to teaching, rather than a one-off event?

BROADENING THE CONCEPT OF RESEARCH

Can research without publication, and without other research formalities, count as 'research'? Could 'research' be understood as just the teacher 'trying things out' ? What might be the minimum conditions, for a broader concept of research? What might we need to sacrifice from 'traditional' research in order to do this? What other conceptions of 'research' could be explored?

Alistair Maclean

[57] See work by Professors Wilfred Carr (University of Sheffield), Richard Pring (University of Oxford), Martyn Hammersley (Open University), by Taleb and by others, below. Hammersely offers a challenge to some current assumptions and orthodoxies in sociological and educational research.

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- other 20 copies .

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