PROSPERO'S BOOKS OR WHICH ENGLISH, WHOSE ENGLISH?

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ABSTRACT

What model of English should we teach? In this paper, I take up the challenge to teachers posed by recent corpus linguists, according to which we now know what real spoken and written English looks like, so what excuse is there for not teaching real English?

'Now we can have access to much more reliable information and learners will be able to produce with confidence much more idiomatic English, with less effort involved' (Sinclair, 1987, p. 159). Why should we still insist on teaching made-up textbook sentences and 'concocted dialogues' (Carter and McCarthy, 1995, p. 154) when we have, at our fingertips, infinite examples of the 'real thing?' (see also Rinvolucri, 1997; Hill, 1999).

On the face of it, there would seem to be no argument: why should any teacher of English as a Foreign Language, willfully ignore the evidence for 'real English'? As T. S. Eliot might have said, had he known about corpus linguistics, 'after such knowledge what forgiveness'?

However, language description and language pedagogy are not the same thing. To understand the challenge of 'naturally-occurring' English, we need to broaden the perspective to look beyond the language model itself to the uses to which language forms are put. I will, therefore, examine the pedagogic implications of naturally-occurring English against the background of (1) English as a global language, (2) language as a social act, (3) the recent history of ELT.

Having sketched out this background, I will then (4) draw on my own research with students and teachers to outline the possible problems which

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the implementation of a corpus-based lexical approach may entail and (5) propose a methodological framework which may help to reconcile some of the contradictions identified in the earlier sections of the paper.

KEY WORDS

English language teaching, EFL, language corpora, English as an international language, appropriate methodology, authentic English, real English, authenticity, context, native-speakers, language models, culture, pragmatics, materials, lexis and grammar, difficulty, tests, discourse, collocation.

RESUMEN

¿Qué tipo de inglés deberíamos enseñar? En este artículo, recojo el reto lanzado a los profesores por los más recientes lingüistas, en el sentido de que si ya somos conscientes de cómo es el inglés que se habla y se escribe realmente, ¿qué excusa hay para no enseñarlo?

Ahora podemos tener acceso a una información mucho más fiable y los estudiantes serán capaces de utilizar una mayor cantidad de modismos en inglés, con mayor confianza y menor esfuerzo (Sinclair, 1987, p. 159). ¿Por qué seguir insistiendo en enseñarles frases estereotipadas y diálogos prefabricados (Carter and McCarthy, 1995, p. 154), cuando tenemos a nuestro alcance infinitos ejemplos reales? (ver también Rinvolucri, 1997; Hill, 1999).

Parece que no debería existir ninguna polémica al respecto. ¿Por qué habría de ignorar deliberadamente cualquier profesor de inglés la evidencia del inglés cotidiano? Como T. S. Elliot habría dicho a la vista del corpus lingüístico, "a sabiendas no hay perdón".

Sin embargo, la descripción de una lengua y su metodología no son la misma cosa. Para comprender el desafío del inglés espontáneo, es necesario ampliar la perspectiva e ir más allá del modelo lingüístico a los usos a los que las formas lingüísticas están sujetas. Habrá que cotejar por consiguiente las implicaciones pedagógicas con el peso especifico de (1) el inglés como lengua global, (2) el lenguaje como acto social, (3) la historia reciente de ELT.

Una vez esbozado el planteamiento, pasaré a (4) describir mi propia investigación con alumnos y profesores para perfilar los posibles problemas que la puesta en práctica de un enfoque basado en un corpus léxico puede implicar, y (5) proponer un esquema metodológico que pueda ayudar a reconciliar algunas de las contradicciones identificadas antes.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Enseñanza de inglés, enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera, inglés como lengua internacional, metodología adecuada, inglés auténtico, inglés real, autenticidad, contexto, hablantes nativos, modelos de lengua, cultura, pragmática, materiales para alumnos, vocabulario, gramática, dificultad, pruebas, discurso, colocación.

Résumé

Quel genre d'anglais devrions-nous enseigner? Dans cet article, je relève le défi jeté aux professeurs par les linguistes les plus récents, dans le sens que si nous sommes déjà conscients de comment est l'anglais que l'on parle et que l'on écrit réellement, quelle excuse existe pour ne pas l'enseigner?

Puisque nous pouvons avoir accès maintenant à une information plus fiable et que les étudiants seront capables de se servir d'une plus grande quantité de modismes en anglais, de s'en servir avec une plus grande confiance et un effort moindre (Sinclair, 1987, 159), a quoi bon continuer à leur apprendre des phrases stéréotypeés et des dialogues préfabriqués (Carter & McCarthy, 1995, 154), quand nous avons à notre portée d'innombrables exemples réels? (voir aussi Rinvolucri, 1997; Hill, 1999).

Il paraît qu'il ne devrait pas y avoir aucune polémique à cet égard. Pourquoi n'importe quel professeur d'anglais devrait ignorer délibérement l'évidence de l'anglais quotidien? Comme T. S. Eliot aurait dit en présence du corpus linguistique: "à bon scient, il n'y a pas d'excuse."

Toutefois, la description d'une langue et sa méthodologie ne sont pas la même chose. Pour comprendre le défi de l'anglais spontané, il faut élargir la perspective et aller au-delà du modèle linguistique, aux emplois auxquels sont soumises les formes linguistiques. Il faudra comparer, donc, les implications pédagogiques avec le poids spécifique de (1) l'anglais en tant que langue globale, (2) le langage en tant que acte social, (3) l'histoire récente de ELT.

Le projet esquissé, je passerai à décrire (4) ma recherche personnelle avec des élèves et des professeurs afin de profiler les problèmes probables que la mise en oeuvre d'une optique basée sur un corpus lexique peut comporter, et (5) proposer un schéma méthodologique pouvant aider à réconcilier certaines contradictions identifiées avant.

Mots-clé

Enseignement de l'anglais, anglais langue étrangère, corpus linguistique, anglais langue internationale, méthodologie appropriée, anglais authentique, anglais réel, authenticité, contexte, anglais langue maternelle, modèles de langue, culture, pragmatique, matériaux, vocabulaire et grammaire, difficulté, tests, discours, emplacement.

Introduction

Global English

In the beginning of the 17th century, say round about 1610, when Shakespeare's *The Tempest* appeared on the scene, there were as few as 7 million speakers of English in the world, the vast majority of them native speakers of English, living on an obscure island, in the north-western corner of Europe.

Today, there are, according to David Crystal in his book on *English as a Global Language* (1997), about 450 million users of English as a native or first language. At the same time, there are as many as 350 million users of English as a second language, in countries, in other words, such as India or Nigeria where English has some kind of internal official function.

If we turn to the world of English as a foreign language, the estimates vary from as few as 100 million to as high as a billion. If we look ahead just ten years from now, we can predict, according to David Crystal, that there will be more speakers of English as a second language than English as a native-language and in 50 years time there could be 50% more speakers of English as a second language than a first language. And one final figure: it has been estimated that about 80% of uses of English do not involve native-speakers at all but involve two or more non-native speakers using English as a lingua franca (Crystal, 1997).

These figures have enormous implications for the 'ownership' of English in the future but also which model of English we teach and for what purpose (Widdowson, 1994). English has indeed gone forth and multiplied but at the same time the choices facing the teacher or course designer have also multiplied: they now have to 'consider how the language is specially designed to engage the student's reality' (Widdowson, 1994, p. 387).

In this paper, I will try and answer the questions: what kind of English do we teach? Which of the many models of spoken English in particular do we teach? What is the relationship between language model and language teaching methodology? My hypothesis will be that the model of English with which we work also affects power relationships in the classroom and the students' capacity to speak in their own voice to articulate the facts, events, ideas and processes of their own world.

But first, I would like to look at the power of language in general and how it shapes the way we see the world and what we can do in the world, the way a foreign language can 'transform ideas, and therefore lives and therefore societies and therefore the world' (Celente, 1997, p. 298).

Language is a defining feature of psychological and cultural development; it is also a powerful organising principle in society and indeed language policy can influence decisively the political and economic development of the state itself. Here are two contrastive views of the role of English in the world today:

> (English) performs a useful function in a multilingual society and will continue to do so. Nigerians' interest includes the ability to operate with two or more linguistic codes… English has become one of the languages available for use by the creative writer (Bisong, 1994, p. 131).

> it must be a responsibility of 'expert' on language to investigate …how command of English relates to contemporary power structures. Likewise, we have to investigate how the manifestly false promises to have-nots about the acquisition of (some) competence in English leading them towards economic prosperity are produced and marketed, and why this marketing is so effective. (Phillipson, 1999).

These conflicting opinions about the role of English in an era of globalisation may seem remote from the concerns of the teacher in the classroom, but I am assuming that micro-choices about which language forms to teach in the classroom reflect assumptions about what education is for and its role in the wider socio-cultural context. Corpus linguistics does not make the transition to the classroom in a vacuum. The 'authenticity' of corpus data suffers a range of significant changes as it is mediated to the classroom through cultural, political and educational constraints. In the next section, I will try and connect the micro-world of the classroom with the macro-world outside the classroom. To do this, I will go back to one of the first ELT classrooms in the time of William Shakespeare.

The Tempest: Learning how to mean

We are often reminded nowadays that the British Empire 'has given way to the Empire of English' (MacCabe, 1985, p. 38) and that the English language has replaced the gunboats as a political instrument:

> The war against the hard hegemony of American colonialism, political sovereignty and economic Empire is fought in a way which advances the soft hegemony of American pop culture and the English language (Barber, 1996, p. 84).

However, the debate over the benefits and drawbacks of English as a world lingua franca can be said to start in the seventeenth century when the first colonies were being established in the New World. The importance of language in the acquisition and maintenance of political power and economic power was recognised from the first stages of colonial expansion.

The Tempest was, amongst other things, one of the first literary texts on the rise of the British Empire. But it is also a play from which, as teachers of English and applied linguists, we can learn a lot. The play puts language in the context of colonisation and Empire-building and, to that extent, contains a crash-course in language in its social and political context. Shakespeare's drama will serve as a useful background against which we can assess the sociolinguistic implications of teaching English as a foreign language and the question of which model of English is appropriate in particular contexts.

AN INSTRUCTIVE TALE.

Once upon a time, there was a coup d'etat in Italy. Prospero, the Duke of Milan, is more interested in his books than politics and is deposed and expelled from Italy by his brother and put to sea in a rotten ship with his baby daughter, Miranda. They reach an island inhabited by one man – Caliban. Prospero takes over the island and sets out to teach Caliban English. Caliban, however, is a difficult student; it is not an easy task teaching the recalcitrant native of the island to express himself:

> 'I took pains to make thee speak….
> …thou wouldst gabble like a thing most brutish' (I ii, 354-357).

Prospero gives Caliban the linguistic tools with which to articulate his sense of Self: 'thou dids't not, savage.

> Know thine own meaning' (I ii, 355-356).

Prospero, having taught Caliban the basics of the language, adopts a total physical response (Asher, 1977) approach to language methodology: he gets his student Caliban to do all the work for him. Prospero is a good teacher and very soon Caliban understands imperatives and is able to perform commands:

> 'Fetch us in fuel and be quick !' (I ii, 366).

As soon as Prospero can communicate his message adequately, he gets Caliban to show him the secrets of the beautiful and fertile island, which Prospero promptly appropriates for himself.

Naturally, Caliban is not over-delighted with his loss of property and freedom (much as he may enjoy the lesson – Prospero's daughter

Miranda is the only other student in what is the first 'mixed ability' class on record):

> 'I am all the subjects that you have
> That was first mine own king.' (I ii, 341-342).

Another approach to language teaching which has clearly influenced Prospero, who has read a great number of books on the subject ('Prospero's books'), is notional-functional (Wilkins, 1976):

> 'I endow'd thy purposes
> With words that made them known' (I ii, 357-358).

Caliban also acquires modal meaning and learns how to express concepts such as power and necessity:

> 'I must obey...his art is of such power...' (I ii, 372).

Prospero knows his Jakobson (1960) and Halliday (1975) well, so he teaches his student the ideational function, or the naming function – this is the function we use when we describe the world; thus, he teaches Caliban to name the sun, the moon and the stars:

> '...to name the bigger light and how the less
> That burn by day and night' (I ii, 334-335).

When Caliban celebrates the prospect of liberty he experiments playfully with Jakobson's poetic function:

> 'Ban Ban Ca–Caliban.
> Has a new a master –get a new man' (II ii, 197-198).

He also learns the language of the imagination, of creativity, of dreaming ; it is, as today's 'NLP master-practitioners' would say, the language of the right-side of the brain and it allows Caliban to imagine alternative worlds:

> 'In dreaming,
> The clouds methought would open and shower riches
> Ready to drop upon me, that when I wak'd,
> I cried to dream again' (III iii, 152-155).

Prospero teaches Caliban the emotive function of language – the one we use for expressing feelings – this allows Caliban to tell his teacher what he thinks of him and his language:

'You taught me language …and my profit on't
Is I know how to curse' (I ii, 363-364).

Of course, the educational functions of a foreign language are real and powerful; access to the language is access to knowledge and knowledge is power. Once acquired, the foreign language opens up the possibility of a counter-discourse against oppression (Peirce, 1989; Pennycook, 1994, 1998). Thus, Caliban soon learns to express his desire for independence:

This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother
Which thou tak'st from me (I ii, 330-331).

To achieve his independence, Caliban must acquire the power that resides in language, especially in the written word; thus, he begins to plan his revolution – he knows that the source of Prospero's power is his textbook (and no doubt a good teacher's book) and these Caliban must take control of:

'First to possess is books; for without them
He's but a sot…' (III ii, 103-104).

The irony is that Caliban's interlocutors, when he voices his alternative visions of sovereignty, are Prospero, his present master (and teacher) and, Stephano and Trinculo, also native-speakers of the language of power who, too, would perpetuate the native's dependence. The relationship is expressed through the lingua franca which the oppressor shares with the oppressed, but which is at the same time the language of the coloniser – notice Stephano's implicit assertion of ownership over the lingua franca:

'Where the devil should he learn our language?' (III ii, 71).

This relationship of domination and dependence is reinforced by the Europeans' introduction of western consumer goods into the island-paradise in the shape of a 'bottle' containing 'celestial liquor'; alcohol will be deployed by the colonisers to render the native more malleable so that they can more easily manipulate him. Stephano, the European and would-be king of the island, will use the attractions of his own culture to achieve domination over Caliban:

'He (Caliban) shall taste of my bottle; if he have never drunk wine afore it will go near to remove his fit. If I can recover him and keep him tame…' (III ii, 79ff).

Caliban exchanges his freedom for the new-found pleasures of alcohol:

> 'I'll swear upon that bottle, to be thy true subject; for the liquor is not earthly' (II ii, 134-135).

In the end, if Stephano got his way, Caliban would end up as a lucrative commodity:

> 'I shall not take too much for him. He shall pay for him that have him and that soundly' (II ii, 82-84).

In short, *The Tempest,* amongst its many thematic riches, explores in the most powerful way I have come across, the role of language in the process of colonial control and the way a local culture (Caliban's) becomes subordinated to the culture of the coloniser, be it the culture of the written word (Prospero's books) or the culture of consumer hedonism (Stephano's celestial liquor). In a remarkable anticipation of the processes of hegemony through 'coca-colonisation', Stephano links language, the 'celestial liquor' and control:

> 'Open your mouth. Here is that which will give language to you, cat. This will shake your shaking (gives Caliban drink)' (II ii, 88-90).

WHAT ENGLISH, WHICH ENGLISH? A HISTORY LESSON

One of Caliban's most important insights was that Prospero's power lay in his books and the knowledge they contained. But Caliban's most serious error was to attempt to destroy those books rather than acquire their knowledge and power for himself (Burn but his books, III iii, 106). The language we teach is always potentially an instrument of self-expression and therefore the model of English we choose to teach is of vital importance:

> I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience... But it will have to be a new English, still in communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings (Achebe, 1975, quoted in Widdowson, 1994, p. 384).

The kind of English we teach must facilitate the expression of the learners' own experience, both in terms of the 'classroom culture' and the culture outside the classroom. Is this principle consistent with the language models we have drawn on in ELT over the years? What kind

of English have we been teaching? Let us now look at how the English language syllabus has changed over the years, bringing the story up-to-date with recent proposals for a corpus-based lexical syllabus.

GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION: THE PHILOSOPHER PULLED THE JAW OF THE HEN

Just over a hundred years ago, when grammar-translation approaches to language teaching were still dominant, this is the kind of English students of English might have encountered in class:

> Where do you live? I live in a large street. Where does your father live? He lives at his friend's house. Where do your brothers live? They live in the large street. Dost thou live at thy cousin's? I do live at his house. (Ollendorf, 1864, pp. 8-9, quoted in Howatt, 1984, p. 143).

Clearly meaning, content and authenticity were not a priority 150 years ago. Reading the above extract, one might be excused for inferring that the break-up of the Victorian family was in full swing. We can be sure, however, that this particular family had not really suffered such traumatic fragmentation. Reality is made to fit the requirements of language practice. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, reformers began to develop the so-called 'Natural Methods' with the use of connected sentences, but though the meaning is clear the texts are still out of joint:

> This is a nice book. I open the book. I shut the book. There are pictures in this book (Marcel, 1853, p. 330 quoted in Howatt, 1984, p. 154).

The slow repetition of images in the next example has been described as reminiscent of Russian silent films but we are still a century away from authentic, natural language:

> The maid goes and seeks her hatchet.
> The maid takes a log of wood.
> The maid draws near to the chopping-block.
> The maid kneels down near this block (Gouin, 1892, p. 69, quoted in Howatt, 1984, p. 163).

The maid was the invention of Francois Gouin and it was the same gentleman in his 'series' method who gave us what was to become a classic ELT sequence of actions;

> I walk to the door. I walk. I draw near to the door. I draw near. I draw nearer to the door. I draw nearer. I get to the door. I get to. I

> stop at the door. am standing by the door. I stop (Gouin, 1892, quot-
> ed in Howatt, 1984, p. 162).

It was the Direct Method at the turn of the century that finally made the mother-tongue taboo and claimed to approach language teaching in the same way a child learnt its mother-tongue. The Direct Method tried to make language clear from the linguistic and visual context. As for the kind of language taught, it was still grammar in disguise and written English spoken aloud:

> We have two ears, one on each side of the head. The ear is an organ of hearing. Can you hear? Yes, I can hear. We are very fortunate to be able to hear. The deaf cannot hear, they are unfortunate. Are they unhappy? I don't know. Right, the unfortunate are not necessarily unhap-py (Sauveur, 1874, p. 48, quoted in Howatt, 1984, p. 199).

These examples of made-up, textbook English, pioneering in their time, are a measure of how far we have travelled in our long search for authenticity in the classroom:

> Here is the finger. Look. Here is the forefinger. Here is the middle finger, here is the ring finger. Here is the little finger and here is the thumb. Do you see the finger madame? (Sauveur, 1874, p. 10, quoted in Howatt, 1984, p. 200).

THE AMERICANS TO THE RESCUE

This unnatural state of affairs in ELT could not continue. Thus, in the 1940s, the Americans moved in to impose a New Structural Word Order. They cut language up into little building blocks and drilled them till they became automatic: the structural approach is a kind of sentence machine (or the linguistic equivalent of fast food):

	my	pen	on	the table
He's putting	your	pencil	in	the basket
	his	book	over	the bag
	her	key	under	the desk

So far, then, we have had grammar-translation, natural methods, direct methods and structural approaches and they all have something in common – they focus on form rather than meaning or use and 'authenticity' was not on their agenda. Though it is customary to point out the shortcomings of traditional approaches to ELT in terms of discourse and authenticity, it also remains a fact that people did learn for-

eign languages before the advent of communicative approaches. More-over, the superiority of functional approaches to language acquisition over formal approaches, often suspected, has yet to be proven.

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

In the 70s, the functional revolution that Shakespeare anticipated took place and, for the first time, we get an attempt to teach what we people say not what the grammar books say. In the notional-function-al approach, the starting point is: what message do I want to commu-nicate and the second step is what language do I need in order to get my message across? Thus, David Wilkins at the University of Reading and an army of applied linguists working for the Council of Europe, came up with long lists of 'functional exponents' like this:

> OK?
> All right?
> Any objections?
> Can
> May
> Could
> Might   I use your telephone?
> Might I possibly
> Could I perhaps
> Is it all right to use your telephone?
> Am I allowed to use your telephone?

(Wilkins, 1976, pp. 60-61)

Their 'model' of what was appropriate in a given context was of course the native-speaker; and so functional English, accompanied by authentic material and information gaps, prevailed for about 20 years and we all taught and slept peacefully at nights. However, the func-tional model of English was still, like its predecessors, based on made-up examples of English. When Wilkins, and after him Van Ek, 1976, and Munby, 1978, listed the 'exponents' of a particular function they merely drew on their own intuitions as competent users of the lan-guage to decide what was real and appropriate. They simply made it up as they went along.

THE CORPUS

Then came the corpus: a corpus is a body of texts, written or spo-ken, considered more or less representative of a language and usually

stored as an electronic data base. One of the oldest and most famous corpus is the one at the University of Birmingham called COBUILD. It consists of about 300 million words mostly from written sources but some spoken too which have been analysed for grammatical and lexical patterns. As a result, numerous interesting discoveries have been made about authentic British English, such as: the three most frequent structure words in English are 'the', 'of', 'and'; and the most frequent lexical items are 'think', 'know,' and 'time' (Sinclair, 1991, p. 143). Common words are discovered to have very different meanings and uses from the ones teachers and textbooks teach. Take 'thing' for example: although we teach 'thing' to refer to an object, pointing at the object in the best Direct Method tradition, the word 'thing' is actually more frequently used in an abstract way.

> 'Literacy isn't the same thing as intelligence'.

> 'A really strange thing happened yesterday' (Fox, 1998, p. 29).

The word 'thing' also has a very important pragmatic function: it is used as way of telling your listener what your attitude is to the thing you about to say:

> 'The important thing is/the scary thing is/the exciting thing is…' (Fox, 1998, p. 29).

When there are two ways of expressing similar concepts and functions which ones are more common?

Take 'would' for example. 'Would' in the sense of past habits ('He would get drunk everyday') is three times more common than 'used to'; ('He used to get drunk everyday'.)

The second interesting thing about the word 'would' is its frequency – it is the 44th most frequent word in English (almost twice as frequent as 'will'). 'Would' is also remarkable for the frequency with which it is used to 'talk about events which are of a hypothetical nature' (Willis, 1990, pp. 18-19) One example from the Corpus is:

'I think *The Tempest* would make a wonderful film' (Willis, 1990, p. 18). A final point of relevance to teachers of English is that hypothetical 'would' in conditional sentences with an explicit occurrence of 'If' is far less common than sentences with an implicit unstated condition.

There are six examples of 'would' in its hypothetical sense in this extract from the Beatles' song 'In an Octopus's Garden' with not an 'if' in sight:

> I'd like to be under the sea.
> He'd let us in.
> I'd ask my friends to come and see.
> We would be warm, below the storm.
> We would sing and dance around.
> Because we'd know we can't be found (The Beatles, 1969).

COBUILD, in fact, explodes the myth of the three conditionals completely.

If we turn to our old classroom friends 'this' and 'that', as in 'this is a door' and 'that is a window' we find that the real, authentic (British) uses of these pronouns are actually quite abstract, and do not refer to concrete things like doors, windows and chalk, at all or the other paraphernalia of 'classroom culture':

> Is that why you had a few days off?
> Is that clear Sergeant?
> This is why I'm opposed to the plan.
> The law says he can't be evicted is that right? (Willis, 1990, p. 50).

Thus, whatever the attractions of the models of English used in Direct and Structural Methods, they cannot be considered to correspond to actual language use. These examples from the COBUILD corpus (and countless others) contradict common current pedagogy and therefore pose a serious challenge to the way teachers and textbooks do things in class.

CANCODE Nottingham

Another fascinating corpus is the CANCODE: a corpus of 'naturally occurring spoken English' based at the University of Nottingham. This corpus, too, is full of insights into the way English is really used and, like COBUILD, demonstrates that the grammar of most textbooks is actually based on written English and not spoken English at all. Spoken English has its own grammar which looks something like this:

> A: D'you want a biscuit?
> B: Erm
> A: Biscuit?

> B: Er yeah
> Pause
> A: All right
> B: Yeah
> Pause
> A: Didn't know you used boiling water
> B: Pardon?
> A: Didn't know you used boiling water
> B: Don't have to but it's … they reckon it's erm quicker
> Pause
> A: Tony was saying they should have the heating on by about Wednesday.
>
> (Carter and McCarthy, 1997, p. 65).

This Pinteresque dialogue illustrates salient features of real spoken English as spoken by native speakers such as ellipsis (or missing words); and the use of the past continuous with reporting verbs; but there are many other features which one would not find in written English such as emphatic word order: 'nice wine that' for 'that is a nice wine.' Double subjects: 'My mate he says he's an engineer…' and so on.

On a pragmatic level, the naturally-occurring data of corpus research throws light on the choices speakers make in natural interaction – the choices are shaped by pre-existing knowledge and the needs of the ongoing discourse. One example is the use of the past continuous tense in reported speech:

> I was saying to mum earlier…Tony was saying they should have the heating on…I was saying to Ken that you wouldn't be in a pub at twelve o'clock… (Carter and McCarthy, 1995).

The past continuous here is not simply an alternative to the simple past with reporting verbs (I said…Tony said etc) but, as Carter and McCarthy point out, it relates to pragmatic choice which arises from the needs of the discourse especially the interpersonal needs of the participants:

> The past simple could have been used, but with a distinctly different force: the past simple seems to give more authority to the actual words uttered, while the past continuous seems more to report the event of the uttering… (Carter and McCarthy, 1995, p. 143).

In the same way as the functional syllabus added a dimension of reality to the formal patterns of the structural syllabus the corpus adds

a dimension of authenticity to the disembodied exponents of the functional syllabus. Reported speech was always there and the past continuous in reporting verbs was always under our noses, but it took a corpus of the language to bring out its frequency, context and significance.

Language like this is typical of the data thrown up by corpus analysis and it thus forms the basis of proposals for a language syllabus designed to replace the previous generation of structural or functional syllabuses. The advantage of corpus-based syllabuses, it is argued, is that the language is not made up but 'real':

> the models of grammar that underpin… the spoken language are still rooted in descriptions of written English… the best course of action would seem to be to expose learners to natural spoken data wherever possible (Carter and McCarthy, 1995, p. 154).

The use of spoken data based on corpora findings in the classroom involves moving from a sentence-based pre-occupation with form to a discourse-based focus on interpersonal meaning (Hughes and McCarthy, 1998) which raises pedagogic questions which I will examine in the next section.

In the classroom

The linguistic insights thrown up by corpus analysis are fascinating for anyone involved in language description or language teaching. The question is what happens in the transition from language description to language teaching?

> In recent years, we have heard persuasive voices insisting that the English presented in the classroom should be authentic naturally-occurring language, not produced for instructional purposes (Widdowson, 1994, p. 386).

Indeed, coursebooks, dictionaries and handbooks have already begun to appear embodying these features of authentic (mostly British) grammar and lexis. Following the pioneering COBUILD dictionaries and grammar guides first published in the 1980s, several major publishers have produced corpus based dictionaries and Longman have recently published a major grammar of Spoken and Written English (Biber et al., 1999). Classroom materials influenced by the insights of corpora have also begun to increase in number. It is interesting to note in this

respect that while the debate concerning the relevance and appropriateness of pedagogic materials goes on, authors, publishers and directors of studies take decisions which have an immediate effect on classroom practice. This pedagogic fait accompli is explored in Doyle (1999).

The appearance of corpus-informed pedagogic materials suggests that the corpus movement is gaining momentum not only in the field of language description but also in the field of language pedagogy. The time is ripe, therefore, to begin the process of evaluation of 'corporeal' English from a practical classroom point of view. The process of mediating the fruits of the research into the classroom has been driven by a partnership between applied linguists and publishers. In the scholarly publications on the subject I have found little reference to research done with the fruits of corpora at classroom level (see, for example, Sinclair, 1991, 1997; Willis, 1990; Lewis, 1993, 1997; McCarthy and Carter, 1995; Hunston et al., 1997; Hughes and McCarthy, 1998).

As the debate has progressed, however, we have seen the early crusading tone of the corpora movement become more receptive to the potential pitfalls of transferring corpora research to the classroom indiscriminately. Hughes and McCarthy (1998) summarise the problems in terms of lesson planning, textbook design and methodology, as well as the relative competence of native and non-native speaker teachers. They also refer to a problem of direct relevance to the present article: the difficulties posed by the close connection between authentic, native-speaker English and the pragmatic context in which it is produced:

> the discourse approach asks for not only longer examples (and if not chosen with great care, examples belonging linguistically or culturally to an 'inner circle' of language users) but also descriptions of the broad context: socio-linguistic background, relations between speakers, context of speech and so on (Hughes and McCarthy, 1998, p. 284).

The paradox of authentic English may be that its strengths on a descriptive level are its weaknesses in the classroom: how far can a description of spoken grammar which takes discourse and pragmatics into account be transferred to the typical non-native speaker classroom where the pragmatic context is absent? Widdowson has expressed the contradiction between language description and language pedagogy:

> the classroom cannot replicate the contextual conditions that made the language authentic in the first place. I think that language teachers should indeed be concerned with pragmatic meaning, but this can only be achieved if they localise the language, create contextual conditions

that make the language a reality for particular communities of learners (Widdowson, 1998, p. 715).

The sections that follow attempt to connect the concept of corpus-based authenticity with the communities of learners and teachers at the receiving end of the whole process.

In this article, we have seen the ELT profession swing from pendulum to pendulum, from syllabus to syllabus and from one inappropriate method to another and yet people continue to learn foreign languages. Why not, therefore, let the applied linguists (and their publishers) create a new paradigm or at least as Willis (1990) says 'a new approach to language teaching' based on the lexical insights revealed so convincingly by corpus linguistics? The problem of traditional (pre-corpus) methods of teaching English was that they turned out to be inappropriate in one way or another, whether we ended up with sentences like the 'philosopher who pulled the jaw of the hen' in the grammar-translation approach (Howatt, 1984, p. 145) or whether we threw out the grammatical baby with the structural bathwater (in early versions of the functional approach). Proponents of corpora in the classroom are now saying, there was not enough 'reality' in language syllabuses in the past; but the problem raised in this article is that corpora may be offering the learner 'too much reality':

> I would argue against using authentic language in the classroom on the fairly reasonable grounds that it is actually impossible to do so. The language cannot be authentic because the classroom cannot provide the contextual conditions for it to be authenticated by the learners (Widdowson, 1998, p. 711).

A sentence like 'I'm gonna have nachos, buffalo wings or potato skins…they don't do cider, and I don't want beer,' (Carter and McCarthy, 1997, p. 98) may be real in Britain but unreal in Greece and surreal in Calcutta.

CLASSROOM RESEARCH

Clearly, we need to carry out research to found out whether corpora in the classroom will make it easier or more difficult

a)   for students to learn English;

b)   for the non-native speaker teacher of English to do her job.

In the next part of this article, I will look at some research carried out to find out whether corpus based models of language facilitate or make more difficult the process of language teaching and learning. I will end by looking ahead to a possible methodology that might help to reconcile some of the contradictions I have identified in this paper.

TESTING THE HYPOTHESES

In an attempt to begin the long process of finding out whether the above eight hypotheses are founded in classroom reality I conducted an experiment with students and a survey with teachers.

The experiment was made up of two tests. The first test was based on corpus data and the second on 'made up sentences'. The two tests required the students to fill in the gaps in 50 sentences from which a key word had been omitted. The sentences in the first test were all illustrative sentences from a corpus-based dictionary for foreign learners of English. (COBUILD, 1996) In other words, they were authentic, naturally-occurring samples of English. Here are some examples of the kind of sentences used in this first test (key word in italics).

1. He was *accusing* her of having an affair.
2. The one hundredth *anniversary* of the birth of Ho Chi Minh.
3. Illiteracy threatens Britain's industrial performance. But quite *apart from* that, the individual who can't read or write is unlikely to get a job.
4. *In case* anyone was following me, I made an elaborate detour.
5. Dinsdale had sustained a broken back while working in the mines. *Consequently*, he spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair.
6. The way that building societies *deal with* complaints.
7. His *heir* Lord Doune, cuts a bit of a dash in the city.
8. He will be in charge of all *hiring* and firing at PHA.
9. He twiddled a *knob* on the dashboard and a red light came on.
10. This congealed *muck* was interfering with the filter and causing the flooding.
11. Although the market has been flattened, residential property costs remain high. *Nevertheless,* the fall-off in demand has had an impact on resale values.
12. A snaking three-dimensional *pattern* of coloured dots.

The second test took the same 50 words and asked students to complete the gaps in the corresponding illustrative sentences taken from a traditional non-corpus based dictionary (Oxford Advanced Learner's,

Hornby, 1974) In other words, the sentences were artificial, made-up examples of English. Here is a sample of the sentences used in the second test:

1. The police *accused* him of murder.
2. Next Friday is the *anniversary* of the first day I met you.
3. *Apart from* the cost, the hat doesn't suit me.
4. Take your coat *in case* it rains.
5. The rain was heavy. *Consequently*, the land was flooded.
6. There are too many difficulties for us to *deal with*.
7. The king's eldest son is *heir* to the throne.
8. To pay for the *hire* of a room.
9. Turn the *knob* clockwise to switch the set on.
10. I've got *muck* on my shoes.
11. I can't follow your advice. *Nevertheless*, thank you for giving it.
12. The cloth has a *pattern* of red and white squares.

The results of the tests showed that authentic, naturally-occurring English is more difficult than the made-up English for teaching purposes (students scored on average about 30% on the corpus-based test and 75% on the non-corpus test).

This raises questions regarding the model of English we wish to draw on in particular pedagogic contexts. On the one hand, we might conclude from the results that the difficulty of naturally-occurring English makes it less appropriate in some contexts than simplified English. Indeed, the comparative results in the two tests will give us different impressions of the competence of the same group of students, depending on which model of English we teach or test them on. The first test makes them appear to be better students than the second. This may have significant implications for all kinds of pedagogic factors in the classroom, such as motivation, student beliefs, teacher expectations, self-esteem and so on.

On the other hand, we may conclude, from the same results, that the apparent difficulty entailed in authentic English might be just what we are looking for if we want students to engage in negotiation of meaning with language in its cultural context. We might add that in encountering lexical items in the company of other lexical items and the concepts they bring in their train, students will learn much more about discourse than if they are protected from 'reality' by carefully doctored language.

To give a fuller answer to the pedagogic issues raised by the above tests one needs to know more about the kind of difficulty involved in

naturally-occurring English. I thus designed a questionnaire for teachers based on the same set of key words and sentences as in the student tests. The questionnaire was first given to 50 teachers in Poland (and later to a similar number of Spanish, Italian and Greek teachers, making a total of 200 respondents).

QUESTIONNAIRE

You are teaching an upper intermediate/advanced class. You wish to help your students understand the meaning of the 15 key words below. Which of the two sentences given for each key word would you choose to help you explain the meaning of the word and why?

1.   ACCUSE
A   He was accusing her of having an affair.
B   The police accused him of murder.

2.   ANNIVERSARY
A   The one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Ho Chi Minh.
B   Next Friday is the anniversary of the first day I met you.

3.   APART FROM
A   Illiteracy threatens Britain's industrial performance. But quite apart from that, the individual who can't read or write is unlikely to get a job.
B   Apart from the cost, the hat doesn't suit me.

4.   ARMS
A   The IRA had extensive supplies of arms.
B   The soldiers had plenty of arms and ammunition.

5.   IN CASE
A   In case anyone was following me, I made an elaborate detour.
B   Take your coat in case it rains.

6.   CONSEQUENTLY
A   Dinsdale had sustained a broken back while working in the mines. Consequently, he spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair.
B   The rain was heavy. Consequently, the land was flooded.

7.   DEAL WITH
A   The way that building societies deal with complaints.
B   There are too many difficulties for us to deal with.

8.   HEIR
A   His heir Lord Doune, cuts a bit of a dash in the city.
B   The king's eldest son is heir to the throne.

9. HIRE
A He will be in charge of all hiring and firing at PHA.
B To pay for the hire of a room.

10. BOTHER
A Lots of people don't bother to go through a marriage ceremony.
B Don't bother yourself about that just because of me.

11. KNOB
A He twiddled a knob on the dashboard and a red light came on.
B Turn the knob clockwise to switch the set on.

12. MUCK
A This congealed muck was interfering with the filter and causing the flooding.
B I've got muck on my shoes.

13. NEVERTHELESS
A Although the market has been flattened, residential property costs remain high. Nevertheless, the fall-off in demand has had an impact on resale values.
B I can't follow your advice. Nevertheless, thank you for giving it.

14. PATTERN
A A snaking three-dimensional pattern of coloured dots.
B The cloth has a pattern of red and white squares.

15. CREEP
A An increasing ratio of mistakes, perhaps induced by tiredness, crept into her game.
B The sea crept noiselessly up the shore.

The results of this questionnaire are of two kinds. First, there is the number of teachers who chose one kind of illustrative sentence or the other. Secondly, there are the reasons given for their choice.

Statistically, the made-up sentences were preferred by 76% of teachers compared to 24% who chose the authentic naturally-occurring sentences. In other words, roughly eight out of ten teachers find made-up sentences more appropriate. (The follow-up surveys with teachers in Italy, Spain and Greece confirm this pattern of preference for the made-up sentences over the 'real' ones.)

But the interesting question is why? The reasons given by teachers for preferring artifice over authenticity can be summed up in the following criteria of difficulty (roughly in order of frequency):

Criteria of difficulty of authentic illustrative sentences

– lexical items unfamiliar (3A 11A).
– additional lexical items (12A 13A).
– context unfamiliar (3A 13A).
– context inappropriate (1A 4A).
– collocation unfamiliar (9A 12A).
– cultural references unfamiliar (2A 4A).
– typicality of example (1A 5A).
– complexity of syntax (3A 6A).
– length of sentence (3A 6A 13A).
– divergence from known structures (1A 5A).
– register too formal/informal (6A 13A).
– reference to historical facts (2A 4A).
– abstract concepts (3A 15A).
– complexity of ideas (3A 12A).
– complexity of tenses (6A 13A).
– divergence from mother-tongue (1A).
– too metaphorical (14A 15A).
– impersonal v personal context (2A 7B).
– demonstrability (15A).
– idiomaticity (8A).
– use of acronyms (9A).
– cohesive/deictic elements (8A 9A 11A 12A 13A).

This list suggests that what defines authentic English, as revealed in corpora studies, is precisely what makes it difficult to engage with for most students and teachers for whom English is a foreign language (the results in an ESL context might well be different). Richness of vocabulary, idioms, cultural allusions, metaphorical turns of phrase, variety of style, matching the word to the context, etc are all features that give authentic English its vitality. Although not all the factors that make the decoding of an utterance 'difficult' for the non-native speaker are the exclusive preserve of the authentic extracts, the lack of context does seem to make 'real' examples more elusive than the often self-contained made-up sentences. The discourse context which would help the non-native student and teacher overcome the difficulties identified by the respondents in my survey is missing (Hughes and McCarthy, 1998). The pragmatic conditions which determine the choice of appropriate lexical and grammatical items have been stripped from

both the authentic utterances and the artificial ones presented to the students and teachers in my surveys. However, without the pragmatic context, authenticity suffers more than artifice. If the linguistic features of the utterances captured by a corpus reflect the 'here and now' of the written or spoken context, the question is what happens to these utterances when they are transferred to the 'there and then' of an ELT classroom – in another time, in another place? The semantic and pragmatic meaning of authentic utterances becomes elusive to these 'communities' of users of English as a foreign language.

In classroom terms, the implications of these investigations are that authentic English, used indiscriminately may be frustrating and demoralising for both teacher and learner:

> if the contextually and culturally influenced, interpersonal, idiomatic nature of much authentic language is to be accepted into ELT classrooms internationally…care needs to be taken that the discourse on which insights are based is not only that of a particular section of British- English-speaking society (Hughes and McCarthy, 1998, p. 285).

The failure to meet the cultural needs of learners may lead to a degree of 'difficulty' in the classroom which clashes with an important role good language teachers are called upon to play: that of 'facilitator'. The fundamental reason for investigating the pedagogic implications of corpora is the suspicion that at the end of the day they will make acquisition more, not less, difficult for students in EFL contexts.

LOOKING AHEAD: METHODOLOGY

What's to be done? To sum up the argument so far before drawing some methodological conclusions: language corpora have given us enormous insight into how modern English works in particular contexts. Paradoxically, the strength of language corpora, their authenticity and close approximation to a specific linguistic reality, makes them more difficult to adopt as the exclusive basis for a foreign language syllabus in diverse teaching contexts around the world. We have confirmed what Shakespeare's *The Tempest* told us 400 years ago years ago: that language is embedded in its social context; language is learning how to mean, learning how to express a wide range of speech acts which will enable the learner to act on his or her own world as a free subject. We have discovered, through the work of both the proponents

and opponents of language corpora in the classroom, the importance of pragmatics. More importantly, we seem to have reached a point of some convergence in two apparently conflicting points of view, that of Hughes and McCarthy (1998) and Widdowson (1998). The common ground lies in the recognition that the local classroom context must be taken into account if language is to be both 'real' and 'realisable' for the non-native speaker:

> materials need to be created which provide the teacher with sufficient linguistic background and context for them to feel confident … (Hughes and McCarthy, 1998, p. 285).

> language teachers should be concerned with pragmatic meaning, but this can only be achieved if they localise the language, create contextual conditions that make the language a reality for particular communities of learners so that they can authenticate it and so realise, in both sense of the term, the semantic resources that are encoded in the language (Widdowson, 1998).

Where do we go from here as far as methodology is concerned? Widdowson's stress on the classroom and social context in which the students find themselves as the only way of creating appropriate pragmatic meaning suggests the importance of taking the learners as a starting point for developing an appropriate syllabus and methodology. The approaches outlined in this paper, from Grammar-translation to corpora have been driven by the language model we thought was the best one and only then was the learner brought into the picture. The methodology suggestions put forward by writers favouring the use of corpora in the classroom have been consistently within the framework of a cognitive 'discovery' approach to learning designed to raise learners' awareness of how authentic English works (Hunston et al., 1997, McCarthy and Carter, 1995, Johns, 1997, Carter and McCarthy, 1998, Willis, 1998). All of these attempts to incorporate authentic data into the classroom have had the commendable intention of making the learner into a researcher, exploring the language, albeit on a small scale. The approach is summed up by Carter and McCarthy:

> …approaches based on observation, awareness and induction may prove a more satisfactory way of dealing with the interpersonal subtleties of choice in matters such as ellipsis… (Carter and McCarthy, 1995, p. 155).

> in respect of spoken grammar teaching, traditional PPP (presentation, practice, production) methodologies should be replaced by III (Illustra-

tion, Interaction, Induction) (Carter, Hughes and McCarthy, 1998, pp. 79-80).

Bearing in mind that 'interaction' in the Carter and McCarthy model for an appropriate methodology refers to a stage in consciousness-raising and not actual language production by the students (Carter and McCarthy, 1995, p. 155) one cannot but feel the methodology of corpora in the classroom is fine as far as it goes but lacking in several of the components essential in any appropriate methodology for the teaching of English in all its complexity.

First of all, to teach 'spoken grammar' without requiring students to produce appropriate spoken interaction seems one-sided and a contradiction in terms. To teach authentic spoken grammar without a fully developed phonological component to go with it, also seems one-dimensional. Thirdly, it is not clear on what basis the language forms and texts will be chosen in a corpus-based approach – how will they relate to the learners needs and wants? How will culturally inappropriate or opaque materials be avoided? What role does the learners' age and previous learning experience play in the choice of a cognitive/discovery approach to language learning? What degrees of linguistic and cognitive sophistication are required by the learner and teacher (native and non-native) to pull off such a project successfully? What kind of equipment hardware and software does the approach outlined by Johns (1997) presuppose?

This is not to say that using corpora as a classroom research tool is not of immense potential value, given the availability of the programmes and equipment. Neither is it to say that, apart from using corpora for 'noticing' and 'exploring' the language, corpora cannot be used in a more task-based, communicative framework (see for example Aston, 1995). Indeed, even a way of using concordances in the classroom without a computer has been suggested by Willis (1998) in her task-based, learner-centred approach to corpora.

The question is whether this tool, corpus linguistics, so powerful in the hands of professional researchers and undoubtedly useful for the student-researcher, too, adds up to an appropriate methodology in the diverse circumstances in which English is taught around the world today. In other words, one can agree with Stubbs, a leading corpus linguist, when he says:

> Exactly how such findings should best be turned into teaching materials and presented to students is a topic which will require long-term experimentation. (Stubbs, 1995, p. 255).

However, on the basis of the research described in this paper one cannot agree with Stubbs when he finds it 'easy to see' how corpora can be used 'for integrating semantic, pragmatic and cultural information into language teaching materials'.

Indeed, the pragmatic and cultural dimension of language as I have argued is precisely what gives authentic data its vitality and precisely what makes it wither when transplanted to alien climes; the resulting lack of context makes the process of recovering semantic and pragmatic more difficult for the learner.

METHODOLOGY: AN INTERLANGUAGE-DRIVEN MODEL

Corpora offer the text –or the language model– as a starting point for an appropriate methodology. In this final section, I will argue for a leaner-driven model as the basis of an appropriate methodology.

In an 'appropriate methodology' as Holliday says (1994) 'the starting point is the social context of learning' and in Widdowson's terms (1996, 1998) it is a methodology that builds learner autonomy on the 'classroom culture' and the dynamics of a particular group of learners in a particular time and place. It will also be a methodology which enables the learners to 'appropriate' English, to make it a tool for the expression of their own needs, their own culture and its points of contact with other cultures. It will be a methodology which will give students who hitherto have 'failed' to learn English a better chance of success. As a tool of self-expression, the foreign language will articulate 'alternative possibilities' (Pennycook, 1994, 299, Pierce, 1989) for the learner, in educational and social terms. The corpus-based 'real English' movement presents a model of complete, finished language for the student to imitate and acquire. The product is there (in corpora, dictionaries, grammars, textbooks) and the student has somehow to acquire this product. Authentic spoken language in particular is language 'already used' by someone else, in another place and time and it has probably gone stale by the time it reaches the learner.

An appropriate methodology, on the other hand, will focus more on the 'here and now' of the classroom language and culture; it will focus on the process of acquiring the language in stages, of closer and closer approximations, not to an external model, but to the meanings the learners themselves wish to articulate in the classroom culture and the wider culture in which they find themselves. In this process, the

students' interlanguage will play a vital part. At each stage of developing acquisition the methodology will offer the student options which will drive the interlanguage further along the road to the competence the student him/herself is striving for. In this interlanguage-driven methodology, there may well be a place for native speaker models of English; some of the insights that corpora have made available to us will be fed into the students ever-changing interlanguage, as appropriate. In other words, an appropriate methodology, will be neither 'corpus-driven' nor 'corpus-based' but it could be, in various degrees, 'corpus-informed' . If, for example, a learner is planning to spend an extensive period studying in an English-speaking country and their academic writing or discussion skills are riddled with what native-speakers would consider inappropriate, deviant language, the corpus-aware teacher will be able to draw on the language required to meet the felt need. The methodology will be accompanied by a range of techniques for 'incorporating' naturally-occurring elements into the students' interlanguage. If the student will be using English mostly with other non-native speakers as a lingua franca, much native-speaker authenticity will be redundant. In the case of a teenage learner it may be that a mini-corpora based on rock music and magazines will be appropriate. Where there are no definable language needs in a particular pedagogic context the model of English we teach will be of a kind consistent with the use of English as a lingua franca in a range of international contexts. The two extreme kinds of spoken and written English, which carry dense traces of the original cultural and pragmatic context will be inappropriate. It will be more appropriate to draw on authentic models which are less 'pragmatically-marked' and therefore more accessible in an EFL context. I am not suggesting therefore that corpora and the native-speaker cultural contexts they throw up should not be a part of the work we do – simply that whatever models and methods we choose should facilitate learning and not frustrate it. Just as we now work with a concept of a 'lingua franca' to help us make sense of the bewildering varieties of English in our globalised communities, so too we need a concept of a 'cultura franca' to help us find common ground amongst the bewildering varieties of micro- and macro-cultures, inscribed in the syntax and lexis of authentic Englishes.

I have argued that native-speaker models of language, adopted wholesale and taught through a methodology based on learning through discovery, on their own will be insufficient and inappropriate to meet the needs of students in a wide range of EFL contexts around

the world. The question, then, is: where *do* we go to find appropriate models and what exactly do we do with them in methodological terms?

A good place to start is the learner. If we accept, in principle, the importance of taking the learners' interlanguage as the starting point for at least some of the activities we engage in class then how are we going to get access to appropriate quantities of student interlanguage? The answer is from Learner Input.

Learner Input is everything the learner brings to class which can be used in class to promote learning: ideas, feelings, experiences, texts. The original idea for Learner Input comes from the work of Curran (1976) and Community Language Learning, the basic pedagogic principle of which is using what the learners' want to say and helping them to say it, using the mother-tongue as a bridge and recycling texts produced by the learners in order to drive their interlanguage forward. In English Language Teaching, the approach has been applied the use of 'lessons from the learner' (Deller, 1990) and 'learner-based lessons' (Campbell and Kryszewska, 1992). Methodologically, Learner Input is the recycling of student texts, for example homework or classroom exercises into tasks which integrate the learners' world with the world of the foreign language and drive the students' interlanguage forward.

Below I summarise the advantages of Learner Input, drawing on some of the issues that have been touched on in this paper. Learner Input:

1. provides the teacher with data from which she can conduct a constant needs analysis;

2. makes it possible to introduce local and international issues and ideas which are of current interest to the group;

3. allows learners to prepare and use their own materials;

4. provides a basis for students to work together on their interlanguage, 'to pool whatever resources they have and work towards group grammars and group lexicons' (Tudor, 1996);

5. the material is of an appropriate level of difficulty;

6. the teacher transforms level, usually upwards, drawing on appropriate models (including corpora) to enrich the learner's competence;

7. student language encounters other language;

8. the mother tongue is source of strength and a way into the foreign language (we move from the mother tongue to the 'other tongue', from the 'mother culture' to the 'other culture');

9.   the content is of interest to learners;

10.   as interlanguage is the driving force error is not 'terror' but a valuable step towards fuller competence in the language. The de-stigmatizing of error helps learners' self-esteem. (Compare the feeling of inadequacy often felt by the learner –and teacher– when encountering opaque, native-speaker authenticity).

The role of the teacher in this model is that of transformer of student texts. These texts which will carry all the signs of the individual's or group's interlanguage. The teacher transforms the interlanguage into something closer to correct and appropriate English, 'to piece out the students' imperfections' with the teacher's superior knowledge of the language and, if need be, access to corpus-data. It is a process involving the 'recycling' of student texts to give them new life.

The methodological approach outlined by corpus linguists is not necessarily inconsistent with the principles of Learner Input (see, for example, Willis, 1998) but it is much easier to implement a Learner Input model if our starting point is the learner's interlanguage rather than corpus data which has to be acquired. The crusading zeal of some 'corpus methodologists' often assumes the primacy of the 'authentic' language model and makes it more difficult to see the options we face in their full pedagogic and cultural complexity:

> It is time for a re-evaluation of our accepted ideas about learning and teaching. Corpus linguistics is going to change the content of our teaching. These ideas on collocation are only the first rumblings (Hill, 1999, p. 6).

These 'rumblings' suggest the inevitability of a new corpus-based orthodoxy. On the contrary, I would argue that it is time we re-evaluated the role of native-speaker authenticity in the EFL classroom and the relationship of the applied linguist to the teacher; I would say it is time to distinguish between language description and language teaching methodology. An appropriate methodology clearly draws on the language models available but sees the language model in the light of the learner's own social, cultural and communicative needs.

LOOKING AHEAD

The insights corpora have made available to us, need to be looked at carefully by teachers, materials designers, methodologists, teacher

trainers, course directors and others responsible for mediating the fruits of research to the classroom. More specifically:

– A selection needs to be made of the more 'common core' features emerging from the corpora;

– these features will need to be 'incorporated' into a more general multi-level language syllabus which will draw on other sources for syllabus items in addition to appropriate items from existing corpora;

– other varieties of English need to be explored and analysed in the same way as British and American English are being explored so we will have available corpora of local and international varieties of English;

– the methodological implications of adopting existing corpora need to be explored: how far do they tie the hands of the non-native speaker teacher? How far do they constrain the autonomy of the learner in EFL contexts?

– we need to develop a methodology where learner interlanguage interacts productively with an external syllabus based on corpora and other sources;

– we need to develop a methodology in which local culture and other cultures interact productively to further the educational and developmental aims of English language teaching as an educational practice.

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