

**THE COGNITIONS UNDERLYING TEACHERS' USE OF
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ON A BA ELT AT A MEXICAN
UNIVERSITY**

ELIPHELET RIVERA CUAYAHUITL

**SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF**

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

EdD

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

SEPTEMBER 2012

DECLARATION

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement

2012

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ELIPHELET RIVERA CUAYAHUITL

ABSTRACT

While in the field of language education much has been written about the design and use of instructional materials, very few studies have actually studied teachers' practices in using materials and the rationales for these practices. In response to this gap, this work examines the findings of a study of English language teachers' use of instructional materials on a BA ELT programme in Mexico.

Drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data, the study examines how more experienced (METs) and less experienced (LETs) language teachers use ELT materials in their lessons, and identifies what factors - cognitive and contextual - influence their decisions. Language teachers in the institution under study first completed a questionnaire about their use of instructional materials; six of these teachers were then studied through observations and interviews to provide a deeper understanding of classroom practices in using materials and the factors shaping their choices.

Findings revealed that textbooks were the most relevant materials in the teachers' practices. In this vein the study unveiled contrasting beliefs between LETs and METs about the use of textbooks. The study also showed that contextual factors such as the length of courses and lessons, and the textbook-based assessment, were explicitly raised as the most influential over the teachers' use of materials. Another emerging factors that also shaped teachers' use of materials include: Procedures for selecting textbooks, institution's facilities, out of fashion materials at the resource centre, institutional mechanisms to supervise teachers' practices and types of teachers' work contracts.

Contributions from this work are expected to be relevant for the institution under study, for similar other BA ELT programs and for the field of teacher cognition.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	xi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	xii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Rationale of the study.....	1
1.2 Research Questions.....	2
1.3 Methodology.....	3
1.4 Structure of the study.....	3
CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH CONTEXT.....	5
Introduction.....	5
2.1 Educational context.....	5
2.2 Public universities.....	6
2.3 Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla.....	7
2.4 The faculty of languages.....	8
2.4.1 BA ELT (LEMO).....	8
2.4.2 English language courses.....	10
2.4.3 Assessment and supervision.....	11
2.4.4 Instructional resources at the LEMO.....	11
2.4.5 Instructional materials.....	12
2.4.6 Language textbooks.....	13
2.5 LEMO teachers.....	14
2.5.1 Academies.....	15
2.5.2 English language academy.....	16

2.6 LEMO students.....	17
2.7 Conclusion.....	17
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	19
Introduction.....	19
3.1 Literature review and research goals.....	19
3.2 Teacher cognition terminology.....	20
3.3 Teacher Cognition background.....	21
3.4 The nature of teachers' beliefs.....	22
3.5 Understanding teachers' knowledge.....	26
3.6 Relevance of teacher cognition in this study.....	31
3.7 Teacher cognition in the Spanish speaking context.....	34
3.8 Teachers' experience in ELT practice.....	35
3.9 Instructional materials in ELT.....	39
3.9.1 Textbook in today's language classrooms.....	40
3.10 Curriculum and Syllabus in ELT Programmes.....	43
3.11 Relevance of work context.....	45
3.12 Conclusion.....	46
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY.....	48
Introduction.....	48
4.1 Research approach.....	48
4.1.1 Connections between quantitative and qualitative data.....	49
4.1.2 Benefits and drawbacks.....	49
4.2 Research questions.....	52
4.3 Context and gatekeepers.....	53
4.4 Sampling.....	54
4.4.1 Sample one.....	55
4.4.2 Sample two.....	55

4.5 Data collection	57
4.6 Quantitative data collection.....	58
4.6.1 Questionnaire Design	58
4.6.2 Questionnaire piloting.....	60
4.6.3 Questionnaire administration	61
4.7 Qualitative phase.....	62
4.7.1 Interview procedures.....	62
4.7.2 Interview piloting.....	65
4.7.3 Interview recording.....	65
4.8 Classroom observations.....	66
4.8.1 Field notes.....	68
4.9 Data Analysis.....	69
4.9.1 Questionnaire data analysis.....	69
4.9.2 Interview and observation data analysis.....	70
4.10 Research Ethics.....	72
4.11 Criteria for research evaluation.....	74
4.12 Conclusion.....	76
CHAPTER 5 : QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS.....	78
Introduction.....	78
5.1 Experience in language teaching.....	78
5.2 Instructional materials.....	79
5.3 Use of instructional materials.....	83
5.4 Textbook Use.....	85
5.5 Contextual factors and use of materials.....	88
5.6 Further Participation.....	92
5.7 Conclusion.....	93
CHAPTER 6: LESS EXPERIENCED TEACHERS.....	94

Introduction.....	94
6.1 Less experienced teachers.....	94
6.1.1 Less experienced teacher one (LE1).....	95
6.1.2 Teaching approach.....	96
6.1.3 LE1's views about instructional materials.....	98
6.1.4 Adopting an anthology.....	99
6.1.5 LE1's feelings about his materials.....	103
6.1.6 Conclusions.....	103
6.2 Less experienced teacher two (LE2).....	104
6.2.1 Teaching approach.....	105
6.2.2 LE2's views about materials.....	108
6.2.3 Textbooks in LE2's practices.....	109
6.2.4 Contextual factors and use of materials.....	111
6.2.5 Conclusion.....	112
6.3 Less Experienced Teacher three (LE3).....	112
6.3.1 Teaching approach.....	113
6.3.2 Instructional materials in LE3's practices.....	115
6.3.3 LE3's views about textbooks and handouts.....	116
6.3.4 Conclusion.....	118
6.3.5 Main findings across LETs.....	119
CHAPTER 7: MORE EXPERIENCED TEACHERS.....	121
Introduction.....	121
7.1 More Experienced one (ME1).....	121
7.1.1 ME1's teaching approach.....	121
7.1.2 Materials in ME1's lessons.....	124
7.1.3 Rationale for using worksheets.....	125
7.1.4 ME1's perceptions about the official book.....	126

7.1.5 Contextual factors and ME1's use of materials.....	127
7.1.6 Conclusion.....	128
7.2 More experienced teacher two (ME2).....	129
7.2.1 ME2's teaching approach.....	130
7.2.2 ME2's views about materials.....	133
7.2.3 Textbooks in ME2's lessons.....	134
7.2.4 Contextual factors and ME2's use of materials.....	135
7.2.5 Conclusion.....	137
7.3 More experienced teacher three (ME3).....	137
7.3.1 ME3's Teaching Approach.....	138
7.3.2 Instructional materials.....	140
7.3.3 Textbooks in ME3's lessons.....	141
7.3.4 Contextual factors and ME3's use of materials.....	142
7.3.5 Conclusion.....	144
7.3.6 Main findings across MET's.....	145
CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	147
Introduction.....	147
8.1 Review of the aims of the study.....	147
8.1.1 Research questions	148
8.2 Quantitative findings.....	148
8.3 Qualitative findings.....	149
8.3.1 Exploring gaps between teachers' beliefs and practices.....	150
8.4 Teachers' use of Textbooks.....	154
8.4.1 Teachers' rationales for using textbooks.....	155
8.4.2 replacing textbooks.....	158
8.5 Alternative and complementary materials.....	160
8.5.1 Alternative materials.....	161

8.5.2 Complementary materials.....	163
8.6 Teachers' conceptions of freedom.....	164
8.7 Contextual factors and use of materials.....	166
8.7.1 Institutional factors.....	168
8.7.2 Classroom factors.....	169
8.7.3 Non-stated factors.....	169
8.8 LETs and METs' variations.....	172
8.8.1 Common themes to METs and LETs.....	173
8.8.2 Distinctive themes and features of METs' and LETs' practices.....	174
8.9 Conclusion.....	176
CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	179
Introduction.....	179
9.1 Synthesis of findings.....	180
9.1.1 Quantitative findings.....	180
9.1.2 Qualitative findings.....	181
9.2 Recommendations for further research.....	183
9.3 Contributions of the study.....	184
9.4 Limitations of the study.....	185
9.5 Conclusion.....	186
REFERENCES.....	188
APPENDICES.....	195

ABBREVIATIONS

ANUIES	National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions
BA	Bachelor's
BA ELT	Bachelor's in English language teaching
BUAP	Benemeritous Autonomous University of Puebla
CEFR	The Common European Framework
CELE	Language centre
ELT	English language teaching
FLT	French language teaching
FL	Foreign Language
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LCD	liquid crystal display
LEMO	BA ELT
LET's	Less experienced teachers
MA ELT	Master in English language teaching
MET's	More experienced teachers
NCH	Typing and transcription Software
SEP	Public Education Secretary (National Board of Education)
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TESOL	Teaching of English as a Second Language
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
UNAM	National Autonomous University of Mexico

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: BA ELT Programme.....	9
Table 4.1: Schedule data collection sample two.....	57
Table 4.2: Quality standards in this study.....	75
Table 5.1: Teachers' age.....	78
Table 5.2: Experience teaching at university.....	79
Table 5.3: Who should select instructional materials.....	80
Table 5.4: Who actually selects instructional materials.....	80
Table 5.5: Most used materials in class.....	81
Table 5.6: Use of teacher designed materials.....	82
Table 5.7: Freedom to use materials other than book in class.....	82
Table 5.8: Teachers' reasons to use materials.....	84
Table 5.9: Most relevant materials for learners.....	84
Table 5.10: Value of instructional materials in language learning.....	85
Table 5.11: Textbook's contributions to language lessons.....	86
Table 5.12: When to replace text books.....	87
Table 5.13: Frequency textbooks are complemented with other materials.....	87
Table 5.14: I have no choice in deciding which materials to use.....	88
Table 5.15: Consent to use any materials.....	89
Table 5.16: Course length fits textbook goals.....	90
Table 5.17: Poor quality copied material influences teaching.....	91
Table 5.18: Textbooks chosen according usefulness in teaching.....	91
Table 5.19: Teachers' views about the resource centre.....	92
Table 6.1: The main features of LE1's course.....	95
Table 6.2: The main features of LE2's course.....	105
Table 6.3: The main features of LE3's course.....	113

Table 7.1: The main features of ME1's course.....	121
Table 7.2: The main features of ME2's course.....	130
Table 7.3: The main features of ME3's course.....	138
Table 8.1: Main findings of the study.....	219
Table 8.2: Gaps between teachers' words and practices.....	150
Table 8.3: Teachers' use of textbooks.....	155
Table 8.4: Teachers' alternative and complementary materials.....	160
Table 8.4: Contextual factors and teachers' use of materials.....	166

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1 Shulman's categories and forms of knowledge.....	29
Figure 4.1 Sequential exploratory design.....	51
Figure 4.2 Sequential strategy in this study.....	51
Figure 5.1 Proportion of lessons based on materials	83
Figure 8.1 Main contextual factors in METs' and LETs' practices.....	167
Figure 8.2 Common and distinct features of LETs' and METs' use of materials.....	173

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire.....	195
Appendix 2: Interview schedule Interview two ME1.....	199
Appendix 3: Qualitative field notes.....	200
Appendix 4: Sample of Interview transcript.....	201
Appendix 5: Transcript used in actual analysis.....	209
Appendix 6: Research participant consent form.....	211
Appendix 7: Sample material from LE1's anthology	213
Appendix 8: Sample from LE3's handouts.....	215
Appendix 9: Sample from LE3's exercises.....	216
Appendix 10: Sample from ME1's worksheets.....	217
Appendix 11: Main findings of the study.....	219

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would not have been possible to write this doctoral thesis without the help and support of the kind people around me, to only some of whom it is possible to give particular mention here.

I express my deepest gratitude to my beloved wife Maria Luisa for her unconditional support and inspiration, and for her great patience and hard work, throughout the years of my study. To my children Manti Vanova, Eliphelet, Jacob Levi, Maui Anne and Robertito who have also given me their unequivocal support and love over the years.

Special acknowledgement is to the memory of a great man, my father Roberto Rivera Marquez, for his great example of faith, love and hard work, and whose teachings helped me stand still in the times of challenge and difficulty, and to my beloved mother Felix Cuayahuitl for her love and support. I also would like to thank my sisters Blanca Esther and Ana Maria and my brother David Saul for their valuable help in times of difficulty.

This thesis would not have been possible without the help, support and patience of my principal supervisor, Dr Simon Borg not to mention his professional advice, his great example of hard work and unsurpassed knowledge on teacher cognition. I also acknowledge the good advice, support and friendship of my second supervisor, Dr. Martin Wedell, whose help has been invaluable on both an academic and a personal level, for which I am extremely grateful.

Finally I would like to express my gratitude to the CONACYT Mexico, for the financial support to carry out this investigation. My deepest appreciation to all.

With Gratitude
Eliphelet Rivera

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives an overview of this study, first describing the rationale and motivation behind the work, then outlining its objectives and explaining the reasons for drawing on the adopted methodology. The chapter closes by describing the structure of the study and giving a brief account of the content of each chapter.

1.1 Rationale of the study

This study examines the cognitions underlying the use of instructional materials by teachers on an undergraduate degree course in modern language teaching in Mexico. For the purposes of clarity, throughout this study I will refer to the course as Bachelors in English Language Teaching (BA ELT). Drawing on quantitative data, the study first explores how the language teachers in the context under investigation use their instructional materials. Then, drawing on qualitative data, the study concentrates on a sub- set of six teachers (three more experienced and three less experienced) and identifies what factors – cognitive and contextual – shape their instructional decisions.

The motivation for this work largely comes from my experience teaching English on the BA ELT featured in this study. Over the years, my interest in investigating the field of instructional materials grew as I was in contact with a range of teaching materials in my daily practice. The interaction I had with a large group of colleagues was also influential, where the diversity of their backgrounds and views about the use of materials, particularly with regard to textbooks, made me feel that teachers' use of materials was a fertile field for investigation.

In addition to my interest in materials themselves, over the years, I identified issues in relation to their actual use that caused tensions among the language teachers on the BA ELT, these include for example: 1) the use of either British or American textbooks; 2) the relationships between textbooks and the BA ELT curriculum; and 3) the criteria used to select language textbooks. These and other issues related to the use of materials that were raised recurrently at staff meetings made me feel many issues and concerns lay behind teachers' instructional decisions. This encouraged me to learn more about the rationale behind teachers' use of materials, and eventually led me to conduct this study. It is also worth noting the significance of my exposure to the literature on teacher cognition, which enhanced my view and understanding of the field I was attempting to explore, helping me to define the aims and the perspective from which I would approach to this investigation and identify the participants who would take part in it.

1.2 Research questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

Main question:

What are the cognitive and contextual factors that underlie the teachers' use of instructional materials (mainly, but not exclusively the textbook) on a BA ELT at a Mexican university?

Specific questions:

1. How does methodology of the textbook influence the teachers' practices?
2. What are the cognitions underlying the teachers' use / lack of use of textbooks?

3. What are the rationales behind teachers' use of materials other than textbooks?
4. How do contextual factors influence the teachers' use of ELT materials?
5. With reference to the above questions, are there any variations in the practices and cognitions between more and less experienced teachers?

1.3 Methodology

This study adopted a mixed methods approach. This allowed me to explore the teachers' use of materials from various methodological angles. On a collective level, questionnaire data shed light on teachers' use of materials generally, while on an individual level, interview and observation data allowed me to examine in depth the use of materials by three less experienced and three more experienced teachers. Even though the study involves qualitative and quantitative data, the core discussion about the use of materials largely concentrates on qualitative issues. This investigation is mostly, therefore, a qualitative study.

1.4 Structure of the study

This study is composed of nine chapters:

This initial chapter introduces the reader to this work. It outlines the main goals of the study, describes the rationale for the adopted methodology and the motivation that led to the development of the study. It concludes describing the content and structure of the investigation.

Chapter 2 provides insight into the Mexican education system, describes the university, the faculty, the BA ELT and the language courses investigated. It then describes the language teachers, in terms of how they are organised, and

the relationships between them, and gives an account of the institution and the forces underlying the context under study.

Chapter 3 presents a review of the literature. The selected topics are all relevant to the aims of this study.

Chapter 4 describes the various stages of the mixed methods research approach implemented in this investigation.

Chapter 5 concentrates on an analysis of the questionnaire data and discusses the language teachers' opinions on a number of issues related to the use of materials.

Chapter 6 focuses on examining interview and observation data obtained from three less experienced teachers (LETs) and reports the study's key findings.

Chapter 7 focuses on examining interview and observation data from three more experienced teachers (METs), and reports relevant outcomes along with the findings presented in the previous chapter.

Chapter 8 discusses the main findings that emerge from the study in the light of relevant literature and other similar studies.

Chapter 9 closes the investigation, highlighting key issues emerging from the study and providing suggestions for further investigation.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH CONTEXT

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research context, describes the distinctive features of the Mexican education system, and provides a historical background to the university and the faculty where the BA ELT under investigation is based. The chapter then goes on to describe the language courses, and gives an account of the teaching resources available, as well as the mechanisms and regulations underlying the language teachers' practices and use of materials.

2.1 Educational context

Higher education in Mexico encompasses a large and complex system of institutions, which, depending on their source of funding, fall into two categories: private and public. Private institutions are universities that are independent from the state which fund themselves entirely through student tuition fees. Public institutions, in contrast, are sponsored by federal and state government, and play a central role within the Mexican educational system since they receive the majority of undergraduate and postgraduate students and produce the majority of scientific research and specialized literature produced in higher education (BUAP, 2009).

There are four higher education pathways in Mexico: (1) Universities which offer an undergraduate degree called the *licenciatura* which is the equivalent of a Bachelor's degree, and two degrees at postgraduate level - a Master's and a Doctorate; (2) Technological institutes, which are three year programs mainly in engineering and management; (3) Teacher- training colleges, which offer four to five year bachelor degrees in elementary and secondary education, and

(4) Technical universities, which offer two year training programs, which offer technical degrees at tertiary level (Tamez Guerra, 2004).

2.2 Public universities

Mexican higher education is characterized by a top tier of public universities which, funded by national and local government, normally offer free enrolment for Mexican students. Public universities have played a significant role in the history of the country, and are the most popular option for higher education students. Currently, they host 66.9% of students in university education across the country, of these, 84.7% are undergraduate and 15.3% postgraduate students (ANUIES, 2009).

To date, there are 381 public universities located throughout the Mexican territory, in which instruction is provided mainly in the nation's official language, Spanish (Tamez Guerra, 2004; SEP, 2009). It is important to note that Mexico comprises 31 states and a federal district (commonly known as Mexico City), and that their regional governments are able to pass their own educational laws, provided they do not conflict with federal legislation.

It is important to draw attention to those institutions that are classified as *autónomas* (or autonomous). Within the system of public universities are institutions of recognised academic excellence funded with resources from both the states and federal government. These institutions have achieved such academic and managerial autonomy that do not fall under the scrutiny of the national ministry of education, the *Secretaría de Educación Pública* (SEP). These universities are autonomous in most academic and administrative matters, although in such issues as the certification and registration of programs, as well as the certification and issue of undergraduate and

postgraduate degrees, they are subject to SEP regulations (SEP, 2009).

These institutions are acknowledged as the most important in the national context due to their high budgets, their SEP certified programmes and the volume and quality of the research they produce.

In recent years, Mexican universities have gained prestige and become leaders in the context of higher education in Latin America. One example is the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), which is the largest university in Mexico and, in fact, in Latin America, and is one of the two Latin-American institutions ranked among the top 200 universities in the world (Top 200 universities, 2009). On a national level, the second highest ranked university behind the UNAM is the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP), which is the institution where this study was carried out.

2.3 Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla

The Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP) is held in high esteem among higher education institutions throughout the country due to its long tradition of excellence. Its historical background can be traced back to the XVI century, when the school was established by the Jesuit order in 1578 as the Espiritu Santo College, and which had religion and literature as its main taught subjects. During the XIX century, the name of the college was changed several times until the official name of State College was adopted.

In 1855, during the Mexican war of independence, the college came to be known as the *Colegio Nacional* (or national college), and on April 4, 1937, it was formally established by the municipal government as the University of Puebla. The university achieved its *autónoma* status on November 23, 1956, and was formally declared *Benemerita* (meritorious or high-valued) on April 1,

1987 (BUAP, 2009).

Currently the BUAP holds over 67000 students in its 60 programmes offered within the following speciality areas: social sciences and humanities; natural and health sciences; economic and administrative sciences and engineering and exact sciences (BUAP, 2009).

2.4. The Faculty of Languages

Belonging to the area of the humanities, the Faculty of Languages is one of the sixteen faculties across the BUAP. The faculty comprises various departments and programmes running within the same campus. The main programmes include: An MA ELT (Masters in English language teaching) created in 2007; a BA ELT / FLT (Bachelor's in English or French language teaching) created in 1984, and an open BA ELT, which is a part time programme designed for in-service teachers, created in 2001. Other departments which offer language courses to the public within the faculty include: the language centre (CELE), the university extension courses (CEU), the House of English, the House of French and the House of German.

By far the most important programme at the faculty is the BA ELT/ FLT, referred as 'Modern Languages' (LEMO). The LEMO hosts over 1200 students and is the course with the largest population at the faculty. From the whole population of students at LEMO, about 85 per cent belong to the BA ELT, and the remaining 15 per cent belong to the Bachelor's in French language teaching BA FLT (LEMO, 2002). This study was carried out within the context of the BA ELT.

2.4.1. BA ELT (LEMO)

The BA ELT's main goal is the training of English language teachers. It was

created in response to the high demand for professional language educators in the local context and in the country as a whole. This programme pioneered the training of English and French language teachers at university level in Mexico, and is acknowledged as the first programme of its kind in the country.

Table 2.1 BA ELT Programme

Term 1 Target language 1 (English)	Term 2 target language 2 (English)	Term 3 target language 3 (English)	Term 4 target language 4 (English)	Term 5 target language 5 (English)	
Reading and writing I	Reading and writing II	Foreign language III (French)	Foreign language IV (French)	Research Methodology	
Introduction to Linguistics	Morphology and Syntax	University Ethics	Latin I	Morphology and Syntax	
Learning Strategies	Strategies of Documental Research		Language acquisition	Sociolinguistics.	
Foreign language I (French)	Foreign Language II (French)		General Didactics	Culture	
Computing	Oral Communication			Language Teaching Methodology I	
				Phonetics and Phonology	
Term 6 target language 6 (English)	Term 7 target language 7 (English)	Term 8 target language 8 (English)	Term 9	Term 10	Term 11
Language Teaching Method. II	Academic Writing	Literature II	Discourse Analysis	Research Seminar I	Research Seminar II
	Literature I	Semantics	ELT Seminar III	ELT Seminar IV	History of Language Evolution
	Pragmatics	ELT Seminar II	Classroom Research	Professional Practice	ELT Seminar VI
	ELT Seminar I	Curriculum Design	Psycholinguistics	ELT Seminar V	Professional Experience
	Technology in teaching and learning	Learning Evaluation		Supervised and reflexive Practice	
	Materials Design				

Source: LEMO (2002)

The BA ELT can be completed in 4-7 years of full time study. It comprises 55 courses, eight of which focus on English language and 47 on a range of topics

in ELT. The list of courses is shown in Table 2.1 above. The table highlights the English language courses within the BA curriculum (shaded areas). The language courses represent almost 15 per cent of all the courses in the BA programme. The table shows the 55 courses spread through the 11 terms that comprise the programme. The first four terms are acknowledged as the basic stage, in which all the course content, except the target language (English language) and the French courses, are taught in Spanish. From term five onwards, all the courses are taught in English - this last stage is acknowledged as the formative stage (LEMO, 2002).

2.4.2 English language courses

The English language courses are core to BA ELT especially because most of the instruction throughout the programme is given in English. The language courses are taught, from elementary to advanced, across eight courses, which most of the time draw on British English based textbook sets, which are prescribed by the institution and normally used for a few years before being replaced in most cases by more recent textbook series or at the suggestion of the language teaching staff. Later I will return to talk about instructional materials.

The use of the target language (English) becomes increasingly necessary as the students move on to the upper stages of the programme. From the fifth term onwards (see Table 2.1), all the courses are taught in English. In these courses, students are required to use the target language to complete a range of tasks and activities that include: developing mini projects, attending conferences, making presentations in class, teaching practice, and the completion of a period of social service. Furthermore, at the end of the BA

programme, students are required to write a thesis in English in order to obtain their degree.

2.4.3 Assessment and supervision

Assessment of the language courses is overseen by an 'evaluation department' which is responsible for designing and printing all the assessments of students on all the language courses. Teachers from the language courses normally report their needs to this department (i.e. how many units from the prescribed book they taught), so that the department can design appropriate language tests.

English language tests are usually based on the contents of the official textbooks; a fact which has led most teachers to use the prescribed textbook as the syllabus. Actually, most of teachers believe it to be the syllabus, even though there is an official syllabus for each language course.

To understand the BA language teachers' practices, and how decisions about their materials are made, it is essential to take into account that, in practice, teachers' language lessons are not monitored in any manner by faculty authorities. There are no mechanisms, therefore, to scrutinize the teachers' use of materials, or ensure that teachers use the official materials.

While the use of textbooks is compulsory, in practice, not all teachers use the official textbooks as their primary material. The issue relating to the mechanisms used to monitor teachers' use of materials will be brought back to discussion later in this study.

2.4.4 Instructional resources at the LEMO

In terms of the facilities available to support language teachers' practices, the faculty offers a variety of resources, which include: 1) A central library, where

teachers can access a range of reading materials and ELT literature; 2) A resource centre known as the 'materials room', where teachers can obtain charts, flash cards, games, videos and audio tapes; 3) A open access–centre (Centro de Auto Acceso y Tecnología, or CAAT) , which comprises a video room, an audio room, a reading room and an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) room. The CAAT allows language teachers, along with CAAT instructors, to provide special training in specific areas or skills. Finally, and as a key resource, classrooms are equipped with large screens and video and audio recorders, as well as computers with an internet connection. This study will help the reader to make sense of the extent to which such electronic resources, among many others mentioned by the teachers, contribute toward the teaching of English.

2.4.5 Instructional materials

The terms 'instructional materials' or 'teaching materials' in this investigation are used to refer to whatever tools are used by teachers to facilitate language learning, and may include textbooks, magazines, newspapers, dictionaries, wall charts, real life objects, videos, audio recordings, photocopies, and the internet. They may also include classroom discussions, teacher's presentations, activities, games and other electronic resources, or, as Tomlinson (2009:4) states: 'in other words they can be anything which is deliberately used to increase the learners' knowledge and / or experience of the language'.

From all the possible resources on the BA ELT, there is no doubt that textbooks are the most used and the most prevalent materials in the language lessons.

2.4.6 Language textbooks

Text sets are normally adopted for periods of between 3-4 years on average.

The main reasons for adopting new textbooks may include; 1) the texts' contents (the readings for example) fall out of fashion; 2) teachers and students may suggest that textbooks are no longer working; and 3) new textbooks sets, appropriate for the language courses, may appear on the market. There are, nonetheless, some textbook sets which have been adopted more than once because of their success and acceptance among both teachers and learners, these include: *Headway*, *Cutting Edge*, *Interchange*, *North Star*, and *Interactions*.

One of the difficulties linked to the adoption of textbook series for the language courses is the incompatibility of these with the BA ELT's courses. This is because while most textbook series offer five levels of English language proficiency - elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper intermediate and advanced - the BA ELT offers eight language courses on its programme (see Table 2.1). Hence, most textbook series can only provide five out of eight language textbooks required by the language courses.

As for the remaining courses, from the sixth to eighth, teachers draw on a range of other textbooks also suggested by the institution, which include *Interactions*, *Mosaic*, and most recently *Streamline*.

Over the years, the use of textbooks has become a source of debate, which has focused on issues that include:

- 1) The relationships between the contents of the prescribed textbooks and the aims of the BA ELT programme.
- 2) Whether assessment of the language courses should focus on grammar or

on language proficiency.

3) The relationships between British or American English-based textbooks, and the central assessment.

To make sense of the last issue, I need to note that on completing the BA programme, the students are required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and get a minimum 500 score in order to obtain their degree. The tension, therefore, stems from why textbooks (most of the time British) based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) are used for the teaching of English, while the students' proficiency is assessed using the TOEFL, which is developed under American English language standards.

2.5 LEMO teachers

At the time of writing this paper, the LEMO staff was composed of 88 teachers, of whom 65 (74%) had an MA in some speciality in TESOL, while 23 (26 %) had a BA in language teaching. In recent years, teachers' academic preparation and development has been encouraged by the university as part of its long term goals. Teachers, therefore, have been challenged to achieve MA and PhD qualifications. At the time of writing this paper, seven teachers from the staff had a PhD.

According to the type of contract, teachers are either full or part time. Teachers who have worked at the faculty for ten years or more are normally full time and hold the senior category of '*indefinido*', which is the term in Spanish to refer to an endless or permanent contract. This contrasts with the category of '*determinado*', which refers to a temporary contract, held by part-time teachers, and is normally a six month-contract that can be serially renewed

over a number of years. At the time of writing, 59 per cent of the staff held a permanent contract, while 41 per cent had a temporary contract (LEMO, 2011). Teachers' categories have a practical impact on their teaching practices. Full time teachers usually have considerably more benefits and better work conditions than part time teachers, and this definitely influences their teaching. For example, full time teachers are allocated private cubicles equipped with computers, printers and internet access, and are allowed to organize their workloads and schedules at their convenience, while part time teachers are allocated, by their course coordinators, courses in either morning or evening shifts. This has a significant effect on teaching practice, because full time teachers are able to stay at the faculty in one shift, allowing them to have full time jobs elsewhere. In contrast, most part time teachers are allocated morning and evening lessons, while most also work in various other institutions under part time or hourly-paid agreements, which suggests they work under great time pressure. Some of these substantial differences, between senior and junior teachers, are also expressed within the teachers' academies.

2.5.1 Academies

Teachers are organized, according their speciality area, in *academias* (academies), which are small bodies of teachers specialized in specific teaching areas. There are four officially recognized academies: 1) *The language academy*, which is the largest of all and involves all the teachers in charge of teaching the English language courses; 2) *The teaching academy*, which is comprised of the body of teachers in charge of courses related to ELT; 3) *The applied linguistics academy*, which comprises the teachers specialized in language studies, and 4) *The Spanish academy*, on which sit

the teachers specialized in teaching Spanish language courses. Aside from the language academy, which is composed of over 60 teachers, all the other academies have less than 15 teachers.

Since most of the language teachers also teach content subjects, most belong to at least two academies. The academies' main purpose is to revise and supervise the courses that fall under their responsibility. Main topics discussed within the academies may include course content, course progress, assessment, instructional materials and timetables. Academies meet at least twice a term.

2.5.2 English language academy

The English language academy is the largest and most influential body of teachers at the faculty, and involves the majority of the teaching staff. Since the BA requires students to take eight English language levels, these courses are the most in-demand and are consequently those offered in the widest range of schedules. As commented above, most teachers, except those from the Spanish academy, have some responsibility for the English language courses. This explains why this academy is the most heavily populated.

The English language academy, like the other academies, normally meets twice or three times a term, and in these meetings a senior teacher known as 'the president' presides over the academy with the assistance of a clerk who makes a record of that which is said or decided upon. This academy president is empowered to make decisions regarding academic issues provided they have been supported and voted on by the academy. Most frequently, decisions relate to course content and the assessment of the language courses. These bodies and the decisions they take are highly respected by the senior teachers

and authorities at the faculty.

2.6 LEMO students

The student population at LEMO has grown in recent years due to the high demand for language educators on a national level. Currently, the population is over 1200 students. From these, about 70 per cent are female and the remaining 30 per cent are male (LEMO, 2011).

A major issue of concern for the faculty's authorities is the dropout rate, which is almost 50 per cent in the first year on the BA programme, meaning that less than half of the students who enrol each year manage to obtain their BA degree (BUAP, 2009). In most cases, dropout rates are believed to be caused by factors related to the students' financial limitations and the effect these have on their ability to complete their studies.

This issue relates directly to teachers' actual practices, as, for instance, students with limited financial resources usually cannot afford the textbook required for the language courses, so they end up using photocopied versions of the textbook. Later, I will return to discuss this issue further, when I examine teachers' practices in detail.

2.7 Conclusion

The description of the research context in this chapter has provided an overview of the most relevant components of the context featured in this study. It has also described the relationships and mechanisms that underlie teaching practices, and in particular the use of materials.

The range of topics discussed above not only provide a descriptive account of the context under investigation, but, in the subsequent chapters, will also be gradually brought into discussion to help make sense of the study's findings.

In the next section, a theoretical background to the study is presented to complement the contextual background provided here.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter seeks to review the literature related to the main goals of this investigation. To make sense of the topics covered in this review, it is critical to remember that this study aims to examine the cognitions underlying teachers' use of instructional materials on a BA ELT at a Mexican university.

This review of literature is expected to examine a set of selected themes and up to date studies in connection to the goals outlined by the investigation.

The chapter first explains the rationale for the selection of themes examined here, and then examines how they are linked to the aims of the study. It then discusses the definition of teacher cognition adopted in this work and explains key terminological concepts related to this topic. The review then provides a background on teacher cognition research, and gives an account of research studies that have aimed to explore instructional materials. It then moves onto a discussion of teachers' experience and the distinctive features of more experienced and less experienced teachers. Later, I review the literature linked to instructional materials and their significance in ELT contexts with reference to institutional curricula and syllabuses. I conclude highlighting some salient issues emerging from this review of literature.

3.1 Literature review and research goals

In this section I discuss the relation between the topics examined in this chapter and the goals outlined for this work. To understand this relationship it is critical to remember that this study aims to explore the cognitive and contextual factors underlying teachers' use of materials (see Chapter 1). More particularly research question one examines the influence of textbooks'

methodology on teachers' practices; research question two explores the cognitions underlying teachers' use of textbooks. In addressing these two questions, this chapter examines: teacher cognition terminology, teachers' beliefs and teachers' knowledge and discusses issues related to textbooks and their relevance in ELT settings. As for research question three, focused on teachers' cognitions about materials other than textbooks, this chapter reviews literature about instructional materials in ELT, highlighting the role of textbooks in today's classrooms. In regard to research question four focused on contextual factors influencing teachers' practices, and research question five, which explores teachers' experience, this chapter examines literature related to teaching contexts and to teachers' experience in ELT practice. The discussion about curriculum and syllabus, although not directly related to the research questions, is of value to get a holistic understanding of this review of literature.

All the research questions addressed in this study are with no exception related to the topics examined in this review of literature. Besides reviewing these topics, a number of related studies are also examined here, placing this research project in a historical context and in relation with state-of-the-art investigation.

3.2 Teacher cognition terminology

Before moving onto the discussion of teacher cognition issues, it will be useful to clarify some related concepts often used in this study. The concept of 'cognition' has been associated with a range of terms - Borg (2006) identified over thirty concepts used in research from the early 1970s to the late 1990s to refer to *teacher cognition*. Such concepts include 'beliefs, case knowledge,

cognition, implicit theories, personal practical knowledge, schema and teaching criteria' (pp. 36-39). Similarly Ellis (2006), in reviewing teacher cognition research produced during the 1990s, identified various other terms used to designate *teacher cognition*, for example; 'teacher knowledge, teachers' mental lives, teacher beliefs, beliefs attitudes and knowledge, conceptions of teaching, teachers' theories and teachers' pedagogical systems' (Ellis, 2006:1).

Given the broad range of terms used to refer to '*teacher cognition*', I will use this term interchangeably in this study to refer to the teacher's beliefs, the teacher's thoughts and the teacher's knowledge.

3.3 Teacher cognition background

As mentioned above, language education literature has referred to the term *teacher cognition* using a range of related terms. To facilitate the understanding of this term in this study, teacher cognition is aligned with Borg (2003b:81), who claims that teacher cognition is the study of 'what teachers think, know and believe, and the relationships of these mental constructs to what teachers do in the language teaching classroom'. The conceptualization of teacher cognition maintained in this study therefore assumes that 'the beliefs teachers hold influence their perceptions and judgements which in turn affect their behaviour in the classroom' (Pajares, 2003:307).

Research aiming to explore language teacher cognition 'draws on a tradition of educational research which stretches back over 30 years' (Borg 2006:5), although teacher cognition research emerged as a distinctive research field in language education only in the mid 1980s and the early 1990s (Saphiro and Kilbey, 1990).

In the last two decades, extensive literature on teacher cognition examined education in general (i.e. Verloop, Van Driel & Meijer, 2001; Pajares, 2003; Donaghue, 2003), and also explored specific aspects of language teaching such as, among many: grammar teaching (Borg, 1999, 2003a); teachers' beliefs about materials (Zacharias, 2005); language learning beliefs with regard to gender (Tercanlioglu, 2004); experience-based knowledge (Ellis, 2006); teachers' beliefs on computers in classrooms (Cummings, 2008) and the role of technology in teaching reading and writing (Ihmeideh, 2010). According to Borg (2006), from the early 2000s onwards, teacher cognition has been characterized by extensive research on 'understanding teacher knowledge' (p.35).

Within the framework of teacher cognition research, teachers' beliefs and teachers' knowledge are perhaps the most researched constructs and those most frequently mentioned through this study. In the following sections, therefore I discuss their distinctive features.

3.4 The nature of teachers' beliefs

Research exploring beliefs has become challenging due to the 'difficulty caused by definitional problems, poor conceptualizations and differing understandings of beliefs and belief structures' (Pajares, 1992:307). In describing the complexity of defining the concept 'beliefs', Pajares (1992:309) says:

Defining beliefs is at best a game of player's choice. They travel in disguise and often under alias – attitudes, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions, conceptual systems, preconceptions, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, personal theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical principles, perspectives, repertoires of understanding, and social strategy, to name but a few that can be found in literature.

Furthermore, he maintains that choosing a suitable definition of *belief* for a particular research project is a matter of selecting among a wide range of existing positions and interpretations, in which the most suitable will be that which fits the particular features and goals of that particular study.

Beyond the terminology used to designate this term, most research in the field of teacher education has attempted to provide a definition of this construct.

Johnson (1994:439) notes that 'Cognitive psychology defines beliefs, as one's representation of reality that guides both thought and behaviour'. She further asserts that beliefs contain a cognitive, an affective, and a behavioural component, each of which influence what one knows, feels and does.

In exploring the nature of beliefs, Richardson (2003) describes them as one form of cognition, while Nespor (1987) refers to beliefs as a form of knowledge.

The term 'belief' nonetheless, holds particular features when it refers to the beliefs of teachers. To distinguish the study of teachers' beliefs from other kinds of studies of belief, Richards, Gallo and Renandya (2001:43) note

The study of teachers' beliefs forms part of the process of understanding how teachers conceptualize their work. In order to understand how teachers approach their work it is necessary to understand the beliefs and principles they operate from.

This suggests that to examine teachers' beliefs, they should necessarily be articulated by teachers themselves. Later in the following chapter I discuss the importance of having teachers talk about their own practices. Richardson (2003:3) defines teachers' beliefs as 'psychologically held understandings, premises, or prepositions about the world that are felt to be true', and suggests three major sources for them; 'personal experience; experience with schooling and instruction; and experience with formal knowledge - both school subjects and pedagogical knowledge' (p.5). In fact, Richardson's definition explains the

sources of teachers' beliefs, and suggests that the most important is experience with schooling and instruction, which relates to the beliefs that teachers gained from the thousands of hours they spent during their own education sitting in classrooms, gaining experience as learners, which Lortie (1975) explored since few decades ago and called 'apprenticeship of observation'. Another view about the foundations of teachers' beliefs (Richards and Lockhart, 1994:30) suggests that

Teachers' beliefs systems are founded on the goals, values, and beliefs teachers hold in relation to the content and processes of teaching, and their understanding of the systems in which they work and their roles within it.

Richards and Lockhart further explain that belief systems consist of objective and subjective dimensions, and that some sourced on empirical experience may be fairly superficial, for instance beliefs about correcting learners. In contrast, other beliefs may be more sophisticated because they require teachers to know some ELT principles, as in for example the belief that team work can be more effective than individual work. In the same vein, Phipps and Borg (2009:381) maintain

Teachers' beliefs exist as a system in which certain beliefs are core and others peripheral...Core beliefs are stable and exert a more powerful influence on behaviour than peripheral beliefs.

Even though investigation into teacher beliefs has identified the existence of belief systems (Phipps and Borg, 2009; Richards, Gallo & Renandya, 2001), this issue has not yet been acknowledged as a feature of teacher cognition research (Phipps and Borg, 2009). One example of research exploring teachers' beliefs was conducted by Richards, Gallo & Renandya (2001). The study explored three aspects of teachers' beliefs: 1) core beliefs language teachers hold about teaching and learning; 2) how teachers saw their teaching

as having changed over the years; and 3) the sources of change. The study involved 112 second language teachers from Asia and Australia. Drawing on survey data, the study reported:

Question One. The three most reported beliefs centred on a) the role of grammar in language teaching and how it should be taught, b) beliefs about learners, and c) beliefs about language skills.

Question Two. With regard to changes in teachers' approaches, teachers reported that 1) their teaching was more student-centred; 2) their methodology (e.g. linguistic focus, tasks and assessment strategies) had changed; and 3) their use of materials had changed - for instance they relied less on textbooks and used more authentic materials.

Question Three. With regard to the sources of change, teachers reported, from 13 options presented in the questionnaire that the three most influential sources of change were: In -service courses; seminars and conferences; and student feedback.

Richards and Lockhart (1994) have also shed light on the foundations of belief systems. They suggest the following sources of teachers' beliefs (pp. 30-31)

- their own experience as language learners
- the experience of what works best
- established practice
- personality factors
- educationally based or research-based principles
- Principles derived from an approach or method

So far, this study has shed light on a number of theoretical viewpoints about the foundations and sources of teachers' beliefs. Having insight into the nature

of teachers beliefs will help make sense of another key concept associated to teachers' cognition - that being teachers' knowledge.

3.5 Understanding teachers' knowledge

Along with beliefs, teachers knowledge has become an issue of growing interest in teacher research in the last 15 years (Phipps and Borg, 2009), although there have existed incipient studies in the field for nearly three decades (Nespor, 1987; Shulman 1986).

A useful way to understand teacher's knowledge is to contrast its definition with that of 'teacher's belief'. According to Pajares (1992), knowledge is meaningful information, whilst beliefs are composed of cultural and experiential knowledge. This distinction is supported by Ellis (2006:7), who illustrates how these two concepts are different.

During formal teacher education, teachers are expected to acquire 'knowledge' about phonology, syntax, bilingualism, learner motivation etc. They are also expected to develop beliefs about propositions within language learning, for example, whether systemic functional grammar is more useful in teaching writing than is traditional grammar.

Similarly, Nespor (1987) has shed light on how teachers' knowledge is distinct from their beliefs. He asserts that beliefs reside in the boundaries of the individual's experience, or the individual's perception about their environment, while knowledge system information is stored as a construct with meaning, which is backed up by learning, definitions, as well as by true and factual concepts.

In this regard, Woods (1996:195) maintains that knowledge is 'things we know - conventionally accepted as 'facts' which we hold to have been demonstrated, or at least to be demonstrable'.

Notions about teachers' knowledge play a central role in the understanding of why teachers do what they do. The assumption that knowledge relies on

learned structures or true concepts, and that beliefs reside in the boundaries of emotions or perceptions of teachers' realities is overly simplistic. For Pajares (1992), knowledge and beliefs are intermingled, and the understanding of one of these constructs would not be possible without the understanding of the other.

In defining types of knowledge, Waters (2005:213) maintains that teachers normally acquire two types of knowledge: 'propositional (declarative) and experiential (or procedural)'. The first refers to knowledge in the form of theoretical principles, and the second refers to knowledge developed through experience.

Research on teacher cognition (Richardson, 2003; Nunan, 2004) asserts that teachers' beliefs drive their actions. Similarly, other studies state that knowledge also 'guides the invisible process of classroom decision making' (Szesztay, 2004:129). Studies in the 1980s and the 1990s have contributed to clarifying the nature and organization of teachers' knowledge. Similar to Nespor (1987), Carter (1990) found that teachers' knowledge resides in the brain as a system.

Shulman (1986) sheds light on the understanding of teachers' knowledge. He identified a particular knowledge associated with teaching which he describes as 'teachers' content knowledge'. In explaining how this particular knowledge is organized, he suggested three main categories or domains (although there are several others): 'subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and curricular knowledge' (p.9).

- 1) Subject matter content knowledge. This category refers to the 'amount and organization of content knowledge per se in the mind of the teacher' (p. 9).

According to Shulman, this category requires teachers to go beyond the understanding of facts and concepts in a particular field. This requires that when a truth, a concept or a principle is presented within a particular discipline, teachers must be able to prove its validity within a particular discipline, as well as show how it is linked to other propositions within the discipline.

- 2) Pedagogical content knowledge. The second category refers to a higher dimension of knowledge that Shulman calls 'subject matter knowledge for teaching' (p.10). This category is described as the knowledge teachers use to carry out complex reasoning, representations, and explanations and to illustrate ideas, concepts and theories. It refers to the teachers' competence in teaching the content of a discipline and making it comprehensible to others.
- 3) Curricular knowledge. This category is 'represented by the full range of programs designed for the teaching of particular subjects and topics at a given level' (P. 10), the variety of instructional materials, and the set of regulations that indicate the mechanisms used to implement a particular program or curriculum. This knowledge is represented by a range of concepts linked to the curriculum, for instance: programmes, syllabuses, objectives and materials.

Shulman (1986) maintains that knowing the categories and sources of teachers' knowledge does not suffice in the understanding of how teachers make decisions. Thus, he suggests three forms of knowledge: 1) propositional knowledge; 2) case knowledge, and 3) strategic knowledge. These forms of knowledge apply equally to each of the three categories listed and discussed

above. Figure 3.1 illustrates the three categories of teachers' knowledge, and the three forms representing each category.

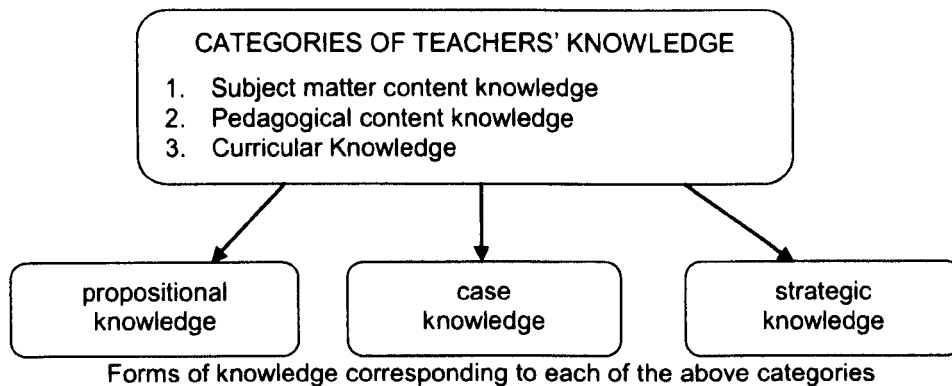


Figure 3.1 Shulman's categories and forms of knowledge

As Figure 3.1 shows, the three main categories of teachers' knowledge are represented in the top box. The boxes below show the three forms of knowledge that Shulman (1986) proposes to represent each category of knowledge. The first, *propositional knowledge*, involves knowledge of specific well documented and thoroughly described events. The second form, *case knowledge*, 'refers to reports of events or sequences of events' (p.11). The third form, referred to as *strategic knowledge*, comes into action, when the 'teacher confronts particular situations or problems, whether theoretical, practical or moral' (Shulman, 1986:13). Even though Shulman presents an extensive taxonomy of teachers' knowledge systems, in practice, it would be too complex to distinguish the boundaries of each of the categories and forms of knowledge described above.

Carter (1990:292), from another perspective, explains how teachers' knowledge is organized. She distinguishes three broad categories of knowledge:

- a) teachers' information processing, including decision-making and expert-novice studies.

- b) teachers' practical knowledge, including personal knowledge and classroom knowledge.
- c) pedagogical content knowledge, that is, the ways teachers understand and represent subject matter to their students.

Along with teachers' beliefs, the concept of *teacher's knowledge* has also been investigated - one example of which is a study carried out by Szesztay (2004). The study, aimed to identify the kind of knowledge which guided the invisible process of classroom decision-making. The participants were seven experienced school teachers who participated in a year-long reflective professional development seminar. As part of the seminar, the teachers taught various language lessons, three of which were videotaped. The course focused on 14-16 concepts of reflective practice.

Drawing on video data as a reference, teachers were interviewed. They were allowed to choose three of the (14-16) concepts of reflective practice that they had studied through the year. During the interviews, teachers were allowed to stop the videotapes whenever they wanted, and then reflected and explained what had happened in that particular episode of the lesson and why. They then related their viewpoints to the three concepts they had previously chosen.

Outcomes from the study showed the following: 1) teachers' reflections about their moves in class were not always borne out by a verbalized thought; 2) reflection-in-action is triggered by unexpected elements in the class situation; and 3) teachers' reflections about their work play a central role in building up their knowledge.

Szesztay's study found that 'teachers knowledge' was intermingled with 'teachers beliefs' as teachers expressed their opinions, although the study

does not make a differentiation between teachers' knowledge and teachers' beliefs. This study takes me back to Pajares (1992:309), who claims that 'distinguishing knowledge from belief is a daunting undertaking'.

Carter (1990), along with Nespor (1987) and Shulman - in terms of his theoretical views about the sources and organization of teachers' knowledge - are particularly relevant for this study, since they enhance the understanding of the cognitive background supporting the teachers' work. Later I will evoke the categories and forms of knowledge when I deal with the teachers' experience.

3.6 Relevance of teacher cognition in this study

While this section highlights some of the benefits of exploring the field of teacher cognition, special emphasis is also paid to the notion of the influence of teachers' beliefs on their instructional decisions.

Calderhead (2003) notes that the main contribution of research on teachers' thinking is the impact this might have on teacher development. On this point, Woods (1991) notes that researching teachers' background knowledge might help enhance language teachers' performance. Further studies (Woods 1996; Goddard, 2003) converge on the view that researching the field of teacher cognition might contribute to improving teachers' practices.

As mentioned above, of the assumptions made by teacher cognition research, it is that which relates teacher cognition to classroom practices that works in the interest of this study. In examining these relationships, Borg (2006: 275) explains:

We know that what language teachers do is underpinned and influenced by a range preactive, interactive and post-active of cognitions which they have. However we also understand that the relationships between cognition and practice in language teaching are neither linear nor unidirectional. It is not linear because cognitions and practices may not always concur, due to the mediating influence of contextual factors...and it is not unidirectional because teachers'

cognitions themselves are shaped in response to what happens in the classroom. Language teaching, then can be seen as a process which is defined by dynamic interactions among cognition, context and experience.

This study therefore assumes that, although they are not linear, interrelations do exist among context, teacher cognition and teacher practice (e.g. beliefs may influence instructional decisions; context may influence beliefs). The study is aligned with this assumption because, as it moves forward, the issues of context, cognition and practice will emerge and be gradually elevated to the core discussion of this work.

There is abundant literature in the field of language education which has examined the relationships between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices. In this respect, Richardson (2003:4) claims that 'beliefs are thought to guide teaching action'. Similarly Nunan (2004: 6) asserts:

Although it is not always immediately apparent, everything we do in the classroom is underpinned by beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of the learning process and the nature of the teaching act.

Further investigation has strengthened the idea that beliefs shape teachers' actions. Kennedy (1996:107) affirms that teachers' beliefs are seen 'as crucial determinants of behaviour'. More recently Phipps and Borg, (2009) have observed that in the last 15 years research has focused on the relationships between teachers' beliefs and their practices. This idea, however, has been on the research agenda for over four decades. For instance, ever since a study performed by Burton and Webb (1968) claimed that teachers' beliefs heavily influence teachers' behaviour in the classroom, other studies more recently have examined these relationships (Woods, 1991; Johnson, 2011; Gatbonton, 2008; Kuzborzka, 2011).

One example is a study conducted by Woods (1991), who drew on a mixed

methods methodology to map language teachers' decision-making process, and examined the learning process for curricular teaching from the perspective of Canadian teachers. The study followed up teachers' work through an entire whole course; from the point the teachers were allocated their courses until the moment when they had the final results in their hands. The study first explored the views and backgrounds of eight teachers, and then concentrated on two experienced teachers (Teachers A and B). Drawing on interview data, teacher log data and video data, the study followed up the teachers' decisions throughout the course. The findings revealed contrasting outcomes between Teachers A and B and their decision making. It was shown that decisions made by teachers in the course of their lessons reflected their assumptions and beliefs about tasks, materials and objectives. Teacher A's decisions tended to accomplish the planned curricular content, while teacher B's interpretation of the curriculum was blurred by his perceptions about the role of teachers and students in the learning process. Overall, the teachers' implementation of the curriculum was shaped by their beliefs about language learning.

Even though abundant research has found links between teachers' beliefs and their practices, other studies (Karaagaç and Threlfall, 2004; Phipps and Borg, 2009) have found a lack of correspondence between teachers' stated practices and their behaviour in the classroom. According to Borg (2006), this mismatch may be because the methodology used to elicit teachers' beliefs was not the most suitable for a particular study, although it could also be attributed to the unobservable nature of teachers' beliefs.

Much of what we know about teachers' beliefs has been captured through

strategies such as interviews, observations, video and audio recordings and surveys; nonetheless, what we know is still limited due to the invisible nature of their thoughts.

Issues related to eliciting data from language teachers will be discussed in the following chapter.

3.7 Teacher cognition in the Spanish speaking context

The field of teacher cognition is a relatively new field in the Spanish speaking context, particularly in Mexico where research in this field is fairly scarce.

However, there are a few studies which have explored teachers' thinking in elementary and secondary education in such areas as: teacher development (Macotela, Seda, and Flores, 1997); teachers' perceptions about education (Aguilar, 2003); teachers' beliefs about teaching both mathematics (Civil, 2006), and science (Flores et al., 2007).

At undergraduate and postgraduate level, very little research has been carried out in this area. The few existing studies have focused on areas such as teachers' self-assessment (Marin, 2005), students' perceptions about learning Maths (Chavez, Castillo, and Gamboa 2008), teachers' conceptions about science and technology (Casas et al., 2009), and teachers' beliefs about teacher training (Negrete, 2009).

Negrete's work (2009) aimed to present an analysis of the state of the art of EFL teachers' beliefs, types of knowledge, attitudes and motivation in a state of Mexico (Quintana Roo). The study involved 25 in-service teachers from more than a dozen pre-university schools from over all the state. A main feature of the participants was that only a few had qualifications in EFL teaching. Drawing on survey data only, the investigation explored the state of

teachers' beliefs, types of knowledge, attitudes and motivation.

Closely related to the field of teacher cognition is the issue regarding teachers' experience. As it plays a major role in this study I examine it in the subsequent sub-section.

3.8 Teachers' experience in ELT practice

Before moving on to the discussion on teachers' experience and its significance in language teaching, it is worth clarifying that teachers' experience is examined here because it is a key variable found in the six teachers that are qualitatively examined in this investigation. Thus, the study concentrates on the practices of more experienced and less experienced teachers. Later, in the methodology chapter, I will talk about the rationale for choosing the experienced participants.

Research in language education has found that 'cognition not only shapes what teachers do but is in turn shaped by the experiences teachers accumulate' (Borg, 2003b:95). This section therefore aims to shed light on how the teachers' experience shape their teaching practices.

It will be useful first to distinguish the differences between two related concepts 'experienced teacher' and 'expert teacher'. In practical terms, we could say that while teachers who have been teaching for many years, and who during which time have followed determined routines repeatedly, have gained experience, they are not necessarily experts or skilful in a particular domain.

In contrast:

experts are often defined as either top performers who excel in a particular field or professionals who achieve at least a moderate degree of success in their occupation (Boshuizen, Bromme & Gruber, 2004).

Tsui (2005:168) maintains that in several studies the terms *experienced teacher* and *expert teacher* are used interchangeably. However, experience and expertise are not synonymous, since experience is clearly linked to the teacher's years' of practice, whereas expertise is more related to skill development.

A major concern for research on expertise is the need to distinguish between the features of experienced and novice teachers. According to Boshuizen, Bromme & Gruber (2004), an experienced teacher may be referred to as a professional, senior, expert, or qualified practitioner, while a novice or inexperienced teacher is usually considered unskilled or short of practice.

I will concentrate on highlighting the distinctive features of experienced teachers. Ropo (2004:163) affirms that 'expertise can only emerge after long experience'. He suggests that a teacher becomes expert after 10,000 hours of teaching and after 15,000 hours sitting as a student. In the Mexican context, this would be comparable to remaining in education for 18 years from elementary to higher education whilst also taking language courses for two hours a week, and then teaching full time for over twelve years. This consideration might vary in other professions or domains and depend on the development of other skills, but, nonetheless, it gives an idea of the process that becoming an 'expert teacher' involves. Ropo (2004) notes that expertise is primarily conditioned to experience; in other words expert teachers are also experienced. Based on this assumption, I will discuss the 'experience' factor, and its influence on the teachers' practices.

In explaining the nature of experienced teachers, Tsui (2003) explains that teachers move through stages or phases in the course of their careers. The

first stage she identified is the exploration or discovery phase, which is distinct in most novice teachers. Tsui (2003:79) explains:

Typically, beginning teachers go through a 'survival' phase where they are preoccupied with their own survival in the classroom. They feel diffident, inadequate, and ill-prepared. Some of the well-documented problems and concerns in this phase are those of reconciling educational ideals and realities, maintaining classroom discipline, establishing an appropriate relationship with students, playing the role of a teacher, and having an adequate mastery of knowledge as well as instructional methods.

The initial stage is followed by a 'stabilization stage', which is described as a phase in which teachers' skills and knowledge settle down. This, according to Tsui, is a consolidation phase in which teachers move from concerns about themselves to concerns about their teaching.

A third stage is the 'experimentation' or 'diversification' stage (Tsui, 2003:80), which is a period in which teachers explore different methods and materials and search for ways to innovate, and is regarded as a time of development and change. This stage is followed by a phase of serenity in which teachers are less susceptible to others' perceptions of them. It is, according to Tsui:

'marked by a decline in professional investment and enthusiasm, but also greater confidence, more tolerance, and spontaneity in the classroom. It is also a phase where teachers' relationship with students become more distanced, largely caused by the widening gap between themselves and their students' (p. 80)

This stage is characterized by a decrease in the teachers' enthusiasm for carrying out classroom activities. The following stage is regarded as 'conservationism' (p.81), and is characterized by 'resistance to and scepticism about innovation and change, increased complaints about students and colleagues and a craving for the past'. Although most features of this stage are closely related to age, it can also manifest itself in young teachers.

A stage near the end of a teacher's career is known as the disengagement

phase. This stage is marked by a practical separation by teachers from both their usual professional routine and their involvement in activities not related to teaching. This is a stage in which teachers ponder on their achievements and regrets over the course of their career. According to Huberman (1993: 10) the disengagement phase can be 'bitter' or 'serene'.

Tsui's description of the various phases through which teachers pass throughout their careers help us make sense of the change and development teachers go through as they become more experienced.

To make sense of how teachers' experience is expressed in their actual practices, Tsui (2005:172) describes distinctive features of experienced teachers' lessons during the planning and interactive phases:

Planning phase. 1) Teachers are generally more keen to make decisions about their teaching and are less willing to follow the institution's suggested guidelines; 2) they are much more efficient in lesson planning; 3) they are more flexible and keen to make decisions in response to unexpected situations; and 4) their practices reflect a much more integrated knowledge base, which means that teachers are able to draw on knowledge from a range of domains.

Interactive phase. 1) Experienced teachers easily recognize patterns in the classroom; 2) they are more capable of differentiating between events that are critical and require prompt attention and events which are not relevant; 3) they respond to class situations with automaticity - in other words they have developed problem-solving skills; and 4) most of their decisions are principle-based. In the same vein, Borg (2003:95), citing Nunan (1992), asserts that more experienced teachers are more concerned with language issues than

with classroom management. He goes on to maintain that with their increasing experience, teachers become more and more skilled in interactive decision-making, which suggests teachers' improvisational skills grow as they become more experienced.

The review of teachers' experience explored here plays a central role in this study, not only as one more variable of the investigation, but also as an issue which may help us to understand the relationships between teachers' cognitions and their experience.

Having reviewed the key features found in experienced teachers, I will move on to discuss instructional materials and their significance to ELT contexts.

3.9 Instructional materials in ELT

Given the focus of this study, the discussion about materials in language classrooms is key to making sense of this investigation. Tok (2010) maintains that instructional materials continue to be key components in language classrooms for both teachers and learners. Tomlinson (2003:2) describes language teaching materials as:

anything that can be used to facilitate the learning of a language. They can be linguistic, visual auditory or kinaesthetic or they can be presented in print, through live performance or display, or on cassette, CD-ROM, DVD or the internet.

From McGrath's (2002:7) perspective:

materials could include 'realia' (real objects such as pencil, chair or bag) and representations (such as a drawing or a photograph of a person, house or scene)... text materials (e.g. textbooks, work sheets, computer software); authentic materials (e.g. off-air recordings, newspapers, articles), teacher-written materials and learner generated materials.

More recently Tok (2010) described instructional materials simply in terms of being either printed or non-printed. In fact, every time researchers attempt to describe the existing materials, they find out that new resources have

appeared which makes listing them all a rather complicated task. Nonetheless, the materials described above help us to make sense of the broad range of possibilities available on the market to help teachers teach their lessons. For the purposes of this study, I discuss the relevance of textbooks in language classrooms today.

3.9.1 Textbook in today's language classrooms

In this study, the term 'textbook' refers to the book or book set used as the main material in the teaching of an English language course. Textbooks have become one of the most evolving tools in English language teaching.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994:315) affirm the textbook 'has become an almost universal element of ELT', playing a significant part in the language teaching and learning processes (Rubdy, 2003). Zacharias (2005:23) also asserts:

whether used in conjunction with other texts or materials or as a sort of surrogate curriculum, textbooks tend to affect the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

In most ELT contexts, 'course books are perceived by many to be the route map of any ELT programme' (Sheldon, 1988:238). Even though it was made nearly three decades ago, this assertion is still true in several language teaching contexts, including that which this research focuses on, where textbooks have gained such importance that they have even replaced the institutional syllabuses in the formation and planning of courses.

Studies of learning materials (Tomlinson, 2003, 2008) have recognized the textbook as a key component in language learning and language teaching. McGrath (2002:10-11) suggests the following reasons to use a textbook in language teaching:

Why teachers and learners need a textbook

- A course book is a map, it shows where one is going and where one has been
- It provides language samples
- It offers variety

Why learners need a textbook

- It defines what is to be learned and what will be tested
- It reinforces what the teacher has done and makes revision and preparation possible. It thus offers support for learning outside class.

Why teachers need a textbook

- It provides a structure for teaching
- It saves time. To prepare materials from scratch for every lesson would be impossible.
- It offers linguistic, cultural and methodological support
- It is easy to keep track of what you have done and to tell others where you have reached (e.g. when reporting to the Head of department or briefing a substitute teacher)

Similar to Mc Grath, Ansary & Babaii (2002:2) suggest a checklist of arguments for using a textbook:

- A textbook is a framework which regulates and times the programs
- In the eyes of learners, no textbook means no purpose
- Without a textbook, learners think their learning is not taken seriously
- In many situations, a textbook can serve as a syllabus
- A textbook provides ready-made teaching texts and learning tasks
- A textbook is a cheap way of providing learning materials
- A learner without a textbook is out of focus and teacher-dependant, and perhaps most important of all, *for novice teachers a textbook means security, guidance, and support.*

In the late 1980s, Sheldon (1988) noted the relevance of textbooks in language classrooms, and, in the following decade, Hutchinson and Torres (1994) pointed out the growing influence of ELT textbooks in language teaching contexts. In the early 2000s, textbooks continued to be a preferred tool for language instruction (Gray, 2000). More recently, Zacharias (2005)

affirmed that textbooks have become a central pedagogical element in language classrooms. Thus, there is evidence to affirm that the textbook's central role has remained unaltered over the years.

Conversely, there are arguments highlighting the disadvantages of using these materials. Tze-Ming Chou (2010), for instance, identified some potential problems in the use of textbooks: First, activities normally follow the same patterns, so they may soon become boring for learners, besides reading selections are not challenging and often draw on unrealistic language. Second, most textbooks do not motivate the student, the main reason is that in most textbook sets, the books are of a very similar design, often featuring repetitive content. Consequently, as soon as students receive their textbooks, they lose interest and motivation. Third, as grammar sections often include little practice, to achieve a particular grammar objective may take a number of weeks.

Studies from the early 1980s have explored a number of issues relating to textbooks; such as the orientation of textbooks' contents (Allwright, 1981), books as cultural artefacts (Gray, 2000), the authenticity of the interactions depicted in textbooks (Gilmore, 2004), and teachers' beliefs about the role of textbooks in foreign language classrooms (Allen, 2008). This latter study is very similar to the research being carried out here. Allen's study aimed to explore the beliefs of 12 elementary level language teachers regarding the role of foreign language (FL) textbook materials. The study took place over a period of ten weeks in the context of a university's FL programme. Although the study was centred on qualitative data, two questionnaires gave insight into the teachers' practices and beliefs about the use of textbooks. Drawing on a Likert-type scale, the questionnaires consisted of 20 items which explored

teachers' practices, alongside the teachers self-reported key aspects about their use of textbooks. Drawing on semi-structured interviews, teachers were interviewed about their beliefs regarding the role of textbooks, the uses of those materials for planning and instruction, and asked to express their views about the most and least useful aspects of using textbooks in their lessons. Allen's findings supported the notion that the textbook functioned as an important tool in FL teaching and classroom learning activity. In this regard all the participants showed evidence of the utility of textbooks in their practices. Teachers also reported three concrete ways in which textbooks supported their lessons: 1) they presented new materials, including images; 2) they presented guided practice; and 3) some book activities could be adapted or modified by teachers for different tasks and activities.

Drawbacks of the book cited by teachers included: 1) books lacked student-to-student activities; 2) some activities were irrelevant; 3) cultural issues in the book clashed with cultural issues emerging from the students, and 4) a lack of truly communicative activities.

Despite the potential drawbacks of textbooks, their role has not substantially changed in ELT contexts, conversely it has attained ever increasing importance in today's language teaching settings.

Since the textbook plays a central role in the curriculum of the context under study and is acknowledged by most teachers as the syllabus in their language courses, it is therefore critical to discuss the significance of the concepts curriculum and syllabus within the framework of this investigation.

3.10 Curriculum and syllabus in ELT programmes

Although this study is not focused on the concepts of the institutional syllabus

or curriculum, these terms are nonetheless frequently raised throughout this study, particularly in the qualitative phase. I therefore feel it is important to discuss what these terms mean within the context of this research.

Understanding the institutional curriculum, the language course syllabuses and the relationships between them will help the reader to better understand the language teachers' instructional decisions in the context under study.

Graves (1996:3) asserts that such terms as *curriculum*, *syllabus* and *course*, frequently overlap; 'some teachers may refer to the *curriculum* for their *course* and others to the *syllabus* for the *curriculum*'. However, most confusion usually rests on the terms *curriculum* and *syllabus*. Nunan (1988) notes that curriculum and syllabus are sometimes indiscriminately referred to as 'curriculum', although they are two distinct concepts, shaped by particular characteristics. In this regard Richards (2001:39) notes that:

Syllabus, which prescribes the content to be covered by a given course, forms only a small part of the total school program. Curriculum is a far broader concept. Curriculum is all those activities in which children engage under the auspices of the school. This includes not only what pupils learn, but how they learn it, how teachers help them to learn, using what supporting materials, styles and methods of assessment, and in what kind of facilities

It can be said that syllabus is one aspect of the curriculum; 'it is a specification of the content of a course of instruction and lists what will be taught and tested' (Richards, 2001:2). It is an official statement of the goals and tasks to be performed in the classrooms in an educational unit (Brumfit, 1984). Curriculum on the other hand, is a wider concept that comprises 'needs analysis, goal setting, syllabus design, methodology, and testing and evaluation' (Richards, 1990:1). In the viewpoint expressed above, the syllabus is a key component of the curriculum, and fundamental to guiding every day teaching, whereas the curriculum is seen as a more general structural and organizational unit.

Within the context of the BA ELT in Mexico, curriculum is taken to include the institution mission, vision, policies, goals, and educational orientations, and is used to establish the syllabuses of all the modules in the course. It is also used to establish the academic profile required of graduating students and the specific criteria used for both enrolment onto and graduation from the BA degree (BUAP, 2011). In the context of the present study, the institutional curriculum and syllabuses take the form of official documents, which are designed by or developed for the institution.

3.11 Relevance of work context

I will close this chapter by discussing the influence of context on teachers' work. Within the framework of education generally, the context may have several interpretations and implications. It may concern the classroom itself and every component within this setting, for instance, facilities, materials and physical resources (e.g. room, board, markers, equipment, and environmental conditions such as temperature, ventilation and location in respect to other classrooms). Institutional context may refer also to the school regulations, philosophy, materials, facilities, libraries and whatever other component of the school beyond the classroom that affects the teacher and their practices. Context, from a broader perspective, can also refer to the atmosphere outside the school, for instance school location, neighbourhood and norms, to mention just a few. Institutional contexts can, therefore, be viewed from different perspectives, as they play an important role in relation to teachers' work. Borg (2006) maintains there are relationships between teachers' beliefs, practices and context. He explains that these relationships are not unidirectional or linear, and thus this may occur in a variety of ways in an

infinite possibility of contexts and situations. In discussing the impact of context on language teachers' practices in particular, Borg (2006:275) notes:

The social, institutional, instructional and physical settings in which teachers work have a major impact on their cognitions and practices. The study of cognitions and practices in isolation of the contexts in which they occur will inevitably, therefore provide partial, if not flawed characterizations of teachers and teaching.

Some studies have explored the relationships among the context, teachers' beliefs and teachers' practices (e.g Borg, 2003b; Moini, 2009; Johnson, Kraft and Papay, 2011). For instance, Johnson, Kraft and Papay's (2011) study draws on a questionnaire with 87 items, and examines the views of over 25,000 teachers from the United States. Outcomes from the study showed that work context has a strong influence on teachers' work, even more than financial considerations. The study showed further that contextual factors were a primary reason for teachers moving to other schools, as they affected career plans and were acknowledged as the most influential factor on teachers' choices. All in all, contextual factors emerged as a key variable in teachers' choices, not only within the boundaries of the classroom, but also in their teaching careers.

In the present study, contextual factors play a significant role in relation to teachers' practices. Further discussion on these issues will be carried out in the following chapters.

3.12 Conclusion

The various topics discussed here set out the theoretical foundations for this investigation. Taken together, they have been presented in such a way as to enhance the readers' understanding of the situation and the context that this study investigates.

The discussion of teacher cognition and teachers' experience has helped us understand the influences on teachers' thinking and how that thinking evolves as teachers become more experienced. Similarly, the discussion about the context has helped make sense of the significance and impact of the research context on the teachers' practices.

An enhanced understanding of the terms curriculum and syllabus, which are frequently raised in this work, has also helped us to identify the relationships between these terms and their particular meaning in the context of this study.

Taken together, the examination of the literature on teacher cognition, teachers' experience, instructional materials, curriculum and syllabus, and institutional context, has contributed, although in different ways, to a more profound understanding of the teachers' practices and the cognitive process that underlie their decisions. Thus the theoretical foundations discussed in this chapter will help make sense of the methodological procedures adopted for this study and which are presented in the following chapter.

The above review of literature has also identified specific issues where current empirical understandings are lacking. It is thus clear that evidence of how language teachers use materials and the factors that influence their decisions is limited, and an awareness of this gap informs the research questions which are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology for this study. Starting with the rationale for adopting a mixed methods approach, the chapter then discusses in detail the purpose for carrying out the study and the methods by which it was conducted, and finally explains the processes that were followed in analysing the data.

4.1 Research approach

This study has been designed on the basis of a mixed methods approach - a 'combination of qualitative and quantitative methods within a single research project' (Dörnyei, 2007:44). The decision to choose a mixed methods approach was informed by my goal to study the use of materials not only by all staff on a BA ELT programme (this required a quantitative approach) but also in more detail with a sub-set of teachers from the programme. For this reason, a qualitative approach was deemed more appropriate.

The mixed methods research tradition has emerged as a separate orientation from qualitative and quantitative traditions during only the past two decades (Creswell, 2003). It is defined as:

research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or program of inquiry (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007:4).

Mixed methods research provides an opportunity for the methods involved in the collection of data to strengthen each other; furthermore, the use of a mixed methodology allows us to obtain data of a diverse nature that may enhance the researcher's view of the studied situation. In this study, the use of a mixed

methods design reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the situation under study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

Qualitative and quantitative research have traditionally been seen as conflicting traditions. However, it is increasingly being accepted that these methods are not totally incompatible and can work within a single project. Furthermore, they can support each other (Smith and Heshusius, 2006).

4.1.1 Connections between quantitative and qualitative data

The sequence in which data were obtained and analyzed was tactical. I started with a questionnaire to obtain a broad quantitative understanding of the beliefs held by LEMO staff about materials. The initial analysis of the questionnaire, informed the design of the second and third interviews, by highlighting issues regarding materials that staff had particular views about, issues which were explored in more detail through the interviews. Connections between the quantitative and qualitative data were also made in the analysis of interview and observation data, where issues raised by individual teachers, in explaining their practice vis-à-vis materials, were compared to the staff questionnaire responses that as a whole provided on these same issues.

4.1.2 Benefits and drawbacks

Mixed methodology has become increasingly popular not only in social research but also in many other fields (Creswell, 2009). Abundant literature in the field of mixed methods research (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003; Smith and Heshusius, 2006; Buchanan, 2006; Bryman, 2008; Dörnyei, 2007; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009) has suggested benefits and drawbacks of this research tradition. Dörnyei (2007:45-46), for example, suggests the following advantages of mixed methods research: 1) It augments the strengths while

eliminating the weaknesses; 2) It increases validity; and 3) It allows for stronger inferences. For instance, considering the combination of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews used in this study, 'one type of data gives greater breadth, whereas the other provides greater depth; together it is hoped that they yield results from which one can make better inferences' (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009:35).

On the other hand, drawbacks may include: 1) challenges arising due to the researcher's insufficient experience in using the distinct methods and 2) problems arising from the implementation of mixed methods research when only one of the two traditions would have been more viable.

Creswell (2003:211) maintains there are various mixed methods approaches available, thus researchers need to decide on the following four key points when selecting a mixed methods strategy: 1) The *Implementation* sequence of the quantitative and qualitative data collection; 2) The *Priority* given to the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis; 3) The *Stage* in the research in which quantitative and qualitative data and findings will be integrated; and 4) The *Theoretical perspective*, if any is to be used in the study (e.g., gender, race, class, ethnicity, lifestyle).

In choosing the particular mixed methods design for this study, I weighed up a number of factors, such as the potential number of participants, the type and amount of data, as well as the sequence in which quantitative and qualitative data would be collected and analyzed.

What is worth noting here is that this is mainly a qualitative investigation, since both qualitative and quantitative methods are not equally distributed throughout the research. The quantitative aspect of the study, however,

provides a valuable insight into teachers' beliefs and their reported practices in using materials across the programme under investigation.

Creswell (2003) has identified six major strategies (although there may be more) for choosing a particular mixed methods design. Although none of his strategies exactly matches that which has been followed in this study, the 'sequential exploratory design' (Creswell, 2003:213) shown in (Figure 4.1) is the most similar to the strategy I drew on in designing this study.

In Creswell's design, (Figure 4.1) greater priority is given to the quantitative approach, whereas the quantitative and qualitative phases are carried out independently to each other.

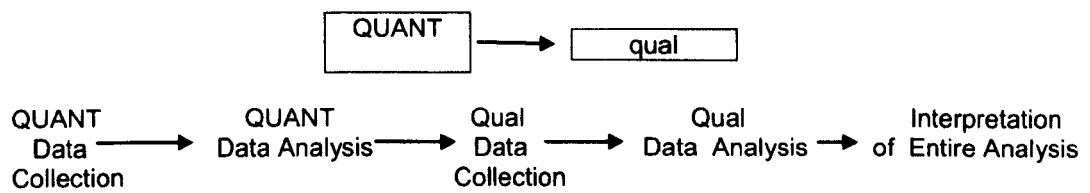


Figure 4.1 Sequential exploratory design Source: Creswell (2003:213)

In contrast to Creswell's design, in this study greater emphasis is given to the qualitative approach. The strategy followed in this study is illustrated in Figure 4.2. The sequence of phases (indicated by left-to-right arrows) in this study shows (Figure 4.2) the collection of questionnaire data as the initial phase. The second phase shows an (initial) analysis of questionnaire data and the collection of qualitative data (interviews and observations), which took place within the same phase.

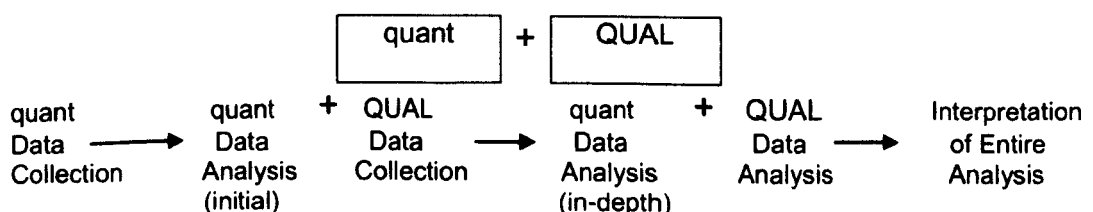


Figure 4.2. Sequential strategy in this study

Similarly, in the third phase, a second in-depth analysis of questionnaire data and the analysis of qualitative data were carried out. In this third phase I decided to analyse the questionnaire data first, so that I could get insight into teachers' use of materials across the faculty before focusing on the analysis of qualitative data. The final stage shows how both quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated in order to obtain the final results.

4.2 Research questions

For the design of the research questions, I selected key issues that provided an actual insight into teachers' use of materials on the BA ELT under study.

Therefore, I addressed first a main research question, followed by five specific research questions.

Main question:

What are the cognitive and contextual factors that underlie the teachers' use of instructional materials (mainly, but not exclusively the textbook) on a BA ELT at a Mexican university?

Specific questions:

1. How does methodology of the textbook influence the teachers' practices?
2. What are the cognitions underlying the teachers' use / lack of use of textbooks?
3. What are the rationales behind teachers' use of materials other than textbooks?
4. How do contextual factors influence the teachers' use of ELT materials?
5. With reference to the above questions, are there any variations in the practices and cognitions between more and less experienced teachers?

Punch (1998) distinguishes between two types of research questions - general and specific. General questions are of primary importance in a research project since 'they guide our thinking and are of great value in organizing the project' (Punch, 1998:34). They are, however, still too general to be answered. Specific questions, in contrast, determine practical procedures and guide the investigation's course of action, and are the questions which are actually answered by the study (Punch, 1998). Bryman (2008:33) asserts that to be effective, research questions should 'be clear, researchable, connected with established theory and research, be linked to each other, have potential for making a contribution to knowledge and be neither too broad nor too narrow'. Additionally, Punch (1998:38) asserts that research questions have five main functions within a research project:

- They organize the project, and give it direction and coherence.
- They delimit the project, showing its boundaries
- They keep the researcher focused during the project.
- They provide a framework for writing up the project.
- They point to the data that will be needed

With the objectives clearly outlined, I then determined the context where the study would take place.

4.3 Context and gatekeepers

In this section, I discuss a number of the practical challenges that I faced in the research context and coping with the gatekeepers. According to Oliver (2003), a *gatekeeper* is the person responsible for the place where research is to be carried out, and whose consent is key to gain access to research resources such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries and ICT equipment. There may be other categories of resources, for instance teachers' and

students files, institutional reports, and other official documents.

In order to get access to the institution's resources, I needed to go through a number of offices, starting with the Director of the faculty, who granted me access to the various departments of the faculty. Then, other subordinate heads of departments also gave, in turn, their consent for me to access their areas of responsibility. Furthermore, I was required to obtain the written consent of each of the participants before gaining access to their classrooms. The process of seeking consent from a chain of authorities is usual in most educational institutions in Mexico, where head teachers or heads of department are usually reluctant to allow researchers access to the institution's facilities. This unhelpful attitude might be based on what Oliver (2003:39) calls a 'conflict', which comes up when the researcher is:

perceived as someone who wants to carry out the research at all costs, while the gatekeeper might be seen as fundamentally concerned with protecting the institution.

While my experience in collecting data for this study was not one that I would describe as tough or as having been typified by conflict, but did I perceive a lack of interest from some department heads, and also from some teachers. In this regard, it is worth noting that very few studies have been carried out within the faculty, due to the reluctance of most teachers to be involved in research projects.

4.4 Sampling

I decided to work with two groups of participants. The first group (Sample 1) consisted of the language teaching staff. The second group (Sample 2), which was a sub-section of the LEMO staff, involved the six language teachers who contributed to the qualitative phase of the study.

4.4.1 Sample One

This first group of participants was composed of all the English language teachers in the LEMO (BA ELT). It should be noted that, for the quantitative part of the study, sampling was straightforward, as the population was small enough to allow me involve everyone - in a sense, these participants were not sampled. I decided to involve all the English language teachers because I felt that, as a group, they would help me address the research questions.

Furthermore, taken as a whole, their opinions would help gain insight into teachers' use of materials across the LEMO, since they were the only teachers drawing on textbooks and a range of instructional materials in most of their lessons. Their beliefs and reported practices regarding the use of materials were elicited through a questionnaire. Of the 42 teachers invited to complete the questionnaire, 39 did so, a figure which represented 92 % of the staff.

4.4.2 Sample two

A sub-set of six language teachers from Sample 1 was chosen as Sample 2, and which consisted of three less experienced LETs and three more experienced teachers METs. Given the wide range of experience represented by the teachers on the BA ELT (from just a few to over 25 years of experience), 10 years was taken as a defining measure of experience here. Thus, in this study, less experienced teachers were defined as those who had been teaching for no more than 10 years, while more experienced teachers were defined as those who had been doing so for over 10 years.

To recruit the six participants, I followed a criterion called '*purposive sampling*' which, according to Bryman (2008:333-334) is:

essentially strategic and entails an attempt to establish a good correspondence between research questions and sampling. In other

words, the researcher samples on the basis of wanting to interview people who are relevant to the research questions.

Thus, I looked for individuals in whom the processes being studied were most likely to occur (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

Given the total number of the staff working on the BA ELT, the volume of data each case would generate (details below) and the time available for the fieldwork to be completed, a sample of six teachers was chosen for the qualitative phase of the study. In this regard, Patton (as cited in Teddie and Teshakkori, 2009: 182) claims 'there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry'.

The six teachers were also chosen because their profile suited the aims of this research, especially in terms of their years of experience, their area of teaching speciality, and issues of accessibility and their willingness to be, for instance, observed in their classrooms and interviewed after class. Overall, these teachers and their teaching contexts offered conditions suitable to the carrying out of the qualitative phase of the study.

Having determined the number of participants the study would focus on, and having identified the potential participants, I contacted six teachers whose profiles were ideal for the study. These teachers were contacted several weeks prior the collection of data through the internet, and they agreed to participate as long as they had been allocated language courses. I also recruited a few other participants in case any of the original six withdrew.

Even though participants were recruited well in advance, I came across an unexpected challenge a few days before the beginning of the courses under investigation. I was informed that only two of my more experienced recruited teachers had been allocated language courses in the term due to be studied. I

was also aware that none of my auxiliary recruited teachers had been allocated a language course. This was a situation that forced me to look for further participants among the teachers who had been allocated language courses, whose profiles I checked, and from which I identified four teachers whose characteristics suited the requirements of the study. After having invited them to join the study, and explained to them both the aims of the project and what was expected from them, they agreed to participate.

4.5 Data collection

Data collection took place over a ten-week period, during which time I drew on three research strategies: a questionnaire which was administered to the language teaching staff (Sample 1) during the two weeks prior to the beginning of the term due to be studied. Three semi-structured interviews and four classroom observations were carried out with teachers from sample 2 over a period of eight weeks. The qualitative data collection phase is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Schedule data collection sample two

Teachers	Week One	Week Two	Week Three	Week Four	Week Five	Week Six	Week Seven	Week Eight
ME1	I1	O1, O2 O3 & I2	I3					
LE1		I1	O1, O2 O3 & I2	I3				
ME2			I1	O1, O2 O3 & I2	I3			
LE2				I1	O1, O2 O3 & I2	I3		
LE3					I1	O1, O2 O3 & I2	I3	
ME3						I1	O1, O2 O3 & I2	I3

I= Interview; O= Observation; ME= More experienced; LE= Less experienced

The table shows how qualitative data were collected over the eight weeks of the summer term. On average, data collection lasted three weeks with each participant, and in most cases data were collected from two or three participants within the same week. It is worth noting that the collection of quantitative data was completed before commencing to collect interview and observation data.

4.6 Quantitative data collection

Quantitative data were collected by means of a questionnaire. The aims of drawing on a questionnaire were: 1) to get an insight into the English teachers' use of materials across the LEMO; 2) to obtain initial information on which interviews 2 and 3 could be designed; and 3) to generate survey information that would assist in the interpretation of qualitative data.

An initial and quick review of survey data was carried out as questionnaires were being collected, which allowed me to identify issues that I wanted to examine in the interviews. For instance, before collecting teachers' views about textbooks through the interviews, I was already aware of the staff's perceptions about textbooks. Furthermore, I was able to identify key issues from the questionnaires completed by Sample 2, so I got some insights into their opinions in relation to the use of materials before exploring this issue in the interviews and the classroom observations- I discuss this further in the subsequent chapters- so once the collection of quantitative and qualitative data was completed, a more in depth analysis of survey data was carried out. Chapter 5 is devoted to the analysis of questionnaire data.

4.6.1 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was composed of 30 close-ended items (Appendix 1), 16 of

which drew on a Likert scale (sections 4 and 5). The items were grouped into six sections focused on specific targets:

- Section 1: Experience in Language teaching
- Section 2: Instructional Materials
- Section 3: Use of Instructional Materials
- Section 4: Textbook use
- Section 5: Contextual factors and ELT materials
- Section 6: Further participation

The issues examined in the questionnaire were suggested by similar studies in the field of ELT materials (Zacharias, 2004; McGrath, 2002; Gray, 2000) and by issues relating to the use of instructional materials that I had identified over my years of working as a language teacher in the research context.

Some key features that guided the design of the questionnaire include layout, appearance, accurate instructions, order and categorization of questions, sensitivity to particular topics, validity and reliability (Dörnyei, 2003). To keep the questionnaire within the required standards, I followed some guidelines on questionnaire design taken from ELT literature. I also revised a few similar tests which had been implemented in other studies, and piloted the questionnaire in order to get feedback on it. This was a process which began in the UK, where the instrument was first designed and initially piloted, and completed in the research context itself, where the piloting phase was completed. Later, I will return to a discussion on the piloting phase.

Williams (2003:249) asserts that 'a questionnaire can be said to be 'valid if it examines the full scope of the research question in a balanced way (e.g. it measures what it aims to measure)'

Two key features that shape effective questionnaires, and which were a concern in designing the questionnaire for this study, are content and length, in other words questionnaires should only ask questions which are relevant to the study and should be no longer than necessary (Denscombe, 1998). In this respect the questionnaire used in this study was brief, and it took no more than 20 minutes to be answered.

In attempting to capture the opinions of over 40 teachers, I found out that a questionnaire was the best option. It was flexible in several ways, as in for example, that it could 'be used successfully with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting a variety of topics' (Dörnyei, 2003:10). I also learned that questionnaires have become common in exploring teachers' beliefs, attitudes and values, as Borg has noted (2006:174):

questionnaires continue to be a strong feature of research on language teacher cognition. They allow large amounts of data to be collected quickly, economically and without significant effort on the researcher's part.

I was also aware of some limitations of research questionnaires for example: responses may result in rather superficial data; some items may not be answered; for some respondents in certain contexts, a questionnaire might appear intimidating, and questionnaires do not always elicit the respondents' actual beliefs or opinions (Denscombe, 1998).

4.6.2 Questionnaire piloting

In order to enhance the quality of the instrument (Dörnyei, 2003), the questionnaire was piloted, prior to its use in the research context among individuals with similar features to the population being researched (Williams, 2003). Hard copies of the questionnaire were distributed among a group of university teachers from eight different countries studying at the university of

Warwick in the UK. Their feedback was crucial to the improvement of the design, layout, content and clarity of the questionnaire. For example, in the introduction to the questionnaire, I used the term 'instructional materials' (see Appendix 1). Most of the teachers who piloted the instrument reported being uncertain about the meaning of the term 'instructional materials' as used throughout the questionnaire. To avoid such confusion, I added a note to the end of the introductory paragraph, explaining what the term specifically referred to in the questionnaire.

Later, once I was re-established in the research context and ready to begin the data gathering stage, another five Mexican teachers also piloted the questionnaire. While these teachers did not participate in the study, they knew the research context very well since they had worked for several years as language teachers in the LEMO, although they had stopped teaching English language courses few years earlier. Feedback from these teachers, who were very familiar with the context, the courses and the teachers being studied, was valuable and helped make the questionnaire clearer for the participants.

Another example is item 2.3, in Section 2. Teachers suggested that the options were rather vague, so after their feedback I added a brief explanation to each option, clarifying precisely what it referred to.

4.6.3 Questionnaire administration

The questionnaire was administered to 42 teachers in charge of the English language courses, wherein a hard copy was delivered in person to every colleague involved. The head of the BA ELT programme provided information about the language teachers' rooms and schedules, and this information helped me find all the teachers in their cubicles or classrooms. Surveying the

language teachers entailed some challenges, due to variations in the teachers' schedules and shifts; nonetheless, I managed to survey almost all the intended participants. Most of the 42 questionnaires were returned (92%) completed. In most cases, I agreed a date and time when I would collect the completed questionnaires, and the majority of teachers co-operated. In very few cases, I needed to send reminders. In general, most teachers responded to and returned the questionnaires promptly.

Later in this chapter, during the discussion of the procedures used to carry out the data analysis, I will describe the steps I followed in analyzing the questionnaire data, while in Chapter 5 I will give an account of the findings of these data.

4.7 Qualitative phase

The collection of qualitative data focused on the small sample of six participants (Sample 2) and lasted three weeks in each case. This phase began about a week after the implementation of the questionnaire. Interview and observation data were collected individually and a similar procedure was followed with each participant (see Table 4.1).

In all cases, participants decided when they wanted to be interviewed and observed, based on their availability and lesson schedules. Thus, having agreed specific dates and times for the interviews and classroom observations, I began the collection of data.

4.7.1 Interview procedures

Each teacher was interviewed once a week, for three weeks. The intention of spreading the interviews over the three weeks allocated to each participant was to get a broad picture of the situation being studied. In other words, the

three interviews attempted to capture key issues relating to the teachers' use of materials in three different moments.

The first interview aimed to obtain background information about the teachers, and also served to establish rapport between the interviewer and the interviewees. It also presented an opportunity to introduce the participants to the project by stating the goals and rationale behind the study. This initial interview lasted 20 minutes on average. Since I was certain of most of the issues I expected to examine in the initial interview, I drew on a previously designed schedule; thus, this was the only interview I actually piloted. The other two interview schedules (2 & 3) were designed and implemented during the qualitative phase, and were not, therefore, piloted.

A second more focused and in-depth interview was based on relevant issues emerging from both the first interview and the observed lessons (see Appendix 2 for an example of an interview schedule). This interview helped collect valuable data closely related to the teachers' implementation of materials, and provided a picture both of the teachers' strategies and challenges they experienced in relation to the use of materials in their lessons. This interview lasted one hour on average.

A third interview took place once the observations with each participant were finished. This last interview aimed to explore, in depth, relevant issues emerging from the four observations and the first two interviews. This closing interview was also an opportunity to hear the teachers' reflections about their teaching and their use of materials. This interview lasted between 60- 80 minutes. In general the interviews went smoothly and without interruptions.

Among the various kinds of existing research interview models, I found that the

semi-structured interview offered more advantages for the collection of the data I needed for the study. This type of interview is one of the most common strategies of data collection in qualitative research (Kvale, 2007) and is used extensively in educational research (Borg, 2006). It is described as a conversation in which the interviewer can examine real experiences and rebuild relevant events in which he did not take part (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The term semi-structured interview typically refers to a flexible type of interview, that allows the conversation 'a certain amount of freedom in terms of the direction it takes, and respondents are also encouraged to talk in an open manner about the topics under discussion or any other matters they feel are relevant' (Borg, 2006:203). This type of interview is normally guided by an interview schedule, in which the interviewer is able to modify the order and structure of the questions (Bryman, 2008). Rubin and Rubin (2005:35) assert that this kind of interviewing provides:

a solid, deep understanding of what is being studied, rather than breadth. Depth is achieved by going after context; dealing with the complexity of multiple, overlapping and sometimes conflicting themes; paying attention to the specifics of meanings, situations and history. To get that depth, the researcher has to follow up, asking more questions about what he or she initially heard.

Much of the effectiveness of this type of interview, however, rests on the interviewer's skills, which can make a substantial difference in the interviewer-interviewee interaction. Conducting the interview therefore requires the application of interview techniques by the interviewer in order to move forward through the various stages of the interview and achieve the interview objectives. These techniques include: 1) Follow up, which refers to a simple encouragement to continue the conversation; and 2) Probe or elicit further information: 'the most straightforward method is by direct invitation to add more

detail' (Richards, 2003: 56).

In reviewing several studies in qualitative research, Borg (2006:203) identified a number of advantages of using semi-structured interviews, for instance:

'1) enable the researcher to develop a relationship and establish rapport with the participant and 2) allow the researcher to explore tacit and unobservable aspects of the participants' lives'.

To administer semi-structured interviews, Gillham (2000:37) suggests having a simple interview plan comprising four main stages: '1) the Introductory phase; 2) the opening development of the interview; 3) the central core of the interview; and 4) bringing the interview to a close, both socially and in terms of content'. These four steps were followed in all the interviews that I carried out in the study.

4.7.2 Interview Piloting

Having designed an interview schedule, and in anticipation of the implementation of the interview in the real research context, I piloted interview 1. Earlier in this chapter, I noted how schedules for interviews 2 and 3 were designed in the research context during the data collection phase, and that, only the first interview was piloted. Knowing the relevance of testing the interview prior to its implementation in the real context, I interviewed two university language teachers from Korea, who studied at the University of Warwick. They provided feedback about such aspects as the design of the interview and potential strategies for eliciting information. For instance, one of the observations from one of the interviewees was in regard to the term 'materials' that I drew on during the interviews, where she felt that the term was broad and rather ambiguous when I first used it. So in the real interviews, I

clarified the term prior to the interviews, and explained to the interviewees, what the term referred to in the context of this study.

4.7.3 Interview recording

Recording consisted of capturing interview data with the assistance of technology. I recorded 18 interviews, three with each participant. The interview data were organized and structured digitally in individual files, ready to be transcribed. According to Dörnyei (2007:139), the process of recording semi-structured interviews is shaped by a 'technical and theoretical aspect'. The technical aspect is concerned with the proper working state of the equipment or technology used to record the interview, which is subject to failure and inaccuracy. The theoretical aspect deals with the limitations of the audio recording devices in the capture of non-verbal information such as the interviewee's gestures, facial expressions as well as other contextual clues (Dörnyei, 2007).

4.8 Classroom observations

Along with interviews, classroom observations were carried out within the qualitative stage (see Figure 4.2). Observations and field notes were key in gaining an understanding of the teachers' use of materials, and also supported the interview design. In all the six cases, the participants and I agreed on four, two-hour observations. It is important to note that as lessons were four hours long, the observations consisted of half of the lessons, and that in most cases the first half of the lessons were observed.

An advantage I found of working in this research context was that classrooms were not large (i.e. designed for no more than 20 learners), and thus in practice the target (the observed teacher) was clearly observable from any

angle in the classrooms. Whenever possible, I collected copies of the materials used by the teachers and students during their lessons. I decided to utilize unstructured observation because it is flexible and does not focus on very particular or personal issues (such as the use of the target language, which for a non-native speaker of English may be embarrassing) but instead enabled me to examine the use of instructional materials generally, reducing the possibility of making the participant feel embarrassed.

According to Adler and Adler (1994:389), observation is acknowledged as 'the fundamental basis of all research methods', even when not acknowledged explicitly as a research strategy. In exploring the limitations of this method, Huberman and Miles (1994:430) affirm that only a 'portion of the raw experience can be captured' through each observation.

Observation has traditionally been thought of in relation to ethnographic studies and has been widely applied in both language education research and the social sciences. Although the subject under observation does not have to modify his usual routine when being observed, this method does require the cooperation of the observee (Dörnyei, 2007). A main feature of this method is its intrusive nature, one which may create an environment of discomfort and embarrassment (Flick, 2007), which may influence the participants' behaviour. Bryman (2008:167) identifies various types of observation that include 'participant observation, non participant observation, structured observation, unstructured observation and simple observation', classifications which are often distinguished by the nature and degree of involvement of the observer in the research context.

Dörnyei (2007:179) notes that in contrast to structured observation, which is

more focused on specific observation categories, unstructured observation:

is less clear on what is looking for and the researcher needs to observe first what is taking place before deciding on its significance.

A major characteristic of unstructured observation is that it does not follow an observation schedule. In a sense, this type of observation aims to make a detailed description of events or behaviours occurring in a particular context (Bryman, 2008). In this study therefore, the observations were generally focused on the use of materials, and concentrated on different targets, depending on which instructional materials were the most important in each observed lesson (i.e. the textbook, handouts).

4.8.1 Field notes

During the observed lessons, I took field notes, through which I attempted to capture relevant events in relation to the use of materials (i.e. teacher's lack of use of textbook; use of complementary material) or the behaviour of individuals during the observed lessons (Creswell, 2003). These field notes (see example Appendix 3) were supplemented with audio recordings which allowed me to capture episodes in which teaching practices relevant to the purposes of this study were observed. The field notes and the class recordings were organized individually, where the field notes were kept in folders, and the recordings stored digitally. Field notes helped me reconstruct, in detail, specific episodes from the observed lessons in order to illustrate the teachers' use of materials (these are presented in the following chapters).

Writing about effective note taking, Bryman (2008:306) states that: '1) [it] should be written briefly and as quickly as possible after hearing or seeing something interesting; 2) the researcher should write up full field notes at the end of the day providing more detail; 3) notes should be vivid and clear; and 4)

notes should be copious’.

4.9 Data analysis

Once all quantitative and qualitative data were collected, I began the analysis phase. I remind the reader that I had already carried out an initial and brief analysis of the questionnaire data prior the collection of qualitative data. For the phase of in-depth analysis, I decided to analyze the questionnaire data first, as doing so would allow me build up a macro picture of the teachers’ use of materials.

4.9.1 Questionnaire data analysis

Earlier in this chapter, I pointed out that one of the aims of the questionnaire was to use the data to inform the design of the interview, that is, the information provided by the teaching staff through the questionnaire was intended to help identify issues that would aid in the design of the interview schedules. Thus, a brief initial analysis of the questionnaires provided insights into teachers’ views about their use of materials in the BA ELT, and informed the design of the second and third interviews.

A second in-depth analysis of questionnaire data was carried out when the data collection phase was finished in entirety. To analyse the numerical data, I drew on SPSS 18.

An initial step in using this statistical package was to identify what kind of data I was dealing with. I concluded that my data were mainly nominal and ordinal. As a second step was to convert the raw data into statistics, I coded the nominal and ordinal data. The coding nominal data is achieved by assigning numbers instead of names to certain category groups, the numbers themselves are arbitrary and have no particular meaning (i.e. age: 1= less than

25; 2= 26-35; 3= 36-44; 4= 45 and above). Similarly, I coded ordinal data, which involves assigning numbers to indicate the ordering of particular categories, which in this data set were mainly items drawing on the Likert scale (i.e. 5=strongly agree, 4=agree; 3=unsure). Thus, given the size of Sample 1 and the nature of my variables, I found the conditions conducive to performing descriptive statistics only (i.e. frequency and percentages).

Drawing on SPSS 18 data editor, I entered data, using abbreviations for each of the items (i.e. years' experience = exp; main materials used in class=mmat). Once all questionnaire data were entered into SPSS's data editor, I performed the analyses outlined above. Later in the following chapter, I report the findings emerging from my quantitative data analysis.

4.9.2 Interview and observation data analysis

A first task in the analysis of interview data was the transcription of spoken data into written text. Drawing on the audio recordings of the interviews, I transcribed every interview, a process which took over two months. The transcriptions of 18 interviews were carried out using NCH, which is a free transcription software (NCH, 2010), (see Appendix 4 for an example of an interview transcript). When the transcripts were finished, I organized them and placed them individually in folders, along with the interview guides, copies of materials used in the observed lessons, and field notes.

For the purpose of this study, I organized the six teachers examined qualitatively into two groups; three less experienced teachers (LETs), who are individually referred as LE1, LE2 and LE3, and three more experienced teachers (METs), referred as ME1, ME2 and ME3. I began analyzing the LET data first.

Drawing on the interview transcripts, I began the interview analysis on an individual case by case basis, following the same procedure in all cases. First, from the transcripts of each case, I identified and highlighted key themes in relation to the research questions and other issues that I considered relevant (see Appendix 5, for an example of a transcript used in the analysis). The aim of identifying common themes across all the cases was to obtain a picture of the teachers' use of materials collectively rather than individually. Otherwise, I would have been left with six different individual cases, indicating a broad range of results and no relationships among them. I therefore looked for themes that were common to all six cases, taking the research questions as reference.

When I finished highlighting the key themes from the transcripts, I began the writing up phase, drawing on the quotations that I had initially highlighted in the transcripts, and using the field notes and questionnaire findings to clarify and make sense of particular episodes or events identified during the observed lessons. It is important to note that findings from the questionnaire were used in most cases to help understand the use of materials by the teaching staff as an academic body.

I worked on a first draft of the qualitative data analysis, after which I decided to devote one chapter to LETs (Chapter 7) and one to METs (Chapter. 8).

As I went through the analysis of interview data I identified a number of unexpected themes that emerged from all the participants' interviews, some of which provided key information about the teachers' use of materials. After weighing up the relevance of these unexpected themes, I decided that a few deserved to be considered in the study. I thus selected six key themes – that

related to the research questions and that emerged from all the participants' interviews. These themes helped me define the qualitative analysis phase, and helped shape the topics to be examined in the discussion chapter. In the qualitative analysis phase, I integrated most of the quantitative and qualitative data obtained in the study. In this regard Bazeley (2009) asserts that all mixed methods research implies some degree of integration. In this respect Woolley (2009:7) explains:

quantitative and qualitative components can be considered 'integrated' to the extent that these components are explicitly related to each other within a single study and in such a way as to be mutually illuminating, thereby producing findings that are greater than the sum of the parts.

The Integration of data therefore entails 'using more than one method or source of data in the study of social phenomena' (Bryman, 2008:274).

Overall, the use of interviews and quantitative and qualitative data in this study enhanced the understanding of the phenomenon being researched, and provided both an individual and collective view of the teachers' use of materials.

4.10 Research ethics

An issue of major importance associated with the participation or intervention of researchers within a research context and one that touches on very sensitive and private aspects of humanity is that which regards ethics. The concept of research ethics specifically refers to the professional, institutional and government standards that are used in the conduct of research with human participants.

The ethical principles that regulated this study were first approved by the University of Leeds Ethics Committee, where most of this study was developed, and were then approved by authorities at the BUAP, who were

informed about the nature of intervention and interaction I was to have with the teachers participating in the study. Some of the key information discussed related to: the instruments to be used for the collection of data; the administration of such instruments, with particular emphasis paid to the procedures to be followed in processing and protecting the data obtained. In this regard, it should be noted that before starting the data collection, I obtained written consent from each of the six participants who were to be studied qualitatively, as stipulated by the University of Leeds (see Appendix 6). In the view of Denscombe (2002:174), 'the notion of ethics is closely linked to the idea of morality', and that in educational research, embracing a code of ethics as part of a research project is not only important but necessary (Denscombe, 1998). Punch (1998) notes that research ethics is more sensitive in qualitative studies, because it more fully explores the boundaries of people's privacy than in quantitative studies. Flick (2007:124) explains the most notable impact of ethics in research as follows:

Any form of research is an intervention that disturbs, influences or even changes the context in which the study is done. Interviewees are confronted with sometimes disturbing questions, routines of daily life or professional work are disrupted, and in evaluation research, for example, its results often aim at changing professional or institutional routines. Such an intervention has a specific ethical dimension to it.

The question of research ethics is indeed an issue closely associated to research practice. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), ethical issues may emerge from each stage of the research process. They will emerge in such areas as the selection of the research topic, the research context, the participants, and the methods of data collection. Ethical questions also may arise during the data management stage or even during the dissemination of

outcomes. Flick (2007:123) suggests to follow a set of principles as an ethical guide when conducting research:

- Autonomy - respecting the rights of individuals
- Beneficence - doing good
- Non-maleficence - not doing harm
- Justice or equity

Actually, most codes of ethics are based around the protection of the participants.

With regard to the research context in this study, there is not an official code of ethics operating across the university (BUAP), which, nonetheless, did not reduce the relevance of this issue to this study.

4.11 Criteria for Research Evaluation

Of major concern in formal research is the question of what criteria are used to assess quality. Borg (2004:1) suggests the following key aspects to weigh up research quality: scope of the proposal, design, structure and value, where each one covers a particular aspect of the research project:

- *Focus of research* - quality in topic and substance of conclusions
- *Conduct of research* - quality of methodology
- *Presentation of research* - quality of reporting
- *Utility of research* - quality in informing policy and practice

In this study, I strove to address the above criteria, in various ways and throughout the various stages of the investigation. Based on the criteria cited above, Table 4.2 illustrates the four key stages of this investigation and how standards of quality were achieved in each.

In the left column, the table shows the four stages followed in the development of this study. The right side column illustrates the specific quality standards

followed in each of the stages of this project and also those which contributed, taken together, to establishing the credibility of this investigation.

Table 4.2 Quality standards in this study

Stages of the study	Quality criteria
Design of the Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality research topic (little research in the field) • Clear and full description of the research context • Selection of a specific research methodology (mixed methods) • Presentations of well defined research questions • Research accomplished within a timeline approved by the university of Leeds.
Conduct of Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics standards to conduct research with humans observed (institution and government) • Implementation of various strategies for the collection of data • Piloting of instruments prior their implementation • Presentation of evidence (quantitative and qualitative data) (see appendices). • Triangulation (integration of quantitative & qualitative results) • My experience as a language teacher and as a member of the staff under study
Presentation of Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and aligned to research questions • Clear presentation of results • Structure • Layout • Final presentation <p style="text-align: right;">} In accordance to university standards</p>
Utility of Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cautious conclusions and discussion of implications • Potential utility for the research context • Clear definition of strengths and weaknesses • Possible transferability to similar BA programs in Mexico and other similar programmes

The four stages represent four moments in the development of this study as follows:

- *Design of the research.* This planning stage mostly illustrates the decisions made prior the actual beginning of the project.
- *Conduct of Research.* This stage features the actual development of the investigation, when all the components deemed in the planning stage came into practice.
- *Presentation of the research.* This refers to the features that shape the study's conclusions.

- *Utility of the research.* This stage refers to the assessment undertaken once the study was finished of the value and contributions of the study to the area.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed the concept of trustworthiness in their discussion of the quality standards and principles to which a piece of research should adhere. Table 4.2 shows the ways in which this study has attempted adhere to these criteria, by, for example, piloting the questionnaire and conducting the study in accordance with the university's own ethical standards. Mason (2003) proposes *validity, reliability and generalizability* as measures of research quality. From these, validity and reliability are perhaps the most dominant criteria in both qualitative and quantitative studies. 'Reliability is concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are repeatable, while validity is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research' (Bryman, 2008:28). Validity, reliability and generalizability are then quality standards closely related to the value of *trustworthiness* and which have all been used to shape this study (Table 4.2). In regard to the standard of 'generalizability', I prefer to use instead the standard 'transferability', which refers to situations and contexts where we feel or believe that our research findings are most likely to have application or be relevant (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). My intention was, therefore, to have achieved these measures throughout all the research phases that comprise this study. I am confident, therefore, that this study has achieved the standards of validity, reliability and transferability that would make this study trustworthy.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter outlined and discussed the methodological structure of this project and provided details of the investigation. On this point it is worth

pondering the challenges of investigating in the field of teacher cognition, and the challenges of drawing on a mixed methods approach.

Exploring the field of teacher cognition was challenging, and every phase of the study entailed particular challenges and drawbacks. I identified three especially challenging phases in the handling of data which were particularly critical in the process of carrying out of this study. The first was the data collection phase, which was shaped by the interaction between the researcher, the participants and the university authorities. The second and perhaps the most complex was the phase of analysis and interpretation of data, which involved the use of technology to process survey data and required me to work on several versions (drafts) of interview and observation data analysis. Finally, the integration of findings was also a challenging phase, especially since I had to draw out every relevant quantitative and qualitative conclusion emerging from the study to facilitate the final discussion of results.

CHAPTER 5: QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter, I present the findings of the quantitative data obtained from 39 questionnaires completed by teachers on the BA ELT programme in the Faculty of Languages at the BUAP. As explained in Chapter 4, these questionnaire data provide an overview of the teachers' beliefs and reported on their practices regarding the use of ELT materials. This overview provided a background for the more detailed qualitative analysis of six teachers which follows in the subsequent chapter.

The questionnaire designed for this study was composed of 30 items and was organized into the following six sections: 1) Experience in language teaching; 2) Instructional materials; 3) Use of instructional materials; 4) Textbook use; 5) Contextual factors and ELT materials; and 6) Further participation. The analysis below reports on each of the sections above in turn.

5.1 Experience in language teaching

The 39 respondents of the questionnaire represent 92.8 per cent of the language teachers in the department under investigation. Participants represented a range of ages distributed more or less equally across the three main ranges shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Teachers' age

Years	N	%
less than 25	1	2.6
25-35	12	30.8
36-44	13	33.3
more than 44	13	33.3
Total	39	100.0

It is worth noting that in some tables, although percentages add up to 99.9 per cent, total indicates 100 percent due to rounding up.

Table 5.2 below illustrates the teachers' experience teaching at the university. This shows that over 70 per cent of the sample had over 10 years' experience working at the university, suggesting that most of the teachers participating in this research were relatively experienced. This particular information was of value when the moment came to define my second sample. I realized that most of the teachers fell into the category of experienced, hence I decided to shape my qualitative sample on the criteria of less experienced teachers and more experienced teachers.

Table 5.2: Experience teaching at university

Years	N	%
1-5	3	7.7
6-10	8	20.5
11-15	7	17.9
16-20	8	20.5
more than 20	13	33.3
Total	39	100.0

5.2 Instructional materials

In Section 2 of the questionnaires, teachers were asked about their beliefs and reported practices regarding the use of instructional materials. Table 5.3 shows that over half of the respondents suggested that each teacher should be allowed to select the materials for his/her lessons, while 35.9 per cent thought the selection of materials should be the responsibility of the language teachers' academy. Therefore, almost 90 per cent of respondents suggested that teachers, individually or collectively, should select the materials for their

lessons. The issue of who should select the materials that teachers use in their lessons was particularly significant in this study, especially in the qualitative phase. So, in the following chapters, this issue will be brought back into discussion.

Table 5.3: Who should select instructional materials

	N	%
myself	21	53.8
the language teaching staff	14	35.9
the faculty's coordinators	2	5.1
other	2	5.1
Total	39	100.0

I also explored who, from the teachers' perspective, actually selected the materials in the research context, Table 5.4 shows that 48.7 per cent of teachers reported that they selected their instructional materials themselves, while 28.2 per cent said that this was undertaken by the language teaching academy. Thus, 76.9 per cent of teachers asserted that teachers, either individually or as a group, chose the materials they used in class.

Table 5.4: Who actually selects instructional materials

	N	%
myself	19	48.7
the language teaching staff	11	28.2
the faculty's coordinators	6	15.4
other	3	7.7
Total	39	100.0

My experience teaching in the research context suggests that teachers are not normally involved in the selection process of textbooks; therefore, the materials that they asserted were selected by themselves, very likely referred to materials other than textbooks.

Regarding to the most frequently used materials in class, Table 5.5 indicates that the vast majority of participants (79.4 per cent) said they drew on a range of materials. What is interesting is that only 17.9 per cent of respondents reported using the textbook as their main material, given that it is the official material and its use is compulsory at the faculty.

Table 5.5: Most used materials in class

	N	%
internet-based	1	2.6
text book-based	7	17.9
authentic materials-based	7	17.9
a balanced combination of two or more of the above	24	61.5
Total	39	100.0

I want to draw attention to the fact that teachers said that they used a combination of materials in their lessons, although this was not observable in their practices as examined in Chapters 6 and 7. What is also interesting is the fact that only one teacher reported using internet-based materials as his main material, even though classrooms at the LEMO are the best equipped across the university. Equipment in classrooms includes LCD projectors, TV screens, audio and video recorders and computers with internet. Such a lack of use of internet-based materials might have been caused by the teachers' lack of training in the exploitation of internet materials, or just a lack of interest in exploring other resources.

The questionnaire also asked teachers about the extent to which teachers designed their own materials. Table 5.6 shows that almost 60 per cent of teachers reported using materials designed by themselves once a month, while 30.8 per cent said they never used them. This suggests that teachers

rely heavily on the official textbook and likely, on materials from the resource centre. Later, I will discuss the issue of materials provided by the resource centre.

Table 5.6: Use of teacher designed materials

	N	%
never	12	30.8
once a month	23	59.0
once a week	3	7.7
every lesson	1	2.6
Total	39	100.0

Teachers were also asked how much freedom they had in the selection of materials. Table 5.7 shows that most of them (71.8 per cent) said that they had no freedom to use materials other than the textbook, with only a small percentage feeling that they had complete freedom.

Table 5.7: Freedom to use materials other than the book in class

	N	%
no freedom	28	71.8
little freedom	5	12.8
some freedom	4	10.3
a lot of freedom	1	2.6
complete freedom	1	2.6
Total	39	100.0

These findings seem to contradict the outcomes from Table 5.4, where almost half of the teachers reported that they selected themselves the materials they used in their classrooms. This might suggest that even though some teachers felt free to use whatever materials in their classes, most of them felt constrained to using them in their practices.

5.3 Use of Instructional Materials

Section 3 of the questionnaire asked the teachers how they drew on materials in their lessons. The first item explored the proportion of the lessons in which they used instructional materials; Figure 5.1 shows that almost 60 per cent of the teachers reported using materials for at least half of their lessons, and over 20 per cent reported using them for most of their lessons. My experience teaching in the research context suggests that it is possible that teachers who reported using materials for about half of their lessons spent the other half of their lessons on skill practice, or focused on grammar material from the textbooks for the first part of the lesson, and then, devoted the rest of the lesson to work on grammar exercises they had generated themselves.

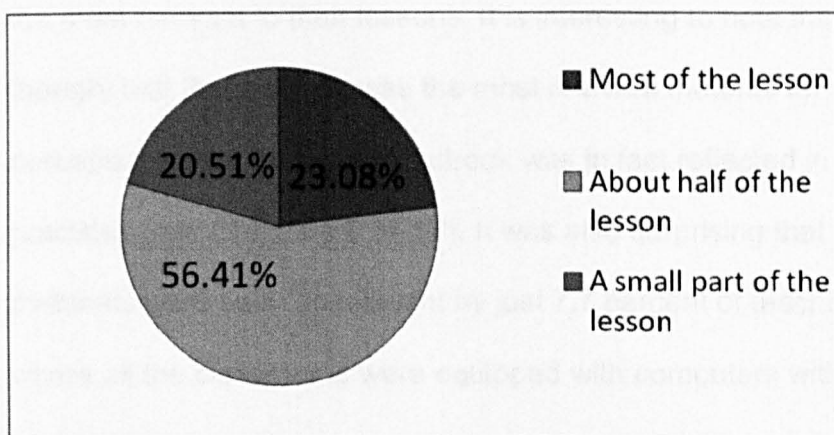


Figure 5.1 Proportion of lessons based on materials

The following chapters will shed light on the teachers' actual use of textbooks and will inform about how the teachers actually organize their class time. Another key issue examined in the questionnaire was the teachers' main reason for using materials in their lessons. Table 5.8 shows that the most highly rated reason (61.5 per cent) was for achieving course goals. Indicating that this was the teachers' primary concern. This issue will be examined further in Chapters 6 and 7.

Table 5.8: Teachers' reasons to use materials

	N	%
they help me to teach standard English as used by native speakers	5	12.8
they assist me to improve my own language proficiency	1	2.6
they help me achieve my course goals	24	61.5
they give me security to face learners	3	7.7
other	6	15.4
Total	39	100.0

The questionnaire also identified what teachers felt were the most useful materials for their learners. Teachers reported (Table 5.9) that they drew on a range of materials, the use of authentic material (41 percent) was reported as the most relevant to their lessons. It is interesting to note that only 12.8 percent thought that the textbook was the most relevant material for their learners. This perception about the official textbook was in fact reflected in the teachers' practices (see Chapters 6 and 7). It was also surprising that internet-based materials were seen as relevant by just 7.7 percent of teachers in a context where all the classrooms were equipped with computers with an internet connection.

Table 5.9: Most relevant materials for learners

	N	%
materials on the internet	3	7.7
textbooks	5	12.8
ready-made visuals as charts, flashcards and pictures	5	12.8
materials of any kind designed by the teacher	3	7.7
authentic materials: as newspapers, and magazines,	16	41.0
other	7	17.9
Total	39	100.0

The survey also examined the teachers' perceptions of how materials were useful for their students' learning (Table 5.10).

Table 5.10: Value of instructional materials in language learning

	N	%
they help me to have students engaged in the lesson	18	46.2
they help learners to be less dependent of the teacher	15	38.5
they help learners to take the course more seriously	1	2.6
Other	5	12.8
Total	39	100.0

The table shows that almost half of the teachers felt that materials helped them to engage learners in their lessons, whilst 38.5 per cent thought that materials help students to be more independent of the teacher. The views of the majority of respondents suggest that instructional materials were seen mostly as a tool for grabbing the students' attention.

5.4 Textbook Use

Given the relevance of textbooks in the language courses on the BA ELT, one section from the questionnaire was dedicated to exploring the utility of textbooks in the teachers' lessons. Items 14 to 21 examined a number of issues in relation to the value of textbooks by drawing on affirmative statements. Table 5.11 reveals that, except for the statement affirming that the textbooks satisfies the students' needs, most teachers agreed, although not strongly, with the statements affirming the textbook was a useful resource.

Table 5.11: Textbook's contribution to language lessons

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean
Textbook helps achieve course objectives	0 0%	5 12.8%	4 10.3%	25 64.1%	5 12.8%	3.77
Textbook helps finish course on time	1 2.6%	8 20.5%	5 12.8%	22 56.4%	3 7.7%	3.46
Textbook activities satisfy students' needs	1 2.6%	16 41%	8 20.5%	13 33.3%	1 2.6%	2.92
Textbook allows to allocate homework	1 2.6%	5 12.8%	7 17.9%	23 59%	3 7.7%	3.56
Textbook allows to adapt course to students' needs	2 5.1%	9 23.1%	12 30.8%	14 35.9%	2 5.1%	3.13
Textbook allows to move back and forward	0 0%	3 7.7%	2 5.1%	30 76.9%	4 10.3%	3.90
Textbook allows to access to culture of target language	1 2.6%	5 12.8%	9 23.1%	20 51.3%	4 10.3%	3.54
Textbook helps minimize cost of making other materials	1 2.6%	1 2.6%	4 10.3%	27 69.2%	6 15.4%	3.92

In the context under investigation, textbook series are normally replaced every 3-4 years. In this regard, teachers were asked their views about when textbooks should ideally be replaced. Table 5.12 shows that for the majority of teachers (56.4 per cent) textbooks should be replaced when learners suggest that they are no longer effective, whereas 33.3 per cent reported they should be replaced when the staff (represented by the language academy) consider it to be necessary.

While in practice, learners have no voice in the selection of books, the teachers may have been expressing their perception of the views held by their students. For instance, as part of the teaching staff, teachers normally report when textbooks do not satisfy the syllabus or are not of interest to the learners, and in such cases coordinators might decide to replace the official book.

Table 5.12: When to replace text books

	N	%
when grammar content does not match the course syllabus	1	2.6
when I consider it to be necessary	1	2.6
when the language teaching staff consider it to be necessary	13	33.3
when learners' feedback suggests the series is no longer effective	22	56.4
Other	2	5.1
Total	39	100.0

The last question about textbooks asked teachers how often they complemented textbooks with other materials. Interestingly, Table 5.13 shows that 43.6 per cent never do so, and 51.3 per cent reported doing so only occasionally. These findings indicate that the majority of teachers feel that they rely heavily on the official textbook, which was observable in their teaching practices (see Chapters 6 and 7). These outcomes seem to contradict earlier responses from Table 5.5, where over 60 per cent of the teachers said they used a range of instructional materials to teach their lessons. Later in the following chapters, I will return to discuss this discrepancy.

Table 5.13 Frequency textbooks are complemented with other materials

	N	%
never	17	43.6
occasionally	20	51.3
frequently	2	5.1
Total	39	100.0

5.5 Contextual factors and use of Materials

A final set of statements explored particular factors that, in the view of the teachers, could possibly have been influential in their use of instructional materials. The first statement investigated whether teachers were allowed to decide which materials to use in their lessons.

Table 5.14 shows that most of the teachers (82.1 percent) disagreed with the statement that they had no choice in deciding which materials to use, which may suggest that they did have some choice.

Table 5.14 I have no choice in deciding which materials to use

	N	%
strongly disagree	9	23.1
Disagree	23	59.0
Unsure	2	5.1
Agree	3	7.7
strongly agree	2	5.1
Total	39	100.0

However, earlier in table 5.7, the majority of teachers indicated that they had no freedom to use materials of their choice, which is a contradiction. This is not the first discrepancy identified in the teachers' opinions. Most of these contradictions will be discussed further in the following chapters.

Teachers were also asked whether they were allowed to use any materials as long as they achieved their course goals. Table 5.15 shows that 35.9 per cent agreed and 28.2 per cent agreed strongly that they are permitted to use whatever materials they needed. This suggests that most teachers (64.1 per cent) in this context feel free to use whatever materials they need.

Again, in their responses on this topic, teachers confirmed that they were permitted to incorporate whatever materials they wished in their teaching,

which contradicts the situation reported in Table 5.7, where the majority asserted they had no freedom in their use of materials.

My experience of teaching on the BA ELT language courses suggests that, although textbooks are the officially prescribed materials for the language courses, in actual practice teachers draw on whatever materials they choose, since the institutions have no mechanisms to monitor the teachers' use of materials. This issue regarding teachers' freedom to incorporate materials of their choice into their lessons will be discussed further when I present the qualitative data from this study.

Table 5.15 Consent to use any materials

	N	%
strongly disagree	4	10.3
Disagree	6	15.4
Unsure	4	10.3
Agree	14	35.9
strongly agree	11	28.2
Total	39	100.0

Since most language teachers follow a textbook-based syllabus, they were asked whether the length of the language courses suited the textbook objectives. Table 5.16 shows an interesting range of perceptions and a relative balance between those who agree (43.6 per cent) and those who disagree (35.9 per cent). Such diversity of opinions can be determined by a number of factors for instance the fact that teachers used different materials at different levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate, advanced) and different text sets from levels 6-8 (i.e. Headway, Interactions, North Star) caused them to develop a range of opinions about the particular textbooks they were using in the summer term. Also, the fact that terms are of different lengths (i.e. the summer term featured

in this study was only six weeks long) and that teachers used particular methods and approaches to both teach their lessons and use the textbooks may also have influenced how long it took teachers to complete the prescribed textbook.

Table 5.16: Course length fits textbook goals

	N	%
strongly disagree	3	7.7
disagree	11	28.2
unsure	8	20.5
agree	14	35.9
strongly agree	3	7.7
Total	39	100.0

In the research being studied here, students often use poor quality photocopied versions of the textbook, instead of the original text, and so teachers were asked whether the students' use of poorly photocopied materials affected their teaching. Table 5.17 shows an interesting contrast of opinions between those who agreed (38.5 per cent) and those who disagreed (46.1 per cent) with this statement. This divergence of opinions can be related to the teachers' personal approaches to using the textbook. Some teachers may rely more and some less on the illustrations (which are often unclear when photocopied). Some teachers, in contrast, provide abundant photocopied handouts to support the textbook, so in those cases, the students' photocopied version of the textbook may not be a problem.

Table 5.17 Poor quality copied material influences teaching

	N	%
strongly disagree	5	12.8
disagree	13	33.3
unsure	6	15.4
agree	9	23.1
strongly agree	6	15.4
Total	39	100.0

When a new textbook series is adopted in the language courses, teachers are not normally involved in the selection process, so I decided to examine whether teachers thought textbooks were selected according their usefulness in language teaching. Table 5.18 shows that 58.9 per cent of contestants expressed some degree of agreement, while only 15.4 per cent disagreed with this statement. What also deserves attention is the fact that 16 teachers (41 per cent of the staff) were uncertain or disagreed with the statement. This range of opinions may suggest that most teachers are unaware of the criteria authorities use for selecting new textbooks, or might also mean that teachers are aware of the criteria but disagree with them.

Table 5.18 Textbooks chosen according usefulness in teaching

	N	%
strongly disagree	2	5.1
disagree	6	15.4
unsure	8	20.5
agree	10	25.6
strongly agree	13	33.3
Total	39	100.0

Given the diversity of opinions about the criteria followed by the authorities for the selection of textbooks, I found it crucial to explore this issue in the

qualitative phase (Chapters 6 & 7).

As the resource centre (materials room) is such a key resource in the context under investigation, offering materials such as charts, videos and games to teachers, I explored the following: 1) whether the centre provided adequate materials for the language lessons and 2) whether teachers had identified some materials not available at the centre.

Table 5.19 shows that 66.7 per cent of teachers agreed that they had identified materials which were not available at the centre and which they would have liked to use. Whereas 46.1 per cent of respondents agreed the resource centre did not have adequate materials and only 33.3 per cent suggested the centre did. Teachers' opinions suggest that, for most teachers, materials available at the centre do not satisfy their needs. However, these results should be considered with caution, especially since teachers' views are likely to have varied significantly in their use of the resource centre -some may even have never used it at all.

Table 5.19: Teachers' views about the resource centre

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
Teachers have identified materials unavailable at the resource centre	0 0%	9 23.1%	4 10.3%	20 51.3%	6 15.4%
The resource centre holds adequate materials to support teaching	5 12.8%	13 33.3%	8 20.5%	11 28.2%	2 5.1%

5.6 Further Participation

The last item on the questionnaire invited teachers to participate in the second phase of the study. Results show that 76.9 per cent of teachers who responded to the questionnaire reported that they would have liked to

participate in further stages of the study, while 23.1 per cent said that they were not interested.

5.7 Conclusion

The descriptive analysis in this chapter has provided insight into the teachers' beliefs and reported practices regarding the selection and use of materials. Findings showed teachers' views on a range of topics in relation to six specific areas (sections 1 and 6 did not examine teachers' views about materials).

The second section explored teachers' views about materials. Results show that although textbooks are the official materials on the BA ELT, they are not the most relevant materials in the language classrooms. It was also revealed that most teachers feel that they should be involved in the selection of the materials they use in their lessons. The third section examined teachers' use of materials. Findings showed that teachers do not rely heavily on materials in their lessons, even though the majority believe materials help them achieve their course goals. The fourth section looked at the teachers' views about textbooks, the findings of which showed that teachers continue to acknowledge textbooks as tools of great value in their teaching practices. The fifth section investigated teachers' views on contextual factors. Outcomes showed that most teachers felt free to use any materials in their practices, and reiterated teachers' beliefs about that they should be involved in the selection of textbooks. Teachers also signalled specific limitations of the materials' room. It is also deserving of attention to mention a few discrepancies to emerge from this quantitative analysis. These will be discussed further in the results chapter and some others will be clarified as I move forward through the phase of qualitative data analysis.

CHAPTER 6: LESS EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

Introduction

This chapter and Chapter 7 examine the qualitative data obtained from sample 2. This sample comprises six teachers: three less experienced teachers (LETs) and three more experienced teachers (METs), all of whom were examined through interviews and classroom observations. This chapter focuses on the qualitative data provided by the LETs.

6.1 Less experienced teachers

To remind the reader, in this study LETs are defined as those with no more than 10 years' English language teaching experience in a university environment. I identify these teachers as LE1, LE2 and LE3. Data from the LETs are composed of nine interview transcripts and qualitative field notes from 12 classroom observations.

To make sense of the data analysis in this chapter, I briefly remind the reader of how the language courses under investigation are organized and assessed. Detailed discussion of these issues is found in Chapter 2.

The English language courses on the BA ELT (LEMO) are organized into three terms which are all allocated the same number of hours. Spring and fall terms are 16 weeks long, while the summer term is eight weeks only, which means that courses in the summer term are taught more intensively (the same number of hours delivered in half the number of weeks).

Of the 55 courses on the BA ELT programme, eight are language courses, from which the first five draw on particular set textbooks. At time this study was undertaken, the language courses were based on *New Headway*. In addition to *New Headway*, the three upper courses (6-8), normally use grammar-

focused textbooks. The most widely used set textbooks include, *Upstream*, *North Star*, *Mosaic*, and *Interactions*. All textbooks for the eight language courses are prescribed by the school authorities.

Although there is an official syllabus for each of the language courses, assessment is normally based on the content and vocabulary found in the textbooks. Language tests are designed and printed by an assessment department and then administered by the language teachers themselves.

6.1.1 Less Experienced Teacher One (LE1)

With about five years teaching at university level, less experienced teacher one (LE1) was allocated a small group of learners. In this context, courses open as long as there are at least five students enrolled. The main feature of LE1's lessons was his use of a self-designed anthology, which was a collection of exercises and texts compiled from different sources that he had decided to use instead of the official book. Lessons were from Monday to Friday at 14:00 until 18:00, 20 hours a week for eight weeks. The main features of the language course given by LE1 are shown in Table 6.1

Table 6.1 The main features of LE1 course

Course level	English language 7
Course length	8 weeks
Course book used	Anthology developed by the teacher
Number of students	6
Materials prescribed by school	<i>North Star</i> Reading & Writing
Special features	An anthology was adopted instead of the prescribed textbook
Course tasks	Written work (essays) and portfolios

6.1.2 Teaching approach

To gain insight into LE1's use of materials, I first examined his teaching approach, which he described as follows:

I am follower of a particular approach...what I do is I go, get to know my students and of course, based on the experience I plan something but you know, I try to first get to know the students and then try to adapt a little bit based on what, how many students I have, ages, students' needs etc, it is different in different contexts (LE1: 11).

He also added 'I think we have an opening, we can use I guess, any kinds of materials if we want' (LE1:11). LE1's words suggest that he felt that he had enough freedom to make choices, to fit his teaching and his materials to his students' needs. His perception about the institution's openness in allowing teachers to choose their own materials contrasted with the views that most teachers expressed in response to the questionnaire, where most of them reported feeling constrained to using only the officially prescribed materials. In his actual practices, LE1 exercised his freedom by replacing the official textbook with an anthology, which he used as his main material and which, as described earlier, was a collection of photocopied material from various books. In his lessons, he often complemented this material with podcasts (either audio or video digital media files). To illustrate how LE1 drew on the anthology and podcasts in his teaching, I present an extract from one of his lessons. The lesson aimed to review relative pronouns.

The lesson began about 15 minutes late, as only two students had arrived on time. LE1 checked his register, and noticing there were two students only, he waited for a few minutes until two other students arrived, then he carried on with the lesson. Holding a handout (see Appendix 7) he went to the board and wrote 'relative pronouns' as the aim of the lesson, then he said

LE1: Do you remember Thursday session? (students opened their anthologies), we studied that a relative pronoun modifies a noun phrase...(he summarized the topic studied in the previous lesson for a couple of minutes, then he went to the board and wrote) 'the contract that he signed yesterday is not valid'(he then explained) We use relative pronouns to refer to a noun and to avoid repetition. In this

sentence...(he explained for a few minutes, then he said). If you remember last session, you were doing some exercises, using relative pronouns. Let's check this exercise in your anthologies (showing his anthology) (see Appendix 7). (Pointing to one of the students he said) Ricardo, can you read the first part of this page? (showing his handout to the student).

Ricardo: We use relative pronouns to refer to a noun mentioned... (the student read two lines from the anthology, and when he had finished, LE1 said)

LE1: Ok, now you are going to write three sentences using relative pronouns. (He let the students work for a few minutes. When they finished, LE1 asked the students to go and write one of their sentences on the board. All the students, taking turns, wrote one example on the board. When they finished the teacher said (holding his handout in his hand) now we are going to check these examples, Irma, (referring to one of the students) can you read this part? (pointing to his handout).

Irma: Relative pronouns, subject or object...(Irma read few lines from the anthology, and then LE1 asked other students to continue reading, when they finished reading the examples from the anthology (see Appendix 7), LE1 said as he was turning a computer and a screen on).

LE1: I was listening to this podcast this morning and there are lots, lots of relative pronouns within that audio, so what we are going to do is to listen twice...it's hard, I know, it's kind of complicated I know but you just focusing on the pronouns. Which are the pronouns? that, which, whose, where...try to write as many pronouns as you hear in the audio...(the students then listened to the podcast, which was a radio programme about Mexico, broadcast in English. After that LE1 asked the students to read aloud, the pronouns they had identified).

(LE1: O2)

The extract gives a taste of a lesson focused on grammar with controlled practice. Although not all the observed lessons with LE1 were grammar-focused, this extract illustrates how LE1 typically used the anthology.

As the extract shows, LE1 followed the anthology closely in the way that a textbook would be used. A major advantage of this anthology was that it allowed him go straight to the core point of his lessons. This was due to the nature of the exercises that the anthology contained. The anthology was in fact a collection of grammar and reading exercises obtained from various sources, very similar in content to the prescribed textbook.

The internet-based materials were used in all the observed lessons, especially to illustrate the grammar structures studied in class. Although LE1 asserted that his course focused on reading and writing, his actual lessons included a significant amount of grammar. As for the reading and writing tasks, they were completed by the students for homework and were checked and briefly discussed in class. In the following section, I explore LE1's views about instructional materials.

6.1.3 LE1's views about instructional materials

Talking about the relevance of instructional materials in his lessons, LE1 said

I think we always have to use materials, always...sometimes like I am doing now, we use a particular book, sometimes like a compilation of photocopies from different textbooks, and that's like the guide for the course; I always use internet-based materials, like podcasts, videos most of the times...I don't really use very much flash cards and maps (LE1: 11).

LE1 valued instructional materials highly, and suggested that he used a range of them. In his practices, he actually drew on the materials that he claimed he used. The particular book he referred to was a compilation of photocopies, as noted above, that he called his 'anthology'. Later, I will discuss his choice of material. With regard to the internet-based materials, which LE1 asserted that he always used, it is important to note that these were in fact used in all the observed lessons.

Although the main material used in his lessons was the anthology, LE1 placed high value on the official textbook.

I think the book is very relevant because on the one hand the students feel like they are grasping something...teachers like me, will always like to have like a guideline and it's very relevant to use the book...I think it provides the students with cultural elements, they provide examples, they provide more practice, it is important for students as well as for teachers (LE1: 11).

While it was interesting to hear that LE1 valued the official material very highly, and that he had identified some specific benefits from using this material, it was clear that in the summer course the textbook was not the most important material in his classes. Later, I will examine LE1's rationale for replacing the textbook with an anthology, and the benefits that this had for his teaching.

As noted earlier, podcasts were often used in LE1's lessons, and so I examined the features that LE1 found useful in this type of material:

I am trying to get my students connected with everyday life...sometimes I have found out that they don't really know what is going on in the world...I think they are living in their own bubble...podcasts provide them with English, real life English and they can develop listening, they can get more vocabulary but I think that's like my hidden purpose (LE1:11).

The fact that podcasts were authentic materials was apparently a feature that LE1 valued highly. In his lessons, he drew attention particularly on a news programme about Mexico called 'Imagen News', which was broadcast in English. With regard to LE1's preference for using podcasts in the classroom, it is important to note that when the questionnaire explored the materials most significant to the teachers' practices, LE1 was the only teacher from the entire teaching staff who reported internet-based materials as the most important in their lessons. Furthermore, this was actually reflected in the lessons that I observed.

Although LE1 found the textbook and podcasts of great value, he decided to adopt an anthology as his main material, so I explored his rationale for doing so.

6.1.4 Adopting an anthology

In explaining the rationale for using the anthology LE1 said:

I didn't follow those guidelines (textbook) because I thought this was a kind of a different course because of different reasons, and the first

one, it's too short, it is a summer course, and the second one is that I had the opportunity to see my attendance list and I saw that there was only six of them...six or seven and so I decided not to follow or continue using the book I was supposed to use (LE1: I2).

LE1 indicated his course was different and specifically mentioned course length and group size as two key issues that led him to decide not to use the official textbook. In this respect, he explained how the course length was a relevant issue:

... six weeks for me was horrible in the sense that I felt all the time in a rush...you know a four hour session five days a week for eight weeks...the schedule from two to six. At two o'clock some students need to eat something, it was really hard (LE1: I3).

My experience teaching on these language courses suggests that most teachers struggle to achieve the goals stipulated by the syllabus, particularly in the summer course, due to the extremely limited time given in which to teach the course content. In practice, the eight weeks allocated to the course are reduced to six, due to various administrative tasks (i.e. enrolment, final reports) that teachers have to carry out within the time allocated for the course. This lack of time is what most teachers find most difficult to cope with.

In addition to his perception about the length of the term, LE1 felt that the length of the lessons was also problematic:

'[Lessons] finish at six o'clock, that's not something that everybody likes, because you know, it's four hours, even though we take breaks it's a lot of time! (LE1:I3).

LE1's comments suggest that he and his students were unhappy with the four hour lessons, especially when undertaken in the often extremely hot conditions that can be experienced in the classroom during a Mexican summer. In practice though, I found no evidence to confirm that the length of the class affected his use of materials in any manner. I want to draw attention, however,

to the fact that almost all the students, LE1 said, had employment commitments in the morning. So when they started the lessons in the afternoon, they appeared tired and unenthusiastic about participating in the class activities. As for the group size, he argued:

...the fact that I had six or seven students which is not normal...we usually have from 15 to 20 or 25 students in each classroom, you know...that made me think about how easy it would be for me to try to implement an alternative for material...because it was not a large number of students that I needed to convince in a way... in this point I thought yeah, it's only six I can deal with this (LE1: I2).

He added

I asked them if they were happy with the idea of having an alternative, you know book or anthology...and everyone said 'yes', so...if one of them had said 'no', I wouldn't have used the anthology (LE1: I3).

LE1's comments about the need 'to convince' the students suggests that he was aware, and also that the students were aware, that not following the set text was a diversion from normal practice. For this reason, he felt that he had to first ask the students how they felt about this. This strategy of negotiating the use of materials was a theme that emerged especially, although not exclusively, among the less experienced teachers.

On this point, it is worth noting that the anthology did also offer an advantage to the students in that it was much cheaper than the textbook. Normally at the start of the language courses, students have not yet purchased the set text (or a copy of it) but rather waiting to find out what the course materials are when they attend the first class.

Apart from the conditions LE1 felt would facilitate the adoption of the anthology, he had some particular concerns about the official textbook:

I have used that book (North Star) before in regular courses, I like the book but not this time, I think it would be very tedious for me and the students...I have asked from other students about the book and they say, 'yeah it is kind of too much, too much to grasp'... it is packed with

information, and you have to read and read again and read again... is like following the same procedure unit after unit (LE1: I1).

We can thus conclude that it was not only the course length and the group size that influenced LE1's decision to replace the set text, but also the volume of material and its repetitive nature found in this text. In contrast, he felt that the anthology:

lets me go with my own pace, teach with my own pace...if I was to use the book I would feel like I'm forced to follow the lessons that the book is giving me...there is no way to escape because it is a whole package, you cannot go backwards or skip. With the anthology I was careful to select the things I thought were going to be necessary...that matched the syllabus and also provided me with enough time to finish on time (LE1: I2).

Earlier, I noted that LE1's anthology was composed of readings and exercises from various sources and, in this regard, LE1 described how that he felt that his anthology matched the syllabus and helped him resolve the problem of time. We can therefore conclude that the anthology was a sort of condensed version of the key themes covered by textbook that concentrated mainly on the points (grammar) that LE1 felt were relevant to his course.

In addition to the reasons LE1 gave for replacing the textbook with his anthology, he raised his concern over the procedures used for selecting books in the department.

...teachers most of the times are never asked about the books...well I think it affects when, like, your opinion is not taken, of course, it's very likely that you have a very negative attitude towards something you were not asked for... they just told us, 'this is the book you are going to be using', they didn't ask for your opinion (LE1: I1).

Another possible factor, then, behind LE1's decision not to use the set text was a negative reaction to the fact that he had not had any say in the choice of this text in the first place.

6.1.5 LE1's feelings about his materials

LE1's course objectives were centred on the students reading and writing skills. Additionally he had challenged his students to write some essays and keep portfolios. He felt the materials he used were tailored to these objectives:

Well at the beginning of this course they kept a portfolio with their writings and entries for the podcasts they listened every week. And for the book, (anthology) the chapters they read...at the beginning they would probably see just a few lines because they didn't have the skill and the ability to write, and now if you could see the portfolios or folders...they include the vocabulary that they have heard in the news, they put it in the reports! (LE1:I3).

LE1 felt his students' reading skills were developed by drawing on the anthology, while their writing skills were practiced using the podcasts. Thus, based on the students' portfolios and written work, LE1 firmly believed that his students had improved their reading and writing skills.

Overall, he showed evidence (portfolios and reports) of the tasks his students had completed at home, but did not specifically elaborate on how his anthology had helped them learn what he taught in class.

6.1.6 Conclusions

In trying to capture the complexity of LE1's use of materials, I conclude this section with a summary of key issues that I found in LE1's practices and that I feel deserve further discussion in the following chapters.

The dominant theme in this case was the teachers' use of an anthology of materials instead of the prescribed textbook. The fact that he was able to replace the set text indicates that, despite institutional requirements, teachers were able to make independent decisions about the materials they used. This may also imply that mechanisms for ensuring that set texts were actually used were not in place in the department. The teacher's comments on why he opted for an anthology (which consisted of photocopied extracts from various other

books) highlighted a range of factors: the limited time available for this summer course, the length of the lessons, the small number of students and their willingness to use an anthology, the teacher's own views about the large volume and repetitiveness of material the set text contained, and a possible resistance to the fact that he had not been involved in choosing it.

The teacher also referred to the added flexibility that an anthology provided in comparison to the set text. It is also important to note that LE1 maintained that the material included in the anthology was chosen with the course objectives and syllabus in mind, so that students would be prepared for the centrally-designed tests they would have to take. A secondary noteworthy issue of this teacher's work was his use of podcasts to support the teaching and learning of grammar and vocabulary. Overall, this case provides insight into a range of factors which shaped the teacher's choice and use of materials. I will return to some of these in the discussion that follows the presentation of the study's findings.

6.2 Less Experienced Teacher Two (LE2)

LE2 was the least experienced teacher in this study. She held qualifications in translation at BA level, and had limited training in ELT (English language teaching). Even though she had experience of teaching content courses (i.e. translation, phonetics) at university, she had only one year teaching English language courses on the BA ELT. Her lessons were four hours a day, five times a week, and characterized by the use of a student-led approach (discussed below). The main features of her course are shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 The Main features of LE2's course

Course Level	English language 3
Course Length	Eight weeks
Course book used	Headway Intermediate and a grammar book
Number of Students	17
Materials prescribed by school	Textbook set <i>New Headway Intermediate</i>
Special features	Student- led presentations
Course tasks	Students presentations, chosen by students and teacher; Team task: Design a photo story

6.2.1 Teaching approach

LE2 described her teaching approach as follows:

I would say at the moment is constructivism...but in all the truth I wouldn't say I really have an approach like a very clear approach because I didn't have that education (as language teacher), I just have glimpses of what those approaches mean (LE2: I1).

LE2's description clearly indicated she was unaware of ELT approaches. She further added:

I perceive myself still as a traditional teacher and I don't like that very much, so I would like to even include more activities but I really need to know exactly how to do it (LE2:I2).

When she elaborated on what she meant by *traditional teacher* she said, it 'is a teacher always using the book' (LE2:I2). LE2's feeling about being a traditional teacher, suggests she relied heavily on the textbook, which was not surprising given that she was not acquainted with ELT principles and had relatively limited experience teaching at university.

LE2's actual approach consisted of a combination of student- led presentations and teacher-led lessons. The student presentations were 30-40 minute individual mini lessons, in which the students talked about a range of topics. On the other hand LE2's lessons were brief teaching sessions, in which she

mainly taught the contents prescribed by the syllabus drawing on the official textbook as her main material and supported by a grammar book.

To illustrate what LE2's practices were like, I present an extract from my field notes taken during one of her lessons.

The class had just completed a listening exercise taught by LE2. A student, who had her materials ready for a presentation, was standing next to the teacher. LE2 indicated to the student - using non verbal communication - to go to the front of the classroom, then LE2 said to the class

LE2: Ok, please be quiet we are going to have a presentation (then talking to the girl in charge of the presentation, said)
Ok Sofi it is your turn. (Sofi saying nothing, began to distribute hard copies of a song (lyrics) with missing words. Then using a computer and a tv screen Sofi prepared a video clip ready to be played and said)

Sofi: Please *write the missing words while you listen to the song (video)* (then she played the video twice while her peers were filling in the blanks. Once she had played the video twice and while she was waiting for her peers to finish to check their responses, LE2 asked Sofi (pointing to the end of the classroom) to walk around to check her peers' work, and Sofi did so. After a few minutes of walking around, Sofi went to the front of the classroom and when she was about to replay the video clip, LE2 said).

LE2: *Ok, Sofi is going to play the song again and then she is going to give the correct answers, please be honest and check your answers.* (Sofi then played the video again, stopping in the sections where words were missing in the lyrics). She first elicited responses from her classmates, when nobody had the right answers, she provided them. During the presentation, LE2 stood next to Sofi, closely monitoring her performance and looking at Sofi's peers very attentively as the activity was going on. Once Sofi completed her presentation, LE2 said: *Thank you Sofi* (and she moved on another activity)

(LE2:02)

The extract above shows what LE2's approach was like in practice. Her particular interest in strengthening her students' teaching skills is evident during the student's presentation. Of note is the way LE2 encouraged the student to assume the teacher's role (i.e. she asked the student to walk around; LE2 carefully monitored the activity). Actually, the students' presentations were not done under pressure of time; for example, the

presentation above lasted about 40 minutes. This contrasted with LE2's lessons based on the textbook, which were 20 minute presentations on average.

In explaining the rationale of her approach LE2 said:

Since I noticed that the students are very creative I have given them more time to participate and to take control of the class...I think it helps a lot individually when they have to present a class for their classmates...they have to see that there are lots of elements...they have to organize groups, take responsibilities for having successful activities. I think all that is exactly what we need for achieving the goal that we have as career that they will become successful teachers (LE2:13).

LE2 felt her language course was an opportunity for her learners to develop their teaching skills. She felt that, by following her approach, she contributed towards the goals of the institution, firmly believing that the goal of her course was to train language teachers.

In her approach, LE2 shared a considerable proportion of her class with her students so that they had sufficient time for their presentations. In this regard, I explored with her why she focused her course on the students' teaching skills when her course was supposed to be focused on language

I consider, that is behind or is on my thought that we are better when we are teaching, that is basically because when I have to explain something, I really have to fully understand what I am to explain first (LE2:13).

LE2's argument indicates vagueness and lack of understanding about the actual aims of her course. There was an evident discrepancy between the aims she expected to achieve as a teacher trainer, and the aims she was expected to achieve in her English language course.

Even though her course focused on her students' teaching skills, I examined her opinion about the relevance of teaching materials in her lessons.

6.2.2 LE2's views about materials

LE2 said on this issue:

In first place they help me understand things...materials help you have fun with your students and also to get them engaged with the class. They help you cover the students' needs...sometimes they need to watch something distracting. If they don't see anything they got lost. And sometimes they can help you memorize vocabulary (LE2:11).

LE2 had identified a number of ways in which materials helped both her students and herself. In this respect, I explored how much freedom she felt she had in her lessons to incorporate materials of her own choosing.

I would say that we have complete freedom to do that, because as I mentioned I use other things that are definitely not the book. I think the important thing for the school is that you cover the programme, it doesn't matter what kind of materials you use, at least nobody has told me the opposite (LE2:11).

To make sense of LE2's sense of freedom, it is necessary to remember that lessons were not monitored at the faculty, therefore most teachers felt free to make decisions about their approaches and the materials they used to execute them. In LE2's case, she used this sense of freedom to help her develop her student-led approach. It is interesting that she had talked about achieving the aims set by the programme, when earlier she had suggested that focusing on her students' teaching skills was the ultimate goal of her course.

I then asked LE2 about the most important material that she used in her lessons:

I usually take the textbook and I complement that with other materials. I think I really get a lot of things from internet to complete the practices...I use the book definitely and the CD that comes with the book...I usually buy a magazine that is *Think in English*, it is a magazine that brings a lot of cultural topics and vocabulary...and use another that is *Teachers*, that is a Latin-American magazine. So those two magazines are the ones I use frequently plus books plus internet (LE2: 11).

Despite the range of materials she described using to complement the textbook, her actual lessons used the official textbook as their principal material, occasionally supported by a grammar book. I need to note though that her students drew on a range of materials in their presentations, which contrasted with her adherence to the official textbook.

Since LE2 claimed that she usually used the textbook set in her lessons, I explored her understanding of this particular source of material.

6.2.3 Textbooks in LE2's practices

LE2's views about the textbook were:

I really don't like the idea of having the programme based on the book...but here it is the way it works, so we have to follow the book, the book is really the course, so I have to take the book as the first point of reference. So as soon as I notice what the book brings, I identify the vocabulary and the grammar points I have to check, then I look for materials that explain in a better way the grammar structure (LE2:11).

She went on to say that 'last course...I was very attached to the textbook, it was like my bible'. Similarly, from my experience as a language teacher working in the research context, most teachers at the faculty felt the official textbook was the programme. In fact the institution had an official programme, which prescribed the content of the BA ELT courses, to which all the teachers across the faculty had access. Nonetheless, the fact that the assessment of the language courses was based on the contents of the textbooks made teachers believe that following the textbook would ensure that the students passed the course.

Moreover, LE2's perception about textbooks reveals that she believed the textbook was the syllabus and felt that it was her primary resource in the teaching of grammar and vocabulary. Her comments that the textbook was her

main reference and that in the previous course, she had viewed it as her “bible” gives an idea of the degree of dependence she had on the textbook.

LE2 asserted that she drew on the textbook as the principal reference point from which she could move on to other materials. In this respect, I investigated how the textbook had helped her in her teaching.

Honestly and personally speaking I do not like to use the book, particularly this book, we are using *Headway*...I do not like it because I consider the content is not appropriate for the students or the kind of students we have. The readings for example are completely out of the frame of my students. For instance next week we have to cover something about holidays...not because I don't believe eventually one of my students will be able to visit Japan, it's extremely hard and out of their context to visit Japan (LE2:11).

LE2's feelings towards the textbook were neither unusual nor surprising. The questionnaire findings showed that teachers across the faculty felt that they did not benefit from the textbook; in response to a specific question, most teachers did not list the textbook among their most important materials.

In addition to her views about the textbooks' content, LE2 felt other features of the official textbook were inappropriate for her learners:

I don't like *Headway* because it is British English...whether we wanted or not, we (Mexican) are closer to the United States, so they (students) have more influence from American English (LE2:11).

The decision to use either American or British textbooks has been an issue of perennial debate at the faculty (a discussion about this issue is found in Chapter 2). In LE2's case, she firmly believed that American English materials were more relevant and convenient for her students.

On a practical level, LE2 had also identified a particular drawback in the official textbook:

...about the structure of the book I love it, but the problem is that it requires a lot of time to organize listening for example...so about

listening that is one skill that I feel very attached to the book, like I didn't feel free to use other materials and that affected my way of teaching...with other skills I didn't feel like that (LE2:I3).

In the observed lessons, I did not find any evidence that the textbook's listening sections were too long. In fact the 15-20 minutes she spent working with this section was the time that most teachers spent working with listening activities. In my view, it was a personal perception that could have been based on her lack of experience.

Beyond the materials that LE2 used in her classes, in the interview, I explored the contextual factors that she felt influenced her use of materials.

6.2.4 Contextual factors and use of materials

LE2 said in this regard:

I think the four hours class is too long. I feel we did a good job, I think it would have been better if we had not had four hours, probably less time would be better and a longer period of time, six weeks for me was horrible in the sense that I felt all the time in a rush (LE2:I3).

Similar to LE1, LE2 also found the four hour lessons and the length of the course to be extremely problematic for her teaching. It is interesting that she had said that the course was six weeks, when it was officially eight weeks long. Actually, other teachers also felt the summer course was six weeks of effective teaching. The issues about the course schedules, the length of the lessons and the length of the courses are issues raised recurrently by teachers throughout this study. In LE2's case, however, we need to remember that in addition to the challenges that most teachers experienced of teaching the course book contents in six weeks, she shared her class time with her 17 students in order to carry out over 50 presentations of 30-40 minutes each. It is, therefore, understandable why she felt that she had so little time to accomplish the aims of her course.

6.2.5 Conclusions

I will conclude this section by highlighting key findings in LE2's use of materials. Later in the following chapter, these findings will be discussed in detail. The central theme in LE2's case was her student-led approach, combined with her use of the textbook. LE2's teaching approach indicates that her students' teaching skills were her priority, while her brief grammar-focused lessons drawing on the textbook suggest an attempt to comply with the institutional regulations and adhere to the officially prescribed materials.

The use of her student-led approach – which contrasted with the approaches of most teachers – suggests a lack of understanding of the goals prescribed by the institutional syllabus. This also suggests that the institutional monitoring of both teachers' work and their use of materials was almost non-existent.

LE2's views about the textbook suggest that while she acknowledged this material as a key resource, she had identified some drawbacks in its content.

Secondary factors that she saw as influencing her teaching included the length of the lessons and the length of the course.

LE2 may have used students' presentations so frequently in order to compensate for her lack of teaching skills. Overall, her lessons were shaped by the high level of student involvement in teaching, with the use of the textbook playing a secondary role.

6.3 Less Experienced Teacher Three (LE3)

With seven years' experience teaching content courses and English language courses at university level, Less Experienced Teacher Three (LE3) worked on an upper intermediate course. LE3 held qualifications at MA level in ELT. A distinctive feature of his course was the use of handouts, which he shared with

his students every lesson. He supported his handouts with monolingual dictionaries, which he used very often. The main features of his course are shown in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 The main features of LE3's course

Course Level	English language 5
Course Length	Eight weeks
Course book used	Handouts and Dictionaries
Number of Students	17
Materials prescribed by school	Headway Upper Intermediate
Special features	Textbooks were replaced with worksheets. Monolingual Dictionaries also used as main materials
Course tasks	Individual class presentations / Design of a photo story

6.3.1 Teaching approach

To get insight into LE3's practices, I first asked him about his teaching approach, which he defined as follows:

...there isn't a particular approach of course, I follow my ideas, my beliefs, I work according to my beliefs, to the context, to the specific needs of the students...we have to take into consideration the philosophy of the school in which we are working there are so many things in order to integrate all these factors and construct an approach that benefit the students (LE3:11).

Similar to the other LETs, LE3 claimed not to follow a particular model, instead following his own approach, which he said was informed by a range of factors that he believed satisfied his students' needs. In practice, his approach consisted on using handouts, which were photocopied materials from a range of textbooks, that he had developed himself and shared with his students and which were used every lesson instead of the official textbook. Along with the handouts, he and the students used dictionaries almost every lesson. Later, I

will discuss LE3's rationale behind the use of other complementary materials.

To illustrate what LE3's lessons were like, I present an extract from my field notes taken during the introductory part of one of his lessons:

LE3 arrived in the classroom and checked his register, then, he gave his students a photocopied sheet (see Appendix 8). When each of his students had received a copy of the material he asked them to have it face down, then he went to the board and wrote the quote 'Education is simply the soul of society as it passes from one generation to another'. Then he asked:

LE3: Do you know this quotation? (pointing to the board. Nobody responded. Then he read the quotation loudly and again asked) What does soul mean? (LE3 wrote the word on the board, then one of the students answered)

Student: It's like the spirit?

LE3: Yeah, that's right the soul is what we have inside. Let's check the meaning of this word in the dictionary. (the teacher and the students looked up the word in their dictionaries. Then LE3 asked to one of the students) Mario can you read the definition of the word in your dictionary? (Mario read the definition of the word after which LE3 said) The soul is the spiritual part of us. In the quote it means that education is a very important part of society ok? Do you know other quotes? (none of the students suggested other quotes) The teacher erased the word from the board and then said; ok before going to the next activity I have a question. I want you to think and then give me your answers. Think about that...do you have a pet? (nobody responded, so LE3 asked) Ok. Hector how do you know you are a pet owner?

Hector: I don't know (students laugh), probably because my pet recognizes me. (Then another student responded).

Student: If I have a pet and take care of it

LE3: How do you know you are pet owners? (LE3 asked the same question to few other students After hearing some responses he said). Ok we are going to see some cartoons (he indicated the students to turn their copies, then he began to read the texts under each picture (see Appendix 8). For a few minutes he described and made the students laugh as he talked about the cartoons (After reading all the cartoons LE3 said). Ok, do you remember what we talked about yesterday? (He then provided another set of photocopies and moved on to another activity).

(LE3:O1)

The extract above illustrates how LE3 used handouts and dictionaries. As noted above, the handouts were photocopies from various textbooks and most focused on grammar and vocabulary (see Appendix 9). Similar to LE1, LE3

used handouts in the close way that a textbook would be used. As for the dictionaries, LE3 and his students used them in most of the observed lessons, mainly to check meaning and pronunciation.

LE3 provided handouts to his students at the beginning of every lesson, materials which were provided at no cost to the learners. Later, I will examine LE3's rationale for using handouts and dictionaries.

6.3.2 Instructional materials in LE3's practices

To get an insight into LE3's use of materials, I first discussed with him the role of instructional materials in his lessons:

Well...materials are very important, yes and through all this experience I have discovered plenty of materials, very interesting, beautiful materials. I have to tell you that the materials work according to the context in which you are teaching yes materials are very important (LE3:11).

LE3 valued materials highly and suggested that he used a range of them in his practices. Thus, I asked him which the most important material in his lessons was:

It depends on the ability that I want to develop on my students, if it's reading I use an encyclopaedia from which I take interesting readings, I also use magazines that have been especially designed for native speakers as National Geographic, Archie, Madmax and some comics which I think are interesting for the students (LE3:13).

He added:

Some magazines provide you with real life speech acts, so that is a characteristic that I like from some magazines, some of them contain listening materials which can be useful in my lessons. Magazines provide learners with a lot of vocabulary. Some magazines provide activities like questionnaires, crosswords puzzles. Some provide cultural information that can be helpful to language learners (LE3:13).

LE3 felt that rather than adopting a particular type of material in his lessons, he chose the material according the ability he aimed to develop, although he expressed some preference for reading materials. Even though he described

using a range of reading materials in his practices, in the observed lessons he did not use any of the various materials that he mentioned.

As noted above, a key resource in LE3's lessons were monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. With regard to the value of these materials in his practices he explained:

...I like dictionaries a lot...whenever I start a course I ask my students for a dictionary...as I have worked with dictionaries I have a way to exploit all this knowledge that dictionaries can provide to my students...dictionaries are authoritative sources from which we can get information...new dictionaries are very, very good because they provide us with very reliable information...and you can check pronunciation there (LE3:12).

LE3 drew on dictionaries very often in his lessons, which indicates they were seen to be of value, although it is important to point out that these were used as a complementary resource.

The discussion above helps make sense of the significance of the use of handouts and dictionaries in LE3's teaching, and also highlights his lack of interest in using the official textbook.

6.3.3 LE3's views about textbooks and handouts

Even though LE3 decided not use the official textbook, I asked him for his views on this material:

Books are of great use for us, they are helpful for us during our lessons, but they are not everything, I am not used to be working all the time with a book. Books help us a lot, there are some books that are say, like a good resource. I have also checked that some books are not so interesting and don't help us during our course (LE3:11).

LE3 clearly valued textbooks and indicated that he believed that they were a useful resource in his practices. However, his actual use of textbooks in class showed that these materials were not relevant to his teaching in practice.

Despite his positive comments about textbooks, LE3 replaced the official textbook with handouts. In trying to understand his use of materials, I explored

his rationale for replacing the official textbook with handouts, wherein he explained:

...well the main reason why I didn't use the textbook is that it was a short course (six weeks) and we were not going to be able to finish the book...also the units or modules are very long, so I was going to spend a lot of time teaching every unit, so I thought I needed quicker ways to cover the content...and as I feel free, I decided for other materials that would work better (LE3:I3).

The length of the course and the large volume of content found in the official textbook were issues also raised as drawbacks by both LE1 and LE2 and also as factors that influenced their instructional decisions, which very likely suggests that other teachers across the faculty felt similarly about these issues. I also want to draw attention to the fact that LE3 described feeling completely free to make decisions about his materials. Later, in the following chapters, I will discuss further the teachers' sense of freedom in using any materials of their choosing.

My experience, both of language teaching in the research context and working with the particular textbook set used by LE3, suggests that the major problem was the lack of time rather than the volume of content in the prescribed textbooks. Actually, New Headway textbooks are no longer than the vast majority of language textbooks on the market. So the actual challenge for teachers on the language courses was to deal with a whole textbook in six weeks.

In explaining how handouts help him resolve the problem of limited time, LE3 stated:

As it was a short course, they (handouts) would help me get the contents quicker than the book...I took the content of the book which is the syllabus... and I took all these structures but using different materials, may be some other books...(LE3:I3).

The belief that the textbook was the syllabus was common among most teachers at the LEMO. LE3 seemed to feel that if the handouts matched the textbook, he would be on the way to achieving the goals prescribed by the institutional syllabus. LE3 talked further about his reasons for replacing the textbook:

I didn't use the book recommended by the institution but...I covered the contents recommended by the institution, so it was not like going against the institution, no, no, no because it is ok if we arrive at the same point as the other teachers in the same level (LE3:I3).

LE3 firmly believed that drawing on his own materials, instead of the official book, was not against the institution's regulations; rather, he believed that he was completely free to use whatever materials in his lessons, as long as he accomplished the aims of his course.

In contrast to LE1, who replaced the book with an anthology, a photocopy of which the students purchased, LE3 provided handouts to his students for free, which is not usual in this context. In this respect, the use of handouts in LE3's practices was not only convenient for him but was also very convenient for the students, who did not have to purchase the official textbook or even a photocopied version of it.

6.3.4 Conclusion

I conclude this section by reflecting on key issues emerging from LE3's use of materials, issues which will be discussed further in the following chapters.

A major theme that emerged from my examination of LE3's teaching practices was the use of handouts as his main material. Also relevant was the use of the dictionaries that he and his students used in the lessons. LE3's rationale for replacing the prescribed textbook with handouts indicates that the limitations of

time and the perceived high volume of content in the textbook were the two key reasons that led him to replace the textbook with his own materials. LE3's replacement of the officially prescribed material indicates that he found that the conditions surrounding the course, in that his use of materials was not monitored, allowed him to make decisions freely about both his teaching approach and his use of materials.

The secondary materials used by LE3 were the dictionaries which he drew on to complement the handouts and which he believed promoted the learning of vocabulary and improved the students' pronunciation.

6.3.5 Main findings across LETs

I will conclude this chapter by presenting a summary of key issues identified collectively in LE1, LE2 and LE3's teaching practices.

The dominant theme in the LETs practices was the use of materials other than textbooks and the repercussions that this had in their teaching practices. From the opinions of all the LETs, we can affirm that they all felt completely free to make decisions about their teaching materials. Two of them exercised this sense of freedom to deviate substantially from the officially sanctioned material in their use of their own materials (LE1 and LE2 replaced the textbook with their own materials), whereas LE2 adopted a student-led approach in which the majority of class time was not dedicated to the textbook. They all claimed that they took these decisions on the basis of their students' needs. In LE1 and LE3's cases, the materials which replaced the textbooks (anthology and handouts) were believed to match the aims contained in the textbooks. Related closely to the use of materials, all LETs felt that the course was too short to accomplish the aims prescribed by the textbooks, which, as I

mentioned before, is viewed by most teachers as the de facto syllabus in all language courses. LE1 and LE2 felt that the textbooks were inappropriate for their learners. Of secondary importance, the LETs' opinions suggested the following: that the textbooks contained a high volume of content; that some topics were out of the student's frame of reference and therefore not relevant to their lives; that British English was inappropriate; and that feelings of resentment emerged as a result of not being involved in the selection of textbooks. Overall, all the LETs' opinions provided insight into a number of issues which shaped their use of materials and which will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 7: MORE EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

Introduction

This chapter aims to analyse interview and observation data from three more experienced teachers (ME1, ME2 and ME3). In this study, more experienced teachers are defined as those with more than 10 years' experience teaching English language at a university level. I will analyze each case individually and then I will conclude by reflecting on key issues collectively.

7.1 More Experienced Teacher One (ME1)

With 26 years' experience teaching language at university level, More Experienced Teacher One (ME1) was the most senior participant in this study. A distinctive feature of her group was that some of the students, who had failed English 2, were retaking that course. The most significant feature of ME1's lessons was the use of worksheets alongside the textbook. The main features of her course are shown in Table 7.1

Table 7.1 The main features of ME1's course

Course Level	English language 2
Course Length	Eight weeks
Materials set out by school	New Headway Pre-intermediate
Number of Students	15
Materials used in class	Textbook set <i>New Headway</i> and worksheets
Special features	Some students were retaking the course
Course tasks	Complete workbooks

7.1.1 ME1's teaching approach

In establishing a framework to discuss ME1's use of instructional materials, I first discussed her teaching approach with her, which she described as follows:

I don't have a name of the approach I use...I usually use a combination of direct method and use the four skills with a lot of guessing to the answers that I expect from students...I let the students use English

as natural as they can by exposing as much English as possible (ME1:11).

In her actual practices, ME1 followed a teacher-led, textbook-based approach with grammar focus, in which the most used materials were the official book and worksheets. Worksheets were photocopied materials (i.e. grammar exercises, pictures) obtained from various sources.

To get a picture of her actual practices and use of materials, an extract of my field notes taken during a lesson using worksheets is presented below. The aim of the lesson was the '*simple present and present progressive*'.

ME1 began the session by marking her register, then she introduced the lesson writing on the board and repeating, as she was writing 'Simple present and present progressive. Then she asked to the class

ME1: Do you remember the present simple, the formula?

Student: person + verb + complement (the teacher wrote on the board as the student dictated the formula).

ME1: And the formula for present progressive? (nobody responded, students looked at each other) Class!? What is the formula?

Student: person + verb be+ ing +complement (teacher wrote the formula on the board).

ME1: Tell me more about the present progressive, (pointing to the formula)

Student: About the grammar structure?

ME1: Yes, how do we know it is present progressive?

Student: Because we use 'ing' verbs?

ME1: Fine how do you know it is present simple? (nobody replied, the teacher then explained) We use simple present when we...(she explained the differences between present simple and present continuous for a few minutes. When she finished explaining said) Ok, I have some copies... (she gave a bunch of worksheets to the one of the students, (see sample Appendix 10), and said), please pass them (when everyone had got a set of worksheets she asked) Could you read the question part?... Enrique, Please!

Enrique: Simple present..Does Bob like tea?..(see Appendix 8)(Enrique read the exercise and then other students taking turns continued to read the exercises from the table. Once they finished ME1 said).

ME1: Do you have any questions? (nobody replied. Good!, now we are going to answer the exercises (the students then answered the exercises from the worksheets, while the teacher monitored the activity. When they finished, ME1 again asked the students to read the answers. So the students taking turns read their answers aloud. When the activity was over ME1 asked, Do you have any questions? (as nobody responded, so she said) Ok, we are going to have some dictation. The teacher then moved on to the dictation activity. (ME1:O2)

The observational extract shows a lesson using worksheets and gives the reader a sense of what ME1's lessons were like. The extract shows a grammatical explanation with controlled practice drawing on materials generated and provided by the teacher. There is a clear gap between her actual practices and her claimed combination of direct method and skills development, suggesting that at least with the group observed in this study, ME1 decided not to follow her stated professed approach.

With this insight into ME1's practices, I explored with her the key features of her group. She explained:

my students are not in the right levels, and this has been a problem...I am struggling with two different kinds of levels and I am struggling with the dates that we are supposed to match with the mid-term exams and the final exams...I am struggling with the students that do not even speak, and they are going to become teachers...I am working with attitude problems and I am working with skills that are not into practice (ME1:I2).

Taking into account ME1's long experience at the faculty, it was interesting to hear that her teaching situation was problematic for her. ME1's actual challenge was to deal, in addition to her English language 2 students, with students who had failed the previous course. These retaking students

constituted almost half of her group. My experience working in that context suggests that what ME1 found unusual and challenging was to cope with two distinct kinds of learners. In cases where there are several of these students, they are normally grouped into a special class.

Also relevant was the issue she raised about the 'dates'. This referred to pressure of time she was under to accomplish the course aims, which was a recurrent issue among all the LETs. In general, most teachers felt that they had insufficient time to accomplish not only the aims of their courses, but also a number of academic and administrative tasks. Next, I discussed with ME1 her opinion on the role of materials in her practices.

7.1.2 Materials in ME1's lessons

She described the role of materials as follows:

...they (materials) have worked for me...with students that are sometimes behind or who don't understand quite well...of course the materials are so important to the students, the size, the colour, clearly visualized etc. this makes the teaching and learning process easier...materials help me a lot, I would say 90 per cent of the class because students' styles are more like observing, listening and very teacher dependent so I try to use different activities with different materials but I most focusing on their needs (ME1:11).

Interestingly, she found teaching materials helped her deal with the kind of problems she was facing with her learners. She specifically asserted that her materials worked well with students who struggled to understand the lessons, as in the case of some of the learners in her class who were retaking the course after having failed previously.

She also suggested that she relied heavily on materials; which was observable in her practice, where she spent most of the class time carrying out activities that drew on both the textbook and her worksheets.

I then asked her what the most important materials in her lessons were, and

she stated 'I would have to say worksheet exercises' (ME1:11). As commented on above, she used the term 'worksheets' to refer to whatever photocopied materials she used in her lessons, such as grammar exercises, readings, pictures and games.

It was interesting to hear that worksheets were the most used materials in a context where the textbook was the official material, as the official book might have been expected to be the most important material in her lessons. ME1's worksheets were not different in nature to the handouts used by LE3, as discussed in Chapter 6, who similarly provided a set of copies to his students every lesson. The difference is that in LE3's case, handouts completely replaced the textbook.

Also in relation to the use of materials, I explored the freedom that ME1 felt to draw on her own materials:

I am very happy with this freedom because I have worked in many universities that they don't want to see other books except their own textbook (ME1:11).

ME1's comment show that she felt as free as the LETs to make decisions about the use of materials, and suggests that there may not be adequate mechanisms in place at the institution to monitor teachers' use of materials.

7.1.3 Rationale for using worksheets

Since ME1 claimed she drew on worksheets as her main materials, I asked her how these materials were helpful in her lessons:

...as soon as I give the theory of a grammar point (from the textbook) I have to jump into the practice (with worksheets), to have a little bit more clarified or understood or...to have the grammar instructions a little more clear with the examples...most of the times I use a lot of diagrams, charts...something that they have to see...so when I give them practices, activities, exercises, material has to do with magazines, newspapers, and books, it has to be authentic (ME1:11).

ME1's strategy clearly indicated that she drew on the textbook to introduce the target topic of the lessons, and then drew on her own materials which she felt helped take her explanations further and which she believed provided clearer grammar examples and practice than the textbook. She summarized the role of worksheets by saying 'I'd say (worksheets) reinforce the objective that I am teaching that day'. Certainly the worksheets did strongly support her use of the textbook, while at times they completely replaced the textbook. For instance, in one of the four observed lessons (see extract above), ME1 used solely her own worksheets throughout the lesson.

Besides the practice and clearer exercises, ME1 felt that her worksheets were more attractive than the textbook:

...I think it is just because it is a different activity, I am not discarding the book but since we spend a little time in the book I think by just giving the worksheets is like they know that they are going to do something different...in the summer I mean 4 hours I have to activate them ...giving them different activities with different materials.
(ME1:13).

ME1 made clear that worksheets were central to her lessons and that, in fact, she used them often. What is not clear, however, is whether she had found any more benefit from her own worksheets than she did using a textbook set like 'Headway'. Since ME1 used the textbook briefly in her practices, I explored her particular views about this material.

7.1.4 ME1's perceptions about the official book

ME1's comments about the book were:

Whatsoever it is obligated that we have to use certain book... sometimes they (coordinators) don't even ask for opinions...'do you agree with this textbook?', how do you see it?, what do you need?' and many times they end up choosing a book for us, for the teachers, and then that makes it a problem...it makes it a problem because teachers are not happy with the book, so we have to look for other complementing materials (ME1:11).

ME1's comments indicate that she felt forced to follow a textbook she was not asked about, and certainly reflect some tension due to not being involved in the selection of textbooks. In this regard, she felt this issue also affected other teachers at the faculty.

Besides the textbooks that ME1 felt were imposed by the authorities, I asked her about other contextual issues that she felt influenced her use of materials.

7.1.5 Contextual factors and ME1's use of materials

On the subject of the contextual constraints on her use of materials, ME1 said:

I am not very happy with our resources that we have in the university so I have to search for more materials, because the time goes by and they (materials) are not updated!...we have a materials' room where we still have material from 1999, it's out of fashion, it's not updated...it would be interesting if someone could give us more information of how to use materials, or have a specific seminar for students and for teachers, I think that would be great to keep our material updated (ME1:11).

The resource centre certainly did not contribute much in support of the teachers' work, and in fact most of staff reported through the questionnaire - see Chapter 5 - that most of the existing materials at the centre were out of date.

To make sense of the drawbacks that ME1 perceived about the resource centre and how these affected her use of materials, I should note that, at the time of carrying out this study, most materials at the centre were neither classified nor catalogued, and thus when teachers needed materials, they had to find them themselves.

Closely related to the practical use of materials, ME1 also felt that the classroom facilities also affected her teaching:

...I hardly use any internet resources because another problem is that most of the times in our classrooms either they (computers) don't function or we don't have them ready...another teacher leaves it open or on and something happens to it and it is this chain that continues

no?...I would love to do new things with it but unfortunately like I said every classroom that I have something is not in function and that doesn't motivate me at all (ME1:11).

ME1 felt affected by the malfunctioning equipment in classrooms, which was understandable since most computers at the faculty, at the time of this study were undertaken, dated back to the mid 1990's. On the other hand, it was surprising that a senior teacher such as ME1, who had a private cubicle equipped with computer and printer, found it difficult to develop her own materials. Another factor that ME1 also felt affected her practices was her students' lack of materials. In her group, most of the students used a photocopied version of the textbook, a few others used the original book, and a very few had no materials at all. In this respect she said:

Well, it is a rule that they need to use textbooks...They must have the book!...and I usually make them have copies, and when they do not have a book I tell them to sit besides someone that has the book or the material...I don't wanna make this like a big detail but it does bother me of course! It does interrupt! (ME1: 12).

ME1 evidently understood that it was compulsory for learners and for herself to take their textbooks to the class, although it was unclear to what extent the students' lack of materials affected her own use of materials, particularly when she used the textbook very little. It is possible that her infrequent use of the book had led some students to feel that even a photocopied version of this material was unnecessary. Overall, the students' lack of materials and the unreliable internet facilities were contextual factors that ME1 claimed limited her use of materials, but, which, in practice, did not really seem to affect her lessons.

7.1.6 Conclusion

To conclude this section, I outline relevant outcomes from ME1's use of materials that in the following chapter I will discuss further.

The most relevant theme in ME1's practices was her use of worksheets along with the textbook. Similar to all the LETs, ME1 exercised her sense of freedom to incorporate supporting materials into her practices. This indicates that teachers found the conditions in the department enabled them to make autonomous decisions about their materials.

From ME1's comments about her use of worksheets, it is possible to identify key features of her work that influenced her instructional decisions.

Worksheets, consisting of photocopied exercises, were the most important materials in her lessons. The main benefits she identified in the use of worksheets were that they provided further grammar explanation and practice exercises, and that they were distinct from the textbooks. Textbooks, on the other hand, were used to introduce the lesson topic only. Other issues not directly related to the use of worksheets, but which were raised by ME1 and could have influenced her decisions include the following: that some learners were not in the right place, creating a mixed ability group; that the resource centre provided obsolete materials; and that ICT equipment in classrooms was often broken down. ME1's case provided insight into METs' use of materials, and into issues that will later be examined in comparison with the LETs, and discussed further in the following chapters.

7.2 More Experienced Teacher Two (ME2)

With 17 years' experience teaching English at university level, ME2 was the youngest of the more experienced teachers. She used student-led presentations as the main feature of her lessons. A distinctive feature of ME2's group was that all the students were retaking English language 3. The main features of her course are shown in Table 7.2

Table 7.2 The main features of ME2's course

Course Level	English language 3
Course Length	Eight weeks
Materials prescribed by school	New Headway Intermediate
Number of Students	7
Materials used in class	Textbook set used by the teacher, and a range of materials used by students
Special features	Student-led presentations
Course tasks	Five presentations and one project

7.2.1 ME2's teaching approach

In describing her teaching approach, ME2 explained that 'I have tried to use an eclectic method with them, sometimes I have to observe them, then focus and try to use something in specific according to their needs' (ME2:11). To make sense of how this approach worked in practice, I present an extract of my field notes taken during one of her lessons that made use of the textbook. The aim of the lesson was to teach the *future tense*.

ME2 arrived about 30 minutes late as usual along with other two students, while other three students were waiting for her in the classroom. She entered into the room holding a cup of coffee. She sat on her chair and had a brief chat with the students, in Spanish. After few minutes she asked them to set their chairs around her desk. The students did as she asked. Surrounded by the students, ME2 began the lesson. She opened her textbook and asked the students to open theirs, then she asked:

ME2: Do you remember what we talked about yesterday? (nobody responded, students looked at each other, then she said).
Open your books on page...it is about the future (Students opened books).

Student 1: Que pagina dijo maestra? (What page did you say teacher? a student asked. The teacher was about to introduce the lesson topic when a late student (girl) dropped into the classroom holding a baby in her arms. ME2 stopped the lesson while everyone greeted the arriving student. Then, one of the students asked to hold the baby, so the baby was passed to her and soon the baby was between the students and everyone including the teacher, were cuddling the baby. The conversation was all in Spanish. Everyone was asking about the baby. This interruption lasted over 10 minutes. ME2 then said (trying to grab her students' attention).

ME2: Ok!! answer these exercises! (she showed her book to the students and asked them to complete some exercises. In the meantime two other students continued to talk about the baby in Spanish. Other two students then began to talk about thefts in the school area in Spanish too. Everyone's attention was caught by the topic about thefts, so the students stopped doing the exercises. Soon everyone's attention, including ME2's was on the topic of thefts and the conversation turned into that topic and it went on for over ten minutes. The teacher in the meantime was marking her register, and taking some notes and occasionally looked at the students but said nothing. After few minutes of hearing the students and trying to get them back into the lesson asked). What will you be doing in ten years? (nobody responded) What will you be doing in ten years!? (said aloud).

Student 2: Voy a tener mi propio negocio ('I will have my own business', a student responded).

Student 3: Que vas a vender? (What will you sell?) (suddenly other student asked)

Student 4: Maestra voy a presentar mi tema? (Teacher, will I have my presentation? One of the girls suddenly asked)

ME2: (noticing the student was ready to have her presentation, she said) Ok, complete the exercises at home and we will check them tomorrow. Now we will have a presentation. Socorro are you ready? Socorro, who has a chart ready for her presentation replied

Socorro: Yes (The lesson then moved on to the student's presentation)
(ME2:O2)

The extract above gives an illustration of ME2's lessons. It shows a review of a previously taught topic, using the textbook. Even though the disruptive situations observed during the lesson were not identically replicated in other lessons, they are representative of the environment and atmosphere observed during ME2's lessons and therefore permitted by her teaching practices. Also distinctive was the casual and familiar interaction with the students, sitting around her desk, which gave the sense that the lessons were friendly conversations rather than language lessons. Another feature was the use of the teacher's material, which was totally textbook-centred, with even basis materials, such as the board, unused during her lessons.

In describing her teaching approach ME2 explained: 'I have tried to use an eclectic method with them (students), sometimes I have to observe them, then focus and try to use something in specific according to their needs' (ME2:11).

She then talked about the rationale for this eclectic approach saying:

I think that it has been developed over the years. Sometimes I plan something but it didn't work so I have to modify a lot sometimes...in some cases the lesson that I planned for the class during the day has to be improved or changed because of the kinds of students I have... sometimes they are very passive and you have to modify your strategies, that's when I think it goes to eclectic, I have to get materials from other parts to create something that can help me to develop in a better way the lesson (ME2:11).

Despite her opinion, ME2 did not draw on her professed approach, instead following a combination of student-led presentations and teacher-led lessons where the book was the main material. The discrepancy between the teacher's claims and her actual practices was a common feature of the work of most teachers in this study. This is a point I will return to discuss later.

ME2 also explained how she formulated her teaching approach:

...at the beginning of the course they (students) told me they had a concern about speaking in front of the class, and I set two specific activities (presentations)...in the first one they have to decide the topic and materials and everything. The other ones are the same kind of presentations, are related to readings or some of the reading topics in the units (textbook) and they, I think they accepted and they liked the idea (ME2:12).

Even though ME2 was aware that the aims of the course were set by the institution, she decided to negotiate part of the course goals with her students. It is interesting that she had done so, knowing that the students were retaking the course and were in critical need of language learning support. Thus after hearing her students' concerns she set the following as the aim of the class:

I think the main point is to achieve the course objective which is, not being so nervous in front of the class, that is the most important (ME2:12).

ME2's decision to follow an approach centred on the learners had a significant impact on her teaching. In respect to her teaching, I asked her opinion about the relevance of instructional materials in her lessons.

7.2.2 ME2's views about materials

ME2's views on materials were that:

They are necessary, obviously you as teacher have the knowledge but sometimes you need tools to develop your knowledge in a better way, so for me the materials are important, it could be a book, or a dictionary or sometimes pictures or paintings that can create a good environment of the knowledge we are talking about...I try to use most of the times real ones, real materials, realia or magazines (ME2:11).

Despite suggesting that she drew on a range of materials, in the observed lessons ME2 used only the textbook and the students' presentations. In relation to her claimed selection of materials, I asked about the freedom she felt to use materials and she noted: 'I think I have complete freedom, the textbook is already set out by the school, but other materials, I can change them whenever I want' (ME2:11).

We thus have a situation where the teacher felt she had freedom to use a range of materials, although in practice she was observed using the set text only. One reason that very likely led to her relying so heavily on the textbook was the central assessment, which, as explained in Chapter 2, was textbook-based (ie the examinations by which English courses were assessed were based heavily on topics and exercises appearing in the set textbook). This could well have been the motivation behind the importance given to covering the text in class.

Observing that the textbook was the main material in ME2's summer course, I asked her about her particular views relating to this material.

7.2.3 Textbooks in ME2's lessons

ME2 described the role of the textbook in her lessons by saying:

Well, as it is like obligatory, I have to use this, it is like the rule in the school, and there is no a specific programme. The book is like the programme (ME2:12).

ME2 was not the first teacher to talk about the compulsory use of the textbook, nor was she the first who acknowledged that the textbook was the programme (syllabus) - both LE1 and ME1 had also raised these issues. What was surprising, though, is that such an experienced teacher still believed that the faculty did not have an official programme, when the syllabuses of all the courses are integrated as one document which is available to all the teachers at the LEMO. My experience in this regard suggests that most teachers do not use the syllabus as a guideline for their lessons, using the textbook as the syllabus instead.

Talking about the utility of the official book in her lessons ME2 explained:

I think it is very important for me...I try to fit the objectives from the programme with the contents from the textbook, and it works very well for me...in specific this book is not designed to fit into our context... in some parts I think like 60 or 70 percent match with the syllabus, in some others obviously I have to adapt some other materials...to make or to reach the point of the lesson, but definitely it is important (ME2:11).

It is worth noting that ME2 had claimed the book's objectives did not match the programme, when she had earlier affirmed that the faculty did not have an official programme. These kinds of discrepancies will be discussed further in the discussion chapter.

In explaining how she drew on other materials to complement the official book, ME2 commented that:

What sometimes I do when I like any topic that is in the book, I develop the exercise as it is presented but also if I can get some other

supporting materials. I take the book's material out and I develop it in a different way, for instance when we talked about Picasso and Hemingway, I took them away and used the students' favourite painters and writers (ME2:11).

Of the techniques that ME2 claimed to use to enhance her teaching of the lessons from the book and the range of materials that she stated she used in her practices, none, except the very simple use of the textbook I have described, were used during the observed practices.

Her actual use of the textbook was very easy and practical. She moved directly to the specific grammar sections, and, in a few minutes, covered the aim of the lesson. In the observed lessons, she neither used the audio tapes to practice listening, nor worked on other sections from the book, instead focusing solely on grammar. This strategy allowed her students have plenty of time for their presentations.

7.2.4 Contextual factors and ME2's use of materials

Given the influence of contextual factors on other teachers in this study, I asked ME2 about any contextual factors that she felt influenced her use of materials. She identified two - 'I think the students' background and the class time' (ME2:13). On the first point, she explained:

The problem with the students was not their level, but their personal problems; through these weeks they have faced problems that are affecting the class, for example today only two of them arrived because the others had to work. One of them is pregnant, there are two other girls who have babies, one recently had a baby and the only boy is having problems with his father, and this Wednesday his car was stolen. I have never had a group like this. In this case all the students are having a lot of issues, it was like a psychological problem for me (ME2:13).

The students' background, which was an issue only mentioned by ME2, was a matter of serious concern to her. She felt that her students' personal problems,

each of which she was aware, hindered her teaching. She illustrated how her students' issues affected the course of her lessons.

I have tried at the beginning to speak in English but they switch into Spanish...I think this is one of the points that I don't like, because if you stop you never continue with the class, not with them. If you let them talk about their problems they continue on (speaking in Spanish), it is strange (ME2:I3).

ME2's actual challenge was to keep the students engaged in the lesson. She suggested that, once the lessons were disrupted, it was difficult to bring the students back to the lesson. We can therefore assume that a number of course aims were unaccomplished (see extract ME2:O2 above). Indeed in most of the observed lessons, I noticed that the students took any opportunity to interrupt proceedings to talk about their personal concerns. This behaviour, allied to the time consumed by tasks such as the class presentations, as noted above, became obstacles to the accomplishment of her course objectives, a situation which made her feel disappointed.

ME2 also felt that the schedule allocated to her course was a disadvantage: 'It was really, really hard for me, entering at seven in the morning, I couldn't arrive on time, I tried but I couldn't' (ME2:I3). Certainly, ME2 did not begin any of the observed lessons on time, beginning on average 30 minutes late. Furthermore, some of her students arrived later than her. Her opinion, combined with my observations, thus suggest that she struggled with tardiness throughout the whole course.

Since the lack of time available to accomplish ME2's goals was a major concern to her, it is understandable, that tardiness, along with the students' frequent disruptions, the students presentations and the length of the summer term, were all, taken together, factors that ME2 felt hindered her ability to teach the complete contents from the set textbook.

7.2.5 Conclusion

I conclude this section by highlighting key findings from my exploration of ME2's use of materials.

The most important theme in ME2's practices was the use of the textbook within the context of a student-led approach. Similar to other teachers, she described having complete freedom to use materials, and evidently to also make decisions about her teaching. From her comments about the use of the textbook, a number of issues were highlighted. She felt that the textbook was the most relevant material in her teaching, the book was actually the only material used in her lessons, although she felt that she lacked sufficient time to address the textbook's objectives. Other personal perceptions that may have influenced her use of the textbook include: she felt the book was inappropriate because it only partially matched the aims of her course; the schedule allocated to her course was a drawback (i.e. starting at 7 am was too early); the students' frequent disruption of her lessons affected her teaching and she felt unable to keep the students on task. Overall, the situation described by ME2 and observed in her classroom was a case in which the teacher's use of the textbook was largely shaped by her students' presentations and their frequent disruptions. Her use of the book was, as she described, limited in terms of time, although it was also limited in terms of methodological resources (i.e. absence of activities and skill practice). I also need to note the discrepancies between her claims and actual practices in relation to materials, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

7.3 More Experienced Teacher Three (ME3)

With 23 years' experience teaching at University, ME3 was the second most

experienced teacher in this study. The most distinctive feature of her teaching was her adherence to the official book and the institutional guidelines. The main features of her course are shown in Table 7.3

Table 7.3 The main features of ME3's course

Course Level	English language 8
Course Length	Eight weeks
Materials prescribed by the school	Streamline Advanced
Number of Students	18
Materials used in class	Set textbook set mainly, as well as audio tapes and worksheets
Special features	Advanced learners
Course tasks	Complete students' book and textbook exercises

7.3.1 ME3's teaching approach

To make sense of ME3's use of materials, I first asked her about her approach to teaching English: 'My teaching approach has to do with my teaching philosophy, I combine my personal experience with some other authors. I guess my approach is to develop formal and informal learning with the students' (ME3:11). Then she added

My approach is that I try to talk to them and I emphasise the instructions a little bit to make them as simple as possible. So once they know what they have to do, then I feel they can work on their own...I do not have to tell them look up in your dictionary, they do it themselves. I have the idea that I should let them alone (ME3:12).

Although there are hints in her description that suggest she aimed to encourage her students' autonomy, ME3's comments are somewhat vague, suggesting she was not certain about the approach she was following in her course. It is important to note here that as opposed to most teachers in this study, ME3 had worked with the same course (language 8) for several years. This fact very likely had helped her develop an approach that, although not clearly stated, was clearly observable in her lessons, and which I will bring

back into discussion later. In contrast, other teachers had to vary their approaches because they taught a range of different courses.

Similar to LE2 and ME2, ME3 also drew on the official textbook as her main material. To make sense of her teaching approach, I present an extract of my field notes taken during one of her lessons. The lesson focused on 'building an argument'.

As usual ME3 began the lesson on time. She checked her register very briefly and went straight into the lesson. She opened her textbook

ME3: Exercise 4, page 145 (as she showed the book to the class). In exercise 4 we have some quotations on the bottom. You are going to try to paraphrase them in your own words ok? Susana, can you read the first quotation?

Susana: 'The sovereign invigorator of the body is exercise, and of all the exercise walking is best'

ME3: Ok, the next one please (pointing another student)

Student: 'Health is a blessing that money cannot buy'

ME3: Ok paraphrase the quotations in your own words. What would be the main idea of those quotations? Tell me about any of them what is the real implication on the quotes? (some students expressed their viewpoints about the quotes for a few minutes. Later ME3 said) Ok, now I want you to support your opinions. You are going to pretend you are student representatives of the LEMO (BA ELT). Make a presentation at a meeting to convince parents and students of the merits of higher education at LEMO. Ok, you can work in pairs (students worked in pairs for over five minutes, writing on their notebooks, while ME3 monitored the activity from her desk. Later she said). Ok, I think you all have finished. (Pointing out a student she asked) can you read your presentation?

Student: Language learning is a very important issue. The students in this programme (BA ELT) will have a professional development. The students will be in contact with few native speakers. The school offers adequate...(all the students read their presentations, then ME3 said)

ME3: Very good, open your books on page 134 please look at exercise two (everyone opened their books) Ok we have some words on the top. So you have some gaps where you will put those words please work in pairs (students then worked in pairs completing the exercise. Later ME3 said) Marisol can you start reading exercise two?

Marisol: Generally speaking, the working environment is a pleasant and safe one... (The students taking turns read their responses, until they finished the exercise).

(ME3:02)

To understand the nature of ME3's activities, we need to remember that the students she was working with were rather fluent at using the target language. The extract above shows a textbook-centred lesson with controlled practice. Most of the lesson focused on speaking skills, although writing was also practiced in two of the activities. A key feature in her lessons was her adherence to the textbook and her observance of the faculty's guidelines (i.e. she was very punctual and did not allow the use of photocopied textbooks). This surely helped her avoid having problems of lack of time that was an issue emerging among all the teachers studied qualitatively. To know more about ME3's use of materials, I asked about her views on instructional materials.

7.3.2 Instructional materials

ME3's views were:

I think instructional materials are good because they organize the content and therefore I'm organized...over the years materials have helped me a lot, a lot...I think they have a lot to do with how I teach, It could be something that I read in a newspaper, I might try to develop it in class...yeah they are very important (ME3:11).

She went on to say: 'I think through the materials you develop skills and also the language' (ME3:12). In contrast to most teachers in this study, ME3 had identified a number of ways in which materials were of benefit and supported her teaching. Even though she suggested that she used various materials, in the observed lessons she only used the official textbook. In this respect I asked her about the extent to which she felt free to incorporate complementary materials into her lessons, in response to which she noted: 'well I am restricted because of the textbook' (ME3:11).

Given ME3's seniority at the faculty, it was interesting to hear that she felt restricted by the textbook, especially since, as I discussed in relation the case studies of ME1 and ME2, the faculty did not appear to monitor the language teachers' lessons, or the materials they used, as long as they achieve the course goals. Thus, based on her views about the textbook, I conclude that the restriction to which she referred did not refer to an institutional imposition, but was rather a feeling of professionalism and personal commitment towards the materials prescribed by the institution.

Given the significant role of the textbook in ME3's lessons, I explored more specifically her opinion about this material.

7.3.3 Textbooks in ME3's lessons

ME3 said the following about the textbook:

Well, I feel that I should, if the syllabus says, I should use the textbook, I'll have the students learning the content of the textbook, or well I will have them trying to learn the content...I feel responsible that they should cover this material...I really have no choice in using the textbook if I want the students to pass the course (ME3:12).

With a vast experience at the faculty, ME3 clearly understood that the use of the textbook was compulsory, although her words suggest she followed the book because its content formed the basis of the exam. Additionally, she believed that the textbook contributed towards the students' learning and felt it was a key resource for her learners to pass the course. On this point, I want to draw attention to the fact that, although other teachers had also acknowledged the textbook was a key resource in their lessons, ME3 was the teacher who more specifically identified the advantages and contributions of this material to her students' learning and language skills.

Despite the importance of the textbooks in ME3's lessons, she had identified a drawback in the particular textbook she was using in the summer term:

I think, I will tell you the truth, I think the book is for a private institution, I mean it is like for business students who are going to work in a company, maybe Volkswagen, I don't know...I think the book we use is of proficiency...I think the book is chosen without taking into account the previous steps to get to that level and that's one thing that I think is inappropriate (ME3:12).

Even though ME3 was committed to using the official book, her opinion suggests she disagreed with its use because she felt it was not appropriate for her learners. This issue about the inappropriateness of the textbook was raised by most teachers in this study. The fact that ME3 had identified some particular drawbacks in the official book and suggested that the authorities were not careful in their choosing of the textbooks, may indicate that she felt unhappy using the official material. In fact, most teachers felt displeased at not being involved in the selection of textbooks. At a staff level, more than half of the teachers reported through the questionnaire that they were not involved in the process of choosing textbooks.

7.3.4 Contextual factors and ME3's use of materials

Closely related to ME3's views about the unsuitability of the textbook, she had a concern about a mismatch she had identified between the institutional assessment and the content she was teaching in her lessons. In this regard, she noted, 'definitely the tests do not reflect the syllabus' (ME3:13). In explaining further the gap between the content of the officially prescribed textbook and the institutional tests she explained:

I think the problem here is the evaluation and the exams. I think the problem is that if we have in the book let's say speaking, reading and writing, and this is what they practice, it would help a lot not to have the pressure of 50 items of grammar, you know?...evaluation that follows European framework, sometimes is very different from what we teach in the classrooms (ME3:13).

To make sense of the problem that ME3 describes, it is important to note that the assessment of the language courses at the faculty has traditionally had a

grammar focus; 50 items of grammar are included in most tests, regardless of the aims of the language course itself. In ME3's particular case, where a business-oriented textbook was being used, she found that the grammar items were inappropriate. Thus, it seems that the fact of having grammar-focused tests is precisely what she found distressing.

My experience teaching in this context indicates that even though various textbook series – not all grammar focused – have been adopted over the years, the tendency of generating grammar focused tests by the assessment department continues to be a driving force in test design. The fact that the BA ELT students are being trained to be teachers has led some LEMO teachers to feel that courses should focus on grammar. Conversely, other teachers believe courses should focus on the students' proficiency. This tension is discussed in Chapter 2.

ME3 was indeed the only participant who openly talked about the institutional assessment. This is not surprising, since grammar focused tests were convenient for most language teachers (i.e. some only used the grammar sections of the textbook). This may perhaps explain why most teachers, including those in this study, followed grammar focused approaches.

ME3 also found that the condition of the classroom equipment also hindered her efforts to use other materials. In this respect she said:

I think what is missing here is that we have the newest tv screens, for example but...my computer doesn't work! and they (staff) took away the whole computer, so I don't have any computer now, the equipment needs maintenance. My comment here is that teachers are not careful with the materials in the classrooms, I mean with the technology (ME3:11).

To make sense of ME3's comments, I need to note that at the time of undertaking this study, all the classrooms at the faculty were being equipped

with new television screens, although most of the computers were in general, outdated. In regard , she add 'nobody tells us, or there are not even instructions, for example I would like may be in the classrooms they say how to use a computer...even how to turn it on' (ME3:l1).

The issue of faulty equipment was a theme that emerged among the more experienced teachers only. In ME3's case, it was truly a limitation, since her classroom did not have a working computer throughout the summer term. Beyond ME3's discontent over not having a computer in her classroom, it is surprising that she felt lacking in technological training, especially when training courses were offered on a regular basis at the faculty.

7.3.5 Conclusion

I will conclude this section by pointing out the key findings from my investigation of ME3's use of materials that will be discussed further in Chapter 8. The central theme in ME3's case is the use of the textbook. In contrast to all her colleagues examined in this study, ME3 felt she did not have the freedom to incorporate complementary materials into her lessons. This suggests that even though the institutional mechanisms to supervise the teachers' work were not strict, ME3 chose to follow most institutional guidelines. Her opinions about the use of the textbook revealed various factors about her instructional decisions: she valued the textbook as an instructional tool; she chose to follow the book because it was prescribed by the syllabus; and, she believed strongly that the book helped her students pass the course, learn language and develop skills. Conversely, she had some personal reservations about the textbook. She felt it was not appropriate for both her course and her students, and suggested that the book had not been carefully selected. Other drawbacks

that she perceived in the teaching context included the idea that the grammar focused tests were aligned with neither the aims of her course nor the textbook's contents.

7.3.6 Main findings across MET's

I will conclude this chapter by providing a summary of key issues identified in ME1, ME2 and ME3's practices. I comment on some issues individually and collectively.

The dominant theme in the three METs is clearly the use of textbooks. Despite the differences in their claimed approaches and materials, the textbook was always a relevant tool in their teaching practices. From their opinions we identify some key issues that shaped their use of the textbooks: Despite ME1 and ME2 indicating that they felt free to use different materials in their practices, they chose to use the textbook (only ME1 incorporated worksheets as important class material); they felt the use of the book was compulsory; and they relied on the book because they felt it would help their students pass the centrally designed tests.

The METs felt that some features of the textbook were inappropriate for their learners, such as the fact the textbooks' contents were not aligned with the aims of the BA ELT, and that the institutional tests did not match the contents of the textbooks.

Other secondary views that the METs held about teaching materials included the following: the resource centre held obsolete materials; ICT equipment and facilities were inadequate or not working; the time allocated to the summer course was too short; conversely 4 hour lessons were too long; the students' background influenced teaching; and, in all three cases, the teachers' opinions

suggested possible resistance to the fact that they were not involved in the selection of the official materials. Generally, METs' cases provided insight into a number of factors that influenced their instructional decisions.

All the findings from LETs and METs will be discussed further in the following two chapters.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the ways in which the findings address the goals of this investigation. It is also hoped that in the light of the literature and other related studies, the discussion will help make sense of the rationales underlying teachers' use of materials.

The chapter first discusses how the quantitative findings informed the qualitative stage (a broader discussion of quantitative findings is provided in Chapter 5). The discussion then focuses on the qualitative findings and similarly makes clear how these address the research questions. The qualitative findings, which represent the core contributions of this study, are examined in the light of six themes as follows: 1) gaps between teachers' stated beliefs and actual practices; 2) teachers' use of textbooks; 3) use of complementary and alternative materials; 4) teachers' conceptions of freedom (to choose materials); 5) contextual factors and teachers' use of materials, and 6) distinctive features of the METs' and LETs' use of materials. I conclude this chapter by reflecting upon the significance of this research to the context under study and to other similar contexts elsewhere.

8.1 Review of the aims of the study

As stated early in this study, much has been written about the design and use of instructional materials, but very few studies have explored how language teachers use those materials in their teaching settings. In response to this gap in the literature, this study examined how teachers use instructional materials on a BA ELT in Mexico. Drawing on quantitative data, the study first explored the staff's views about their use of materials. Then, drawing on qualitative

data, the study examined the practices of a sub-set of six teachers, three more experienced (METs) and three less experienced teachers (LETs), and identified what factors – cognitive and contextual – influenced their instructional decisions.

8.1.1 Research questions

The research questions for this study were:

Main question: What are the cognitive and contextual factors that underlie the teachers' use of instructional materials (mainly, but not exclusively the textbook) on a BA ELT at a Mexican university?

Specific questions:

- 1.- How does methodology of the textbook influence the teachers' practices?
- 2.- What are the cognitions underlying the teachers' use / lack of use of textbooks?
- 3.- What are the rationales behind teachers' use of materials other than textbooks?
- 4.- How do contextual factors influence the teachers' use of ELT materials?
- 5.- With reference to the above questions, are there any variations in the practices and cognitions between more and less experienced teachers?

The discussion below sheds light on how both the quantitative and qualitative findings addressed these questions.

8.2 Quantitative findings

Quantitative findings helped understand teachers' use of materials at three points throughout the study: First, during the collection of qualitative data: At this initial point, findings reported generally about teachers' use of materials across the staff, these opinions included the views of the teachers examined

qualitatively. Later in the study, the questionnaire findings informed the design of the interviews. These findings helped focus the interviews on key issues related to the teachers' actual use of materials.

Finally, quantitative findings helped make sense of qualitative data. This means that whilst qualitative data were analyzed, quantitative findings were brought up to help make sense of teachers' use of materials. For example when LE1 talked about the most relevant materials in his lessons, he affirmed were internet-based. When his opinion was contrasted with the staff, we knew he was the only teacher across the institution who acknowledged those materials as the most relevant in his practices.

Further information about quantitative findings is provided in Chapter 5 where these findings are discussed and are summed up in Chapter 9.

8.3 Qualitative findings

Qualitative findings were obtained by examining the practices of a sub-set of six language teachers and shed light on a range of factors – cognitive and contextual – that shaped teachers' decision making, and are the main focus of this chapter and this study.

As stated above the qualitative findings are examined with regard to six themes which emerged throughout the study. The themes and main qualitative findings of the study are summarized in Table 8.1 (Appendix 11). The table illustrates the qualitative findings (themes) in relation to the six participants. To facilitate the discussion, the table has been broken down into the different themes and each will now be discussed in turn and in relation to the research questions outlined early in this study. It is worth noting the research questions will not be answered in the order they were addressed. This means that

answers will emerge as we go through the discussion of the various themes listed above. It is also critical to say that the themes under discussion are not related to one specific research question, but in some cases, they address more than one research question.

8.3.1 Exploring gaps between teachers' beliefs and practices

This initial theme examines the gaps between teachers' beliefs, and the teaching approaches and materials that teachers actually used in their practices. This section thus helps understand teachers' rationales for using materials other than textbooks examined by research question three. In exploring teachers' use of materials and their approaches to teaching, a number of gaps or discrepancies between the teachers' stated beliefs and their actual practices were identified. Table 8.2 illustrates these gaps.

Table 8.2 Gaps between teachers' words and practices

Participants	Teachers who affirmed following a particular teaching approach	Teachers who actually followed a particular teaching approach	Teachers who said they drew on specific materials in their lessons	Teachers who actually used the materials they affirmed using in their lessons
LE1	✓	x	✓	✓
LE2	✓	x	✓	x
LE3	x	x	✓	x
ME1	✓	x	✓	x
ME2	✓	✓	✓	x
ME3	✓	✓	x	✓

As the table shows, the gaps found out through the interviews, related specifically to the teachers' teaching approaches and the materials they used in their language lessons. The first column shows the six participants, while the second and fourth columns show the approaches and materials professed by

LETs and METs. Columns three and five (shadowed) show the actual approaches and materials seen in the observed classes.

Under the assumption that what teachers verbalized were their actual beliefs, this section explores the possible reasons for the discrepancies between what they said and what they did in practice.

Research in the field of language education has often explored the relationships between teachers' beliefs and their behaviour (i.e. Pajares, 2003; Farrell, 2005; Borg, 2006). Over the last two decades, numerous studies have examined the differences between teachers' stated beliefs and their actual practices (Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Farrell and Lim, 2005; Phipps and Borg, 2007 and Phipps and Borg, 2009). Such differences have been referred to in the literature using a number of terms, such as incongruence, mismatch, inconsistency and discrepancy (Phipps and Borg, 2009; Basturkmen, 2012). Research exploring the differences between what teachers say and do has identified a number of variables that may cause such discrepancies. Phipps and Borg (2009:381) note that 'contextual factors such as a prescribed curriculum, and high stakes examinations, mediate the extent to which teachers can act in accordance with their beliefs'. Other studies (Farrell and Lim, 2005, Karavas-Doukas, 1996) have similarly shown that contextual factors such as time constraints and the institutional syllabus may hinder the extent to which teachers are able to act in agreement with their beliefs. Richardson et al. (1991:579), on the other hand, suggest that 'the lack of relationship between beliefs and practices may indicate that teachers are going through a change process', as teachers gain practice and experience with each passing year in their careers. Another possible reason for the

identified discrepancies, based on my perceptions formed during the interview stage of this study, is that teachers may have answered the questions mechanically as the interviews were going along and as new questions were coming up.

Phipps and Borg (2009:381) suggest that the differences between teachers' beliefs and their practices should be seen in a 'positive light, since understanding the relationships between teachers' beliefs and their practices is essential to understand and improve teachers' work'. In this study, for example, discrepancies can be seen as evidence that teachers are able to make decisions on the spot, in other words they can behave in response to their teaching contexts rather than in-line with their well- established beliefs, which, in my opinion, is a positive finding. Overall, discrepancies between what teachers say and do may be caused by factors associated both with the teachers' beliefs and their teaching contexts.

A study that shows how teachers' beliefs are not always reflected in their practices was conducted by Urmston and Pennington (2008). It explored the tensions in the practices of a group of novice language teachers in Hong Kong over a two year period after their graduation. Using quantitative data, the study reported that as teachers felt that the tests and assessments of the students in their institution were not aligned with the prescribed approach, most of them decided to follow their own teaching approaches.

Another study conducted by Karavas-Doukas (1996) explored the discrepancies between the institutional communicative approach and the approach actually used by a group of 14 Greek language teachers. Drawing on a Likert-type attitude scale and class observations, the study showed that the

introduction of a new approach was not in-line with the well-established theories and beliefs of the language teachers, which in turn caused tension between their professed approaches and the approaches they actually used in their lessons (Karavas-Doukas, 1996).

In the particular cases examined here, teachers identified a number of contextual factors that they felt influenced their instructional decisions. For instance, LE1, who acknowledged that textbooks were a core material in his lessons, felt that the official textbook in the observed course was not useful because it contained a high volume of content for a six week course. He, therefore, replaced it with a self-developed collection of materials. Similarly, ME1 suggested that she usually followed a textbook-based communicative approach, but in her actual practices, she followed a grammar-based approach drawing on worksheets, arguing her students were lower than the expected level. LE2 was another teacher who asserted that she adhered to the textbook prescribed by the authorities, but in practice drew on a student-led approach based on students' presentations because she believed that developing the students' teaching skills was the main goal of her language course.

The discussion so far has helped understand the teachers' rationales for drawing on instructional materials. In answering research question three, findings showed that even though there were a number of reasons for the tensions between teachers' professed approaches and materials, there were contextual factors beyond teachers' control (i.e. teachers' selection of textbooks; students' background) which strongly shaped their decisions. Later in this chapter, I will return to discuss further the influence of contextual factors over teachers' practices.

8.4 Teachers' use of textbooks

This section and the following subsections discuss findings about teachers' use and lack of use of textbooks. The discussion about teachers' use of textbooks fully addresses research question two which explores teachers' rationales for using textbooks and also sheds light on how the textbooks' methodology influences teachers' work, examined by question one. So far this study has provided evidence of the relevance of textbooks to the research context, and more particularly to the language courses under investigation. In this section, I examine the teachers' rationales in relation to the use of the official textbook in the language lessons. Table 8.3 below illustrates the use of textbooks in contrast with other materials across the METs and LETs lessons. The shaded area illustrates teachers' stated beliefs about the utility of textbooks as well as other, not explicitly expressed reasons, which emerged over the course of the interviews. The table shows that four teachers (LE2, ME1, ME2 and ME3) drew on the official textbook, whilst two other (LE1 and (LE3) decided to replace the textbooks with their own materials.

It is worth noting that not all the teachers who articulated positive comments about the utility of textbooks in their practices ended up using them in their lessons, as in the case of LE1, who highlighted a number of the benefits of textbook use, but eventually drew on what he called an anthology.

Conversely, not all teachers who identified drawbacks in the official textbook replaced it with other materials, as in the cases of ME1 and ME3. This clearly indicates that regardless the utility teachers found in the official textbook, there were other contextual forces, which are discussed further in the following sections that strongly shaped teachers' instructional decisions.

Table 8.3 Teachers' use of textbooks

Participants	Main materials used in lessons			Main reasons for using textbooks				
				Teachers' stated reasons			Teachers' non- explicit reasons	
	Anthology	Handouts	Set Textbook	It is compulsory at the faculty	It ensures learning and students' pass	It is a course guideline	Central assessment is textbook -based	Teachers believe the textbook is the syllabus
LE1	✓							
LE2			✓	✓		✓		✓
LE3		✓						
ME1			✓	✓	✓		✓	
ME2			✓	✓				✓
ME3			✓	✓			✓	

8.4.1 Teachers' rationales for using textbooks

A surprising finding observable in Table 8.3 above was the use of the official textbook by all the METs. It was surprising given the METs' long years of practice and their experience of working with a range of materials that they affirmed using in their teaching practices (i.e. the internet and magazines). In contrast, in two cases (LE1 and LE3) teachers exercised their sense of freedom to use alternative materials instead of the official textbook. Later, I will discuss these two cases separately.

In answering research question two, findings showed that teachers' main reasons for using the textbook were not related to the advantages or features of the textbook itself (i.e. grammar content, methodology, colourful illustrations, activities, skills practice). Instead, teachers noted other reasons for using textbooks which include: 1) the textbook was compulsory for students and teachers; 2) the official textbook would help students pass the course; and, 3)

the textbook was a course guideline . Additionally, other non explicit reasons for using a textbook were suggested during the interviews, and these include: 1) textbook content would help prepare learners to take the centrally designed tests (textbook-based tests); and, 2) the textbook was the course syllabus. Paradoxically, the only teacher (LE1) who acknowledged several valuable features of textbooks, did not draw on this material in his course.

Given METs' experience and awareness of a range of materials, I did not expect them to make such consistent use of the official materials. Rather, I expected them to draw on a range of materials and ICT resources in their practices. Their actual use of textbooks therefore indicated that, contrary to LETs' views, METs found the textbooks were beneficial for them and for their learners. It was observed that textbook were easy to handle, especially when some teachers had used the same textbooks for a number of years. Such experience in using textbooks and tests allowed METs to incorporate complementary materials without replacing the official textbook, as seen in ME1's practices. Overall their familiarity with textbooks and tests was a key feature of METs' practices

In the observed lessons, I noticed that METs did not go through every single activity or section in the textbooks, but they taught the topics or points of grammar that they felt their students were more likely to find in the tests. Their experience and knowledge of the textbooks allowed them to move through the books efficiently, teaching the topics that would help the students pass the course, despite the limitations of time, which was an issue raised by most LETs. METs' long years of practice had surely helped them identify key

advantages in the use of textbooks that lead them to use the textbooks as core materials in their lessons.

In regard to research question one, findings showed that the methodology suggested by the prescribed textbook did not influence teachers' practices significantly, but what actually shaped teachers' use of textbooks, explored by research question two, were factors other than the textbook itself (i.e. it was compulsory, it would help learners to pass the centrally designed test).

According to Richards (2001:1-2), the main advantages of using textbooks may include, for example: 1) they provide structure and a syllabus for a program; 2) they maintain quality; 3) they provide a variety of learning resources; and, 4) they are efficient. These perspectives evidently contrasted with the LETs' opinions about textbooks, which were not seen very relevant for the particular courses featured in this study.

A study carried out in the United States explored teachers' beliefs and practices relating to the role of textbook material in foreign language teaching and learning in beginner-level courses (Willis, 2008). The investigation involved 12 beginner-level language teachers, comprising six native and six non-native speakers of English. Using questionnaire and interview data, the study showed: 1) that textbooks are still a key component in university level FL classrooms; and, 2) almost all the participants thought the main contributions of textbooks were in terms of vocabulary, culture components and grammar structures. As for the utility that teachers found on the use of textbooks, the study identified three: 1) the presentation of new material, 2) guided practice activities and 3) the transformation of existing textbook activities into new ones.

In contrast to Willis' study in which teachers followed a range of approaches and made minor changes to the textbook, this study identified two teachers (LE1 and LE3) who opted for a major modification in their use of the prescribed materials. These teachers replaced the official textbooks with alternative materials. These two cases are discussed below.

8.4.2 Replacing textbooks

In the context of this study, where the official textbook has been the central resource in the language courses and has been acknowledged as the institutional syllabus and a key reference for assessment, two teachers (LE1 and LE3) replaced the official textbook with their own materials. In regard to research question two which examines teachers' cognitions underlying teachers' use and lack of use of textbooks, this section examines two cases in which teachers replaced the prescribed textbook with their own materials. In both cases, the teachers shared similar opinions about using textbooks and also expressed particular reasons to make their decisions. They both felt the length of the summer course and the high volume of content they found in the prescribed textbooks were major drawbacks. It is worth pointing out that while other teachers had the same perceptions about the book's content and the course length (i.e. MET 3), they used other approaches to address such drawbacks (i.e. ME1 used worksheets but continued to use the textbook as her main material).

Both LE1 and LE3 also talked about particular reasons for replacing the prescribed text with their own materials. For example, LE1 signalled in various stages of the research that he was unhappy about not being involved in the selection of the textbooks. In LE3's case, his decision to not use the official

textbook was shaped by the belief that he was free to draw on any materials as long as he accomplished the course prescribed by the official syllabus. Their decisions indicate that in contrast to other teachers, they found their alternative materials (anthology and handouts) were better options than the prescribed textbooks. Furthermore they felt that their materials allowed them to achieve the course goals within the six weeks of the summer course and, above all, allowed them to teach the content their students needed to pass the official tests.

With regard to teachers who do not use the textbooks prescribed by institutions, McDonough & Shaw (1993) maintain that materials prescribed by institutions can be coherent and well designed, but, given the variety of contexts and situations where they are used, they may still seem inappropriate to certain teachers. It is thus understandable that textbooks do not match the needs of every context and teacher, since they are designed for all teachers and not one in particular.

This study showed that the lack of use of textbooks, explored by research question two was mediated by a range of contextual factors and by the teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning. The analysis of LE1 and LE3's cases showed that: 1) they felt the official book will not allow them achieve the course aims on time; 2) they, also felt that such factors as the course length, and the text's volume influenced their lessons. What is worth noting in these cases, is LE1 and LE3's freedom to make decisions about their instructional materials. Such sense of freedom was very likely supported by their perception about the institutional mechanisms, charged with monitoring the use of materials to ensure that the official materials were used in line with the

institution's curriculum, that they knew were almost inexistent.

8.5 Alternative and complementary materials

Another key theme in this study was METs' and LETs' use of materials other than the textbook. Findings in this section enhanced the understanding of teachers' rationales for using materials other than the prescribed textbook examined specifically by research question three.

Table 8.4 Teachers' alternative and complementary materials

Participants	Materials used to replace the textbook		Materials used to complement the official textbook				Advantages found in using complementary materials			
	Anthology	Handouts					ICT materials	Grammar book	Dictionary	Worksheets
	Reasons for using alternative materials		ICT materials	Grammar book	Dictionary	Worksheets	Provided real English, listening and vocabulary	Provided further practice	Provided vocabulary and pronunciation	Clarified grammar / were different from textbook
	Time constraints & large volume of textbook content	Time constraints								
LE1	✓		✓				✓			
LE2			✓	✓				✓		
LE3		✓			✓				✓	
ME1						✓				
ME2										
ME3										

These other materials were basically used for either: 1) complement the textbook (e.g. ME1) or 2) replace the textbook (e.g. LE1 and LE3). Table 8.4 above shows the findings across METs and LET's' in regard to the use of a range of materials. The table summarizes the complementary or alternative

materials that METs and LETs used in their language lessons. The second left column headed in bold type indicates the materials used by the teachers to replace the official textbooks and the reasons teachers stated for using such materials. The middle column also headed in bold shows the complementary materials identified across the participants. Finally, the last right column displays the reasons stated by the participants for using the various complementary materials.

Along with the reasons for using complementary and alternative materials shown in Table 8.4, other not openly explicit reasons were raised, these include: contextual factors, textbook's drawbacks and possible resentment as result of not being involved in the selection of the textbook.

This study provides evidence of a range of complementary materials incorporated by teachers into their lessons and their rationales to make decisions about their materials. In this regard Willis (2008:8) maintains

From a sociocultural theory perspective, the textbook is one tool among many used by FL teachers and learners. *How* individuals use this tool is, in turn, mediated by their conceptions of its role in learning activity and, particularly for FL instructors, by pedagogical frameworks and beliefs about teaching and learning that inform their teaching activity.

We may thus conclude that teachers' use or lack of use of materials is largely determined by their perceptions about their context and their pedagogical beliefs about their practices.

8.5.1 Alternative materials

In the previous section, LE1 and LE3's rationales for using instructional materials were discussed. Looking at the alternative materials used in those two cases, we find out similar collections of material obtained from various textbooks and which mainly contained grammar exercises. The two teachers'

manner of organizing these materials, however, was rather different. LE1, on the one hand, presented all the course materials at the beginning of the course in what he referred to as an 'anthology', and which very much resembled a book. In LE3's case, he organized his materials as handouts which were provided to the students every lesson, (see samples of these materials in Appendixes 6 and 7). Since the materials used by LE1 and LE3 replaced the official textbooks in full, it is worth contrasting the main features of these materials with the distinctive features of professionally developed commercial textbooks. Bolitho (2012) maintains that the distinctive features of a good course book include:

- 1) Linguistically, culturally and methodologically appropriate
- 2) Provides a range of possibilities for learning and teaching
- 3) Considered a key tool by students and teachers
- 4) The language content is presented similarly to how it is used in real life contexts
- 5) Contains motivating tasks and activities
- 6) Deals with topics relating to the students' interests
- 7) Supports learning beyond the classroom.

The above were not features of LE1's and LE3's alternative materials. Their replacement materials- used instead of the official textbook- mainly aimed to match the contents appearing in the set textbooks' that they felt their students would be likely to find in the institutional tests. This reveals that LETs' lack of use of textbooks, investigated by research question two, and the resulting adoption of alternative materials, aimed to prepare students to passing the institutional tests. While the fact of preparing students for passing tests is not a negative feature in and of itself, it is a genuine concern if the main goal

underlying a language course is to help students pass an institutional test, as opposed to their development as language learners.

Looked at in comparison with professionally developed commercial textbooks, LE1's anthology and LE3's handouts did not conform with the pedagogical, methodological, linguistic and structural principles that govern most of such published materials.

As for the advantages LE1 and LE3 found in using their own materials, it is evident that they felt that it was easier and more practical to move straight into the grammar exercises, which they had selected themselves to specifically prepare their students to pass the institutional tests, rather than go through every single activity suggested by the official textbook.

8.5.2 Complementary materials

In understanding teachers' rationales for using textbooks, examined by research question two, I identified a range of materials that teachers drew on to complement the official textbooks. Table 8.4 above shows the various materials observed in METs' and LET's' lessons. The importance of these materials to the teachers' practices and their actual use in the teachers' practices, varied in proportion to the teachers' perceptions about the utility of the official textbook. That is, the more teachers felt that the official textbook did not satisfy their students' needs, the more importance was given to other materials in their teaching practices. For instance, in ME1's case, she contended that the activities in the textbook did not meet her students' needs, hence she relied so heavily on worksheets that at times they became the dominant materials in her lessons. In contrast, in LE3's case, his everyday use of dictionaries aimed to clarify the meaning of new vocabulary and aid the

pronunciation of some words only; they were not used as the main materials in his lessons.

Findings on this issue from questionnaire reveal that, across the teaching staff, over 60 per cent of the language teachers reported that they drew on a combination of materials, whilst less than 20 per cent affirmed using the textbook as their main material. This therefore indicates that the use of complementary materials was significant across the teachers' practices at the LEMO. In this regard Islam and Mares (2003) explain that through techniques such as 'adding, deleting, simplifying, reordering and replacing', (p.91) teachers use materials to adapt their lessons to their students' needs. So this means that, incorporating other materials could be seen as an implicit strategy that most teachers had very likely been practicing in their teaching contexts in previous courses.

Most of the techniques listed above were observed in the METs and LETs' teaching practices, and, in most cases, decisions for choosing complementary materials were based on the teachers' individual perceptions about the textbook.

8.6 Teachers' conceptions of freedom

Through the implementation of a questionnaire this study examined teachers' views on their freedom to make decisions about instructional materials.

Findings about this issue, provided insight into teachers' decision making, and thus helped address fully research questions two and three, which investigated the rationales underlying teachers' use of textbooks and the use of materials other than the textbook. Outcomes from the quantitative stage showed that over 70 per cent of the teaching staff affirmed having no freedom in choosing

and using materials, whilst only one teacher (LE1) reported having total freedom. Thus, the consistency of opinions across the teaching staff about not having freedom, led me to feel it would be significant to explore this issue with the six teachers studied qualitatively. Contrary to the findings coming up from the questionnaire, interviews and observations showed that most of the teachers (except ME3) felt completely free to choose and use any materials in their lessons and, in practice, exercised this freedom to make decisions about their materials. METs and LETs' views about the freedom to use materials, as expressed during the interviews, not only contrasted to a large extent with the opinions about this issue that they reported through the questionnaire, a discrepancy I verified by cross-referencing their questionnaire responses, but also contrasted with the opinions reported by the teaching staff in the questionnaire. If taken as typical and representative, it could be possible to infer from the views expressed by the LETs and METs that most teachers on the BA felt free to make decisions in their lessons and that it would be possible to observe this in their practices.

The issue about teachers' conceptions of freedom in this study became relevant as this study moved forward and, as most METs and LETs suggested, their instructional decisions were driven by the freedom they felt in their teaching contexts. Actually, most teachers signalled specific contextual issues (i.e. group size, course length, textbook's contents) that influenced their decisions about the use of materials.

In addressing research question two, which investigated the teachers' rationales for using textbooks, the findings showed that some teachers exercised their sense of freedom in order to make instructional decisions. For

example, in the case of LE1 and LE3, teachers completely replaced the official book with their own materials, despite the compulsory nature of the official textbook. Similarly, in the case of LE2 and ME2, teachers adopted student-led approaches in which the students' presentations were the activity most central to the lessons, and the teaching of content from the prescribed textbooks ended up being complementary to the learners' presentations. Conversely, it is also worth noting that the two teachers with the most years of experience and seniority within the BA ELT (ME1 and ME3) were the most cautious in terms of making significant changes to their lessons. Later in this chapter, I will discuss further the issue of the teachers' seniority and its repercussions on their practices.

8.7 Contextual factors and use of materials

One of the key findings of this study was the strong influence of contextual factors on the teachers' instructional decisions. Findings discussed in this section fully addressed research question four focused on examining contextual issues. Table 8.5 shows the main contextual factors that the six teachers studied qualitatively asserted shaped their use of instructional materials.

Table 8.5 Contextual factors and teachers' use of materials

	Lesson length	Course length	Institutional assessment	Obsolete resource centre's materials	Faulty ICT facilities	Official textbook unsuited to BA	Textbook's large volume of content
LE1	✓	✓				✓	✓
LE2	✓	✓					✓
LE3		✓	✓				
ME1	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
ME2	✓	✓	✓				
ME3			✓		✓	✓	

The table shows on the top row details of the seven main contextual factors that METs and LETs felt influenced their instructional decisions. What

deserves attention is that two factors, - lesson length and course length - were common to almost all the six teachers, whilst others were exclusive to just two or three of them.

To better understand the contextual factors specifically highlighted by the METs and LETs, and illustrated in Table 8.5, these have been organized into two main categories (institutional and classroom) and shown in Figure 8.1 below. The figure summarizes, in the lower left box, the institutional factors that METs and LETs felt influenced their practices. Similarly, in the right lower box, the figure shows the factors that within the classroom, teachers felt influenced their lessons.

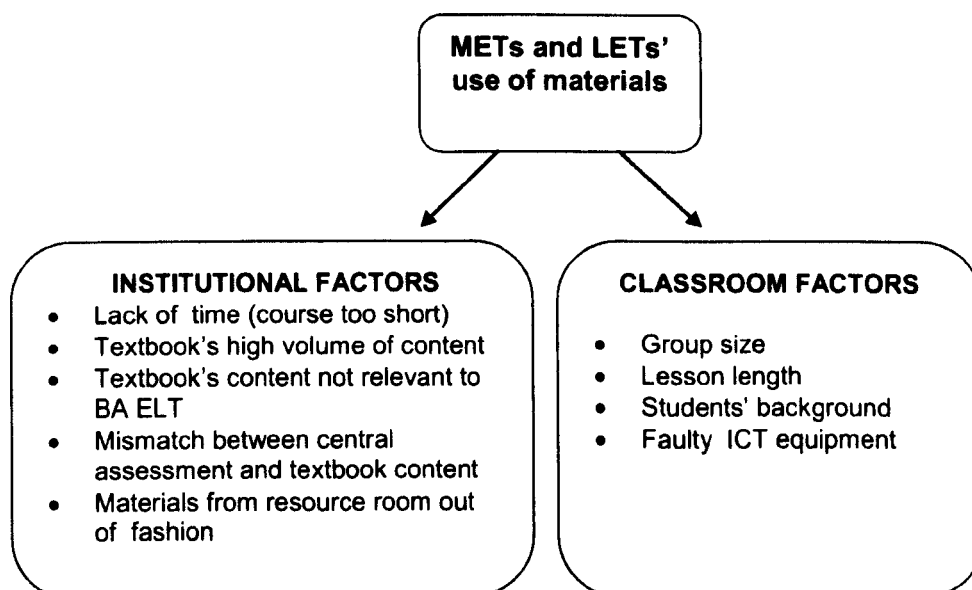


Figure 8.1 Main contextual factors in METs and LETs' practices

It is also worth mentioning a third category of factors that, while not directly signalled by teachers, my experience allowed me suggest as issues that influenced teachers' decision making. These factors include:

- Possible resentment over not being involved in the selection of textbooks
- Teachers' experience
- Teachers' contractual arrangements

- a) Seniority
- b) Wages
- c) Schedules

To make sense of the three categories of contextual factors listed above, they are discussed individually below.

8.7.1 Institutional factors

These factors were referred to by teachers as the conditions or situations that they perceived in the school and which they felt affected their practices. In most cases, these related to the institution's guidelines and to the authorities' decisions. These included the course timetables, central assessment, the resource centre (materials' room) and the official textbooks (see Table 8.5). The most recurrently mentioned factor among the METs and LETs was the lack of time available to accomplish the course goals. It is thus important here to underline this issue as significant, especially as it was perceived collectively as a major problem with the courses. Earlier in this work, I explained that the courses being researched were eight weeks long on paper, but in practice lasted six weeks only. Furthermore, this issue was raised as a core factor in some crucial decisions by teachers', as in, for instance, two cases in which the prescribed textbooks were replaced with alternative materials (LE1 and LE3). These two teachers specifically pointed to the lack of time as the main reason that led them to use their own materials.

Closely related to the lack of time, METs and LETs also mentioned other factors related to the prescribed textbooks, such as issues relating to the incongruity of the textbooks' content with the goals prescribed by the syllabus, or the centrally designed tests, which were highlighted as factors they felt affected their practices, and which were under the school's control.

Several studies examining the relationship between language teachers' practices and beliefs have highlighted the mediating effects of contextual factors. For example, a study carried out in the United States (Lumpe, Haney, and Czerniak, 2000) and involving 130 teachers, aimed to examine the contextual factors that influenced teachers' practices. Using survey and questionnaire data, the study identified 28 contextual factors that, in the view of the teachers, influenced their practices, these included: 1) student ability, 2) class size, 3) class length, 4) classroom assessment and 5) curriculum materials. The discussion above has illustrated how contextual factors function in the context of the teachers' practices.

8.7.2 Classroom factors

Teachers also identified contextual factors that they felt influenced their decisions within their particular teaching settings. As shown in Figure 8.1, the factors mentioned most often by teachers were related to particular student characteristics, such as background and group size, as well as more general issues such as lesson schedules and classroom facilities. These factors, although determined by the institution, directly impacted the classroom context. In this respect, I need to note that most of the problems that the teachers identified in their classrooms were beyond their control. For instance, teachers did not decide on the group size or the students' background. Similarly, they were unable to modify the course length or have the ICT equipment fixed.

8.7.3 Non- stated factors

Along with the contextual factors highlighted by METs and LETs, other key factors emerged through the study which were not signalled directly by

teachers as influential on their teaching. There is evidence however, that I will discuss later, that show these factors shaped the teachers' use of materials, albeit not strongly. These factors related to the teachers' experience, work conditions and their status – particularly work contracts and seniority – within the institution.

To make sense of how these factors influenced teachers' practices, it is critical to remember some distinctive features of teachers in relation to their experience. The METs in this study were teachers with over 10 years' experience and normally had full time contracts. Such teachers were entitled to benefits such as higher wages (compared to LETs), compact schedules in either morning or evening shifts (LETs had lessons spread throughout the whole day) and fully equipped personal cubicles. LETs, in contrast, were teachers with ten years' experience or less and normally had part time or hourly paid contracts. Given their low incomes, most LETs worked in various schools and hence had concomitant limitations on their time.

Although none of the participants talked about the issues listed above, it was clear that teachers with the most seniority and experience worked under more favourable conditions than the less experienced and less senior teachers.

Such differences were observable in some aspects of their lessons. For instance, the more experienced teachers spent most of the day in the school, whilst the less experienced teachers were only in school during their lessons time. These differences in terms of time worked evidently to the advantage of the more experienced teachers, who reasonably had more time and resources with which to prepare their lessons and materials.

In practice, however, these substantial differences were not reflected in the

teachers' practices. For instance, it was surprising that METs had not generated materials for their lessons when they had resources such as computers, printers and the internet. In contrast, the LETs, who in general had limited resources, were in practice the teachers who used the most varied materials in the observed lessons. This may be related to what Tsui (2005) observed in teachers who have worked for many years and described as a decline in teachers' work, and which is also described the phase of disengagement by Huberman (1993), which manifests itself as teachers' gradual lack of interest in their work.

Earlier in this chapter, when the gaps between what teachers say and do were discussed, the significance of contextual factors was pointed out, such as the curriculum, the examinations, and time constraints. These were identified as forces that determine the extent to which teachers act in line with their beliefs (Phipps and Borg, 2009). With regard to teachers' contexts, Borg (2006:275-276) explains that:

the social, institutional and physical settings in which teachers work have a major impact on their cognitions and practices...Contextual factors may interact with teacher cognitions in two ways; they may lead to changes in these cognitions or else they may alter practices directly without changing the cognitions underlying them.

Borg (2006) goes on to explain that contextual factors can be of several types, although most of them fall into two categories - the temporary (classroom-related) and the more permanent (institutional). Temporary factors are related to the classroom and the instructional experience of the teacher (e.g. heat, cold and other physical classroom conditions), whereas the more permanent factors may include school policies and other conditions existing outside the classroom and even the school. This distinction can help us understand how

the contextual factors identified by teachers were forces that actually influenced their instructional decisions.

Similar to this research, the study described above showed that contextual factors, especially those beyond the teachers' control, shaped to a large extent the course of language lessons and in turn led language teachers to modify their teaching strategies. Overall – and in relation to research question four - this section provided evidence of the significant influence of contextual factors, more specifically institutional, classroom and other non explicitly expressed factors on the teachers' practices.

8.8 METs and LETs' variations

This closing section addresses research question five which examines the variations between METs' and LETs' use of materials. The discussion here actually focuses on the common and distinctive features of METs' and LETs' use of materials, illustrated in Figure 8.2 below. Such findings are in relation to the six themes proposed earlier in this chapter.

The figure below illustrates the main features across METs and LETs in relation to their use of materials. The upper boxes show, on the left ,the themes common to both groups of teachers, and on the right, the themes distinctive to each group of participants. The lower boxes show the main features to METs' and LETs' use of materials identified through the observations and the interviews.

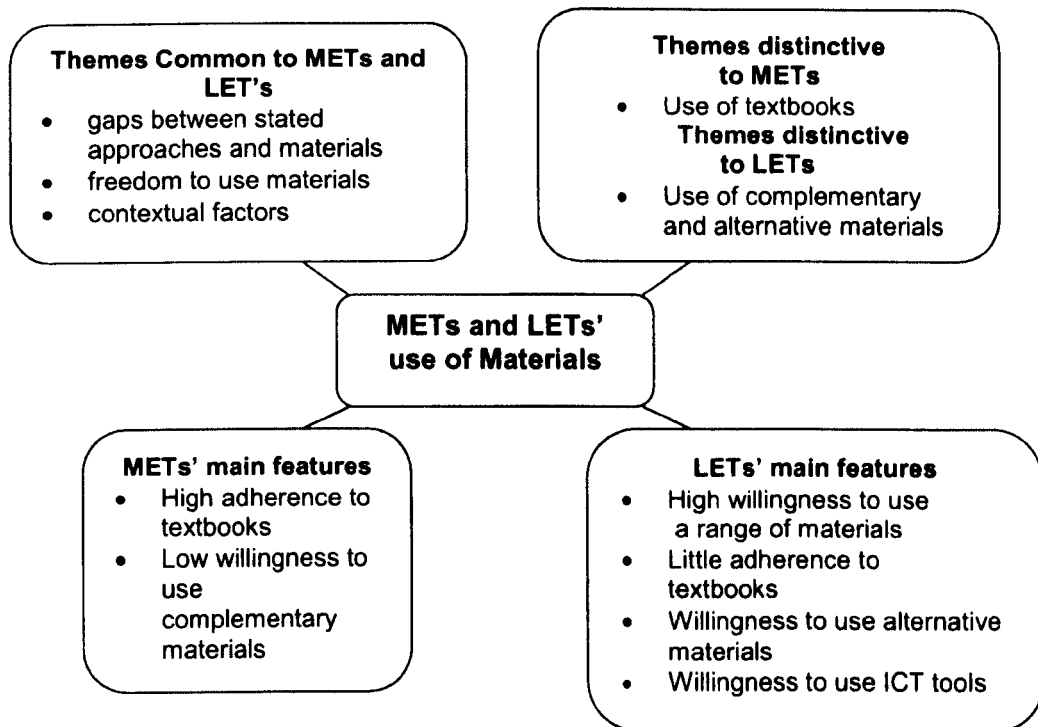


Figure 8.2 Common and distinct features of METs' and LETs' use of materials

The distinctive and common features to METs and LETs illustrated in the figure above are further discussed below.

8.8.1 Common themes to METs and LETs

Figure 8.2 above shows that with reference to the use of instructional materials, there were more differences than similarities between METs and LETs.

In three out of six themes emerging from this study - that is gaps between what teachers say and do; freedom to use materials; and views about contextual factors that influence the use of materials - METs and LETs collectively expressed similar opinions. These themes therefore should be highlighted as key findings of this study which deserve attention, not just as potential contributions of the study to the field, but also as fertile areas for further research in the specific context under investigation.

8.8.2 Distinctive themes and features to METs' and LETs' practices

Even though METs and LETs' practices and their use of materials match in a few individual instances, on a collective level their use of materials was substantially different, especially in relation to the use of textbooks and the use of substitute and complementary materials (Figure 8.2).

Findings in relation to the METs and LETs' use of textbooks show that both groups diverged in the strategies through which they made use of the prescribed textbooks. METs in general showed a marked adherence to both the textbooks and the institution's guidelines, which was rather surprising, given their years' experience, seniority and status within the teaching staff. I argue, nonetheless, that METs' preferences for textbook-based approaches were based on the benefits that they had, over the years, identified in the use of textbooks. In other words, METs had found that drawing on the prescribed textbooks was a straightforward route towards the achievement of their course objectives.

On the other hand, LETs tended to complement the textbook with other materials, and in two cases, the texts were fully replaced. Also worth noting is LETs' use of ICT resources, which was observed in two cases (LE1 and LE2) and indicates that in general, LETs were more willing to use these resources than their more experienced colleagues. In this respect, I need to highlight the gap between LETs and METs in terms of their years of practice, which was 15 years on average. This gap not only points to METs' advantages in terms of their work conditions, but also indicates that they belonged to a generation of teachers that was formed without ICT tools as part of their personal and professional reality, and who had, therefore, in the course of their careers been

required to incorporate new technologies into their teaching. Conversely the fact that LETs had been formed with ICT tools as part of their BA curriculum might explain why they were more willing than METs to use ICT materials in their lessons.

Research conducted by Kitchenham (2006) illustrates how 10 experienced language teachers went through the process of incorporating technology into their practices. The study used a mixed methodology approach and combined reflective journals, a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and research field notes. Findings emerged as themes and showed that teachers experience a number of transformations as they learn to use, adopt and teach educational technology. Examples of transformations include changes in perspective, revised habits of mind, and changes in personal assumptions. Overall, the study showed that there was some resistance to change among the teachers. The teachers recognized that to learn and get benefits of technology in their practices they had to go through a process - which was not easy to accept - of learning to use the technologies. The study showed that for experienced teachers, especially those who were about to retire, using technology entailed a process of change that not all teachers were willing to put themselves through. Kitchenham's work provides an insight into the challenges that more experienced Mexican teachers need to face in order to deal with the technological tools which are now part of their daily practice.

On this point, Tsui's (2003) position about the stages teachers go through in the course of their careers should not be ignored. She talks about a process of disengagement between teachers and their work which grows as teachers approach the end of their careers. If, in addition to this feeling of

disengagement, experienced teachers are required to start learning how to use technological tools, the challenges that these teachers (such as the ones involved in this study) are experiencing are thus understandable.

The findings of this research show that METs were more aware of the linguistic and methodological value of materials, whereas LETs were more concerned with the grammatical components. Overall, this study demonstrated that, although some similarities emerged between LETs and METs, there were more contrasting features between the two groups of participants.

8.9 Conclusion

This chapter pointed out the ways in which findings of the study answer each of the research questions and helped understand METs' and LETs' use of materials. The study not only uncovered key factors associated with the teachers' beliefs and their use of materials, but also unveiled some key issues about the institution and the mechanisms to regulate the teachers' use of materials across the BA ELT programme.

This chapter examined findings in the light of the following six key themes and were related to specific research questions as follows: 1) gaps between teachers' stated beliefs and actual practices was relevant to research question three; 2) teachers' use of textbooks, shed light on research questions one and two; 3) use of complementary and alternative materials addressed research question two ; 4) teachers' conceptions of freedom addressed both research questions two and three; 5) contextual factors and teachers' use of materials was directly relevant to research question four, and 6) distinctive features of the METs' and LETs' use of materials covered research question five.

Findings showed that gaps between teachers' beliefs and practices indicate that: 1) teachers may use instructional materials mechanically, 2) may draw on materials on the spot or 3) may indicate teachers are on a process of change. Findings also showed that teachers' use and lack of use of textbooks depend broadly on contextual factors such as, length of lessons, length of courses and texts' volume of content. Also teachers' discontent at not being involved in the selection of textbooks might be a reason for not using textbooks. Outcomes indicated that teachers' use of complementary and alternative materials was closely related to teachers' beliefs about the utility of textbooks, this means that the less significant the textbooks were for the teachers, the more relevant were the complementary and alternative materials.

On the other hand teachers' freedom to make instructional decisions heavily influenced their use of materials (e.g. some teachers exercised their freedom to complement or to fully replace the official textbook). As for the influence of contextual factors on teachers' use of materials, findings suggests that these shaped strongly teachers' use of materials, especially those beyond the teachers' decision making such as the selection of textbooks, the selection of learners, and the length of the classes and of the course length . Finally in exploring distinctive features of METs' and LETs' use of materials, it was found that METs' and LETs' strategies for using materials were contrasting. LETs tended to use technology and a range of materials in their lessons. METs on the other hand showed a especial preference for the official textbook. Thus while METs and LETs are different in terms of the extent to which they use the textbook, they are largely similar in seeking materials that will help their students pass the institutional tests.

Overall, this study has helped provide insight into the teachers' use of materials in the classroom and also identified a gap in regard to the institutional mechanisms which regulate teachers' use of materials.

I summarize the main issues to emerge from this study in the next and final chapter.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions of the present study as well as recommendations for further research. The issues highlighted here emerged from the analysis and discussion undertaken in the previous chapters. The conclusions are based on the evidence I have presented throughout the study, and on my reasoning and beliefs in relation to the insights and perspectives that this study has achieved. This study set out to explore language teachers' use of instructional materials and identified the cognitive and contextual factors that shape their instructional decisions in their work on a BA ELT in Mexico. Drawing on quantitative data, a group of teachers were examined in relation to their use of materials, and then, drawing on qualitative data, a sub-set of six teachers, three more experienced and three less experienced, were examined in- depth.

Investigating the cognitions underlying their use of materials is of particular relevance to the context under study and to the field of teacher cognition due to the significance of instructional materials in today's language classrooms.

The research questions outlined for this study were as follows:

What are the cognitive and contextual factors that underlie the teachers' use of instructional materials (mainly, but not exclusively the textbook) on a BA ELT at a Mexican university?

Specific questions:

1. How does methodology of the textbook influence the teachers' practices?
2. What are the cognitions underlying the teachers' use / lack of use of

textbooks?

3. What are the rationales behind teachers' use of materials other than textbooks?
4. How do contextual factors influence the teachers' use of ELT materials?
5. With reference to the above questions, are there any variations in the practices and cognitions between more and less experienced teachers?

9.1 Synthesis of findings

It is worth noting that, although the main findings emerged from the qualitative phase, the quantitative data contributed broadly towards the accomplishment of the objectives of this research.

9.1.1 Quantitative findings.

Findings emerging from Chapter 5 provided insight into the teachers' use of materials, and more particularly into the topics explored by the research questions. Key findings include:

- 1) *Nature of main materials used in the language lessons across the institution under investigation.* Nearly all the teachers (39 out of 42) reported the main materials they used in their practices were a combination of the textbook and authentic materials. Whilst only one teacher affirmed the use of internet-based materials.
- 2) *Teachers' rationale for their use of materials.* Findings from the survey showed the following: most teachers infrequently used materials designed by themselves; the vast majority of them felt constrained from using materials other than textbooks; about half them relied on complementary materials for about half of their lessons; and the main reason for the use of materials was to achieve their

course goals.

3) *Teachers' views about textbooks.* Most of the teachers reported that the official textbooks achieved the following: helped them achieve the aims of their course; helped them finish the course on time; helped them allocate homework; allowed them access to the culture of the target language; and helped them minimize the costs of producing other materials.

4) *Teachers' perceptions about context.* The questionnaire revealed that the majority of teachers were uncertain about incorporating materials of their choice into their lessons. Most teachers were also uncertain whether the course aims fitted its length. More than half of them felt that textbooks were chosen because of their ELT utility, and the majority felt the materials at the resource centre were out of date.

9.1.2 Qualitative findings

The findings reported in Chapters 6 and 7 were the central data in the study. These findings provided answers in different ways and proportions to the specific research questions through six key themes that emerged from them. The main findings apply equally to METs and LETs, and are as follows:

1) *Gaps between what teachers say and do.* These findings revealed a number of potential reasons behind the discrepancies between the teachers' stated beliefs and their actual practices. The gaps in question were key features identified in the teachers' practices. The findings showed that contextual factors were particularly influential in those cases in which teachers made significant changes to their use of materials. In some cases, however, answers might have emerged spontaneously as questions came out during the interviews. These findings shed light on the teachers' rationales behind their

use of materials on the spot which is often different or even contradictory to their perceptions of their own teaching practice and showed that teachers' stated beliefs are not always reflected in their practices. The findings in the cases examined in this study, indicate that teachers do not behave mechanically in line with their beliefs but that they align their behaviour to cognitive and contextual factors.

2) *Teachers' use of textbooks.* This study's findings on teachers' use of textbooks showed that, although textbooks were compulsory in the language courses, in practice teachers followed a range of approaches to using them in their lessons and that; overall, METs were more willing to use them than LETs. The study drew attention to two LETs who chose to drop the official textbook and adopted self-developed materials (an anthology and handouts). It was found that in these two cases contextual factors were crucial determiners in the decision to opt for the alternative materials.

3) *Use of complementary and alternative materials.* Findings showed that in relation to the official textbook, teachers made one of the following decisions: a) to incorporate complementary materials or b) to fully replace the textbooks with other materials. In the case of drawing on complementary materials, teachers used them to fill gaps they felt were not covered by the official textbooks, or because those complementary resources had features that did not find on the official textbook.

As for the use of alternative materials, which was a more radical decision, the two teachers who decided to replace the textbook felt their own materials were a better option to achieve the aims of their courses. In all cases, it was found that teachers' main drive for drawing on either complementary or replacing

materials was to accomplish the aims prescribed by the syllabus and enable the students to pass their courses.

4) *Teachers' conceptions of freedom.* Findings on this issue relate to most of the research questions. Findings showed that teachers' freedom (or perceptions of freedom) in relation to the use of the prescribed textbooks might have been shaped by a range of particular factors which include: teachers' experience; type of work contract (i.e. full time, part time, permanent, temporary), seniority on the BA ELT and personal interpretations of institutional regulations.

5) *Contextual factors and teachers' use of materials.* Findings on this issue largely and directly answered research question 5. Findings showed that, in the teachers' views, factors such as the course length, lesson length, students' background, procedures for textbook selection and textbook content were in most cases crucial to the teachers' use of materials. Overall contextual factors played a significant role in the teachers' instructional decisions.

6) *Distinctive features of LETs and METs' use of materials.* Findings in relation to the teacher's experience showed that, although there were some similarities, METs and LETs' use of materials was significantly different. In particular, METs adhered more closely to the official textbooks and the institution's regulations, while LETs were more willing to use a range of materials including technology-based materials.

9.2 Recommendations for further research

The debate about teachers' use of materials in this study has not only revealed a number of contextual and cognitive issues that shape language teachers'

instructional decisions, but has also highlighted a number of related topics that were not examined in this work and which need to be researched further.

The following are therefore topics which, in my view, are worth investigating in the near future to enhance the findings of this study.

1) *Language teachers' perceptions about the impact of instructional materials on students' learning.* This is related the ultimate goal of language teachers, which is the teaching of a target language (English in this study) and how the use of instructional materials impacts students' learning.

2) *Students' views about language teachers' use of materials.* A second issue worth exploring is the students' views about teachers' use of materials. This would allow researchers to gauge the extent to which language teachers' use of materials is aligned to the students' expectations, which, in turn, would have a positive impact on students' learning.

3) *Teachers' rationales in the selecting of textbooks.* This topic is closely related to one of the findings of this work; that regarding the resentment expressed by teachers as a result of not being involved in the selection of textbooks and which may be replicated in other similar contexts. In this regard it would be interesting to explore further how giving teachers more say in the selection of textbooks would impact on their teaching.

4) *Research on non experienced teachers' use of materials.* Future research can continue to explore non experienced teachers' use of materials. This will largely help understand the needs of prospective teachers.

9.3 Contributions of the study

This study contributes to the literature in some ways. First, I do believe that one of the merits of this study was the exploration of the issue of teachers' use

of materials in actual teaching settings, as there has been very little research of this type conducted on teachers' use of materials. Second, this study examined teachers' use of materials from the perspective of experienced teachers rather than from the traditional 'experienced – novice' view. Most studies in the field of teachers' expertise, have explored the 'experienced – novice' relationship, which actually represent two extremes of teacher experience and which has left an unexplored area in this field. Third, from the study, we now know more about the rationales behind more experienced teachers' use of materials. More specifically, we know why teachers use textbooks or cast them aside. The study also allows us to learn teachers' rationales for using alternative or complementary materials.

Even though I examined a number of supporting topics in this study, exploring the cognitions that underlie teachers' use of instructional materials was definitely the leading concept throughout the investigation.

9.4 Limitations of the Study

This study has offered a practical view of language teachers' use of materials on a BA ELT in Mexico. It was conducted within a public institution, involved the language teaching staff and drew on a mixed methods approach. As a direct consequence of the nature of the qualitative data produced by the investigation, the context where the study was carried out and the nature of the participants, I outline the following limitations:

One limitation of the study is the fact that the main findings of the study were of qualitative nature. This means that most of these are based on what the teachers stated about their work and use of materials, so this study relies heavily on teachers' spoken testimony. A further limitation is the local nature of

the study (although the context under study is very similar to many in Mexico and Latin America). One limitation is also the relatively limited insights that emerged from the quantitative part of the study, although this is perhaps a natural limitation in terms of how much questionnaires can reveal about teachers' beliefs and practices.

Another limitation is the fact that I was an insider. This means that my own beliefs and biases may have influenced my interpretations of data, although I did make an effort to monitor any such biases.

One final limitation concerns the extent to which the outcomes of the investigation can be generalised beyond the boundaries of the research context. This means that the main findings are true for the particular institution where the research was undertaken and for the particular group of language teachers working there. They may, however, have some application in other similar contexts, and may be a reference for further studies in the field of teacher cognition and the field of language education generally.

9.5 Conclusion

To conclude this chapter and this investigation, I need to state that this work did generally achieve its intended objectives in terms of both the research objectives and the research quality standards that were set out throughout the study. In short, I set out to investigate the cognitions underlying language teachers' use of materials and I did it.

I hope that, for readers going through this study, it has been worth reading a work in which I concentrated the best of my efforts.

This study has thus contributed to the understanding of language teachers' use of instructional materials and to the field of teacher cognition generally. It

has advanced our understandings of how teachers use materials and has opened a number of options for further research in relation to this largely unexplored topic.

REFERENCES

- Adler, P.A., and Adler, P. (1994). Observational techniques. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. (pp. 377-392) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Aguilar, J. (2003). Aproximación a las creencias del profesorado sobre el papel de la educación *Journal: la Escuela y el Trabajo Docente. Religion y Sociedad* Vol. 15 (26) pp1-29.
- Allen, H.W. (2008). Textbook materials and foreign language teaching: Perspectives from the classroom. *Northeast conference on the teaching of foreign languages*. No. 62 (pp. 5-28).
- Allwright, R. L. (1981). What do we want teaching materials for? *ELT Journal* 36 (1) pp. 5-18.
- Ansary, H., and Babaii, E. (2002). Universal characteristics of EFL/ESL textbooks: A step Towards Systematic Textbook Evaluation. *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. VIII, No. 2.
- ANUIES, (2009). Annual report. Retrieved 10 February, 2010, from, http://www.anuies.mx/servicios/e_educacion/index2.php.
- Bazeley, P. (2009). Integrating data analyses in mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. 3 (3), 203-223.
- Bolitho, R. (2012) *Designing textbooks for modern languages: the ELT Experience*. Retrived 30 June, 2012, from, <http://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/1470>.
- Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education. Research and practice*. London: Continuum.
- Borg, S. (2003a). Teacher cognition in grammar teaching: A literature review. *Language Awareness*, 12(2), 96-108.
- Borg, S. (2003b). Teacher cognition in language teaching: a review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language Teaching*. 36, 2, 81- 109.
- Borg, S. (1999). Teachers theories in grammar teaching. *ELT Journal*, 53(3), 157-167.
- Boshuizen, H., Bromme, R., and Gruber, H. (2004). On the long way from novice to expert and how travelling changes the traveller. In H. Boshuizen, R. Bromme & H. Gruber, (eds.) *Professional learning: gaps and transitions on the way from novice to expert*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Brumfit, Ch. (1984). Function and structure of a state school syllabus for learners of second or foreign languages with heterogeneous needs. In C. J. Brumfit (Ed.) *General English syllabus design*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Bryman, A. (2008). *Social research methods*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- BUAP. (2009). Historia de nuestra universidad. Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. Retrieved 17 May, 2010, from, <http://www.buap.mx>.
- BUAP. (2011). *Reglamento de ingreso permanencia y egreso de la Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla*. Puebla: BUAP. Retrieved 3 March, 2012, from, http://cmas.siu.buap.mx/portal_pprd/wb/Consejo_Universitario/r_permanencia.

- Buchanan, D. (2006). An uneasy alliance: combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. In A. Bryman (Ed.) *Mixed Methods Vol. 1*. London: Sage Publications.
- Burton, B., and Webb, J. (2012). Beliefs and behaviour in teaching. Retrieved 3 April, 2012, from, www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_196811_brown.pdf.
- Calderhead, J. (2003). The contribution of research on teachers' thinking to the professional development of teachers. In C. J. Day, J. Calderhead & P. Denicolo (Eds.) *Research on Teacher Thinking: Understanding Professional Development*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Calderhead, J. (1984). *Teachers' classroom decision making*. London: Holth, Rinehart and Winston.
- Carter, K. (1990). Teachers' knowledge and learning to teach. In R. Houston, M. Haberman and J. Sikula (eds). *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education. A project of the association of teacher educators*. New York: Mac Millan Publishing Company.
- Casas, J., Gonzalez, F., Mancisidor, A., Cabral, L. (2006). La concepción que tienen los profesores de los institutos tecnológicos federales en México sobre la naturaleza de la ciencia y la tecnología. *Conference dictated at Congreso Iberoamericano de Ciencia, Tecnología, Sociedad e Innovación CTS+1*. Palacio de Minería pgs.1-13. Retrieved 12 June, 2012, from, <http://www.oei.es/memoriasctsi/mesa5/m05p04.pdf>.
- Chavez, E., Castillo, M., and Gamboa, R. (2008). Creencias de los estudiantes en los procesos de aprendizaje de las matemáticas. *In cuadernos de investigación y formación en educación matemática* 3, págs. 29-44.
- Civil, M. (2006). Working towards equity in mathematics education: A focus on learners, teachers and parents. *Proceedings of the 28th annual meeting of the north american chapter of the international group for the psychology of mathematics education*. Mérida, México: Universidad Pedagógica Nacional Vol. 1-30.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. London. New York: Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). Mapping the field of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. 3: pp 95-108.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design. qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. London: Sage Publications.
- Cummings, A. (2008). Spanish teachers' beliefs and practices on computers in the classroom. *Hispania*, 91, 73-92.
- Denscombe, M. (2002). *Ground rules for good research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Denscombe, M. (1998). *The good researcher guide. For small-scale social research projects*. New York: Open University Press.
- Denzin, N., and Lincoln Y. (eds.)(1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N., and Lincoln Y. (2005). *The sage handbook of qualitative research*. Third Edition. London: Sage Publications.
- Donaghue, H. (2003). An instrument to elicit teachers' beliefs an assumptions. *ELT Journal*, 57(4), 344-351.

- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research. construction, administration and processing*. London: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Ellis, E. M. (2006). Language learning experience as a contributor to TESOL teacher cognition. *TESL-EJ*. 10(1), 1-2.
- Farrell, T.S.C., & Lim, P.C.P. (2005). Conceptions of grammar teaching: A case study of teachers' beliefs and classroom practices. *TESL-EJ*, 9(2), 1-3.
- Flick, U. (2007). *Managing quality in qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Flores, F., Gallegos, L., Bonilla, X., Lopez I., & Garcia, B. (2007). Concepciones sobre la naturaleza de la ciencia de los profesores de biología del nivel secundario. Mexico: *Revista Mexicana de Investigacion Educativa* Vol.12 (032) 359-380.
- Gatbonton, E. (2008). Looking beyond teachers' classroom behaviour: novice and experienced ESL teachers' pedagogical knowledge. *Language teaching research*, 12(2), 161-182.
- Gilmore, A. (2004). A comparison of textbook and authentic interactions. *ELT Journal* Volume 54/3 pp. 363- 374.
- Gillham, B. (2005). *Research interviewing: the range of techniques*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Gillham B. (2000). *The research interview*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Goddard, R.D. (2003). The impact of schools on teacher beliefs, influence and student achievement. The role of collective efficacy beliefs. In J. Raths and A. Mc Aninch (Eds). *Teacher beliefs and classroom performance: The impact of teacher education*. United States: Greenwich, Con.
- Graves, K. (1996). *Teachers as course developers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gray, J. (2000). The ELT coursebook as cultural artefact. How teachers censor and adapt. *ELT Journal*. 54/3. pp. 274-286.
- Huberman, A. M., and Miles, M.B. (1994). Data management and analysis methods. In N.K. Denzin, and Y.S. Lincoln, (eds) *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Huberman, M. (1993). Steps towards a developmental model of the teaching career. In L. Kremer-Hayon, H. Vonk and R. Fessler (Eds.) *Teacher professional development: A multiple perspective approach* (pp.93-118). Amsterdam: Swets and Zeitlinger.
- Hutchinson, T. and Torres. E. (1994). The textbook as agent of change. *ELT Journal* 48/4: 315-328.
- Ihmedeh, F. (2010). The role of computer technology in teaching reading and writing: preschool teachers' beliefs and practices. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*. 24, 60-79.
- Islam, C., and Mares, Ch. (2003). Adapting classroom materials In B. Tomlinson (Ed.) *Developing materials for language teaching*. London: Continuum.

- Johnson, K.E. (1994). The emerging beliefs and instructional practices of Pre-service English as a second language teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 10(4) pp 439-452.
- Johnson, S.M., Kraft, M.A. & Papay., J. P. (2011). How context matters in high-need schools: The effects of teachers' working conditions on their professional satisfaction and their students' achievement. Retrieved 22 April, 2012, from, www.gse.harvard.edu/~ngt/Teacher%20Working%20Conditions%20Johnson%20Kraft%20Papay%202011.pdf.
- Karavas-Doukas, E. (1996). Using attitude scales to investigate teachers' attitudes to the communicative approach. *ELT Journal* 50(3), 187- 198.
- Karaagac, M., and Threlfall, J. (2004). The tension between teacher beliefs and teacher practice: the impact of the work setting. *Proceedings of the 28th Conference of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education*, Vol. 3 pp. 137–144.
- Kennedy J. (1996). The role of teacher beliefs and attitudes in teacher behaviour. In .G.T. Sachs, M. Brock. and R. Lo. (eds). *Directions in Second Language Teacher Education*. Hong Kong: University Press.
- Kuzborska, I. (2011). Links between teachers' beliefs and practices and research on reading. *Reading in a foreign language*, 23(1), pp 102-128.
- Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing interviews*. London: Sage Publications.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews. An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, California; London: Sage Publications.
- Lacorte, M., & Canabal, E. (2005). Teacher beliefs and practices in advanced Spanish classrooms *Heritage Language Journal* 3 (1), 83-10.
- LEMO, (2011). Programa de Licenciatura (LEMO). Retrieved 15 October, 2011, from, <http://facultaddelenguas.com>
- LEMO, (2009). Personal académico de la Licenciatura en lenguas modernas Retrieved 14 May, 2010, from, <http://www.escueladelenguas.com>.
- LEMO, (2002). Programa de Licenciatura. Ruta crítica. Retrieved 17 December, 2010, from, <http://www.facultaddelenguas.com/lemo/plan2002.html>
- Lincoln, Y. S., and Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic enquiry*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.
- Lortie, D. (1975). *School teacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lumpe, A. T., Haney, J. J., & Czemiak, C. M. (2000). Assessing teachers' beliefs about their science teaching context. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 37(3), 275-292.
- Macotela, S., Sedal, I., & Flores, R. (1997). Las creencias de los docentes mexicanos sobre el papel de la escuela y el maestro. *OEI Revista Iberoamericana de Educación*. Retrieved 13 February, 2010, from, <http://www.rieoei.org/deloslectores/106Macotela.PDF>.
- Marin, V. (2005). Las creencias formativas de los profesores universitarios. *La Revista Iberoamericana de Educación*. No. 34(5).1-12.
- Mason, J. (2003). *Qualitative researching*. London: Sage Publications.
- McDonough, J., & Shaw, C. (1993). *Materials and methods in ELT*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- McGrath, I. (2002). *Materials evaluation and design for language teaching*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

- Moini, M. R. (2009). The impact of EFL teachers' cognition on teaching foreign language grammar. *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji*, No. 49, Special Issue, English, Winter, pp. 141-164.
- Negrete, M. (2009). Teachers beliefs, types of knowledge attitudes and motivation as determinant constituents in teacher training. The current state of the art in EFL teaching in Mexico: A case study in Quintana Roo *In memorias del V foro de Estudios en lenguas internacionales (FEL)* 2009. pp. 659-673.
- Nespor, J.K. (1987). The role of beliefs in the practice of teaching. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. Vol. 19(4), pp 317-328.
- NCH (2010) Transcription software. Retrieved 10 August, 2010, from, <http://www.nch.com.au/software/dictation.html>
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nunan, D. (1988). *Syllabus design*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Oliver, P. (2003). *The student's guide to research ethics*. Maidenhead : Open University Press.
- Pajares, F. (2003). Self – efficacy beliefs, motivation, and achievement in writing: A review of the literature. *Reading and writing quarterly*. 19: 139-158.
- Pajares, F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research. Cleaning up A Messy Construct. *Review of Educational Research*. 62(3), 307-332.
- Phipps, S., and Borg, S. (2009) Exploring tensions between teachers' grammar teaching beliefs and practices. *System* 37 (3), pp. 380- 390.
- Phipps, S., and Borg, S. (2007). Exploring the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practice. *The Teacher Trainer*.21(3),17-19.
- Punch, K. P. (1998) *Introduction to social research. Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. London: Sage Publications.
- Richards, J. C. (2001) *Curriculum development in language teaching*: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. and Lockhart, Ch. (1994). *Reflective teaching in second language classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Richards, J.C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J.C., Gallo, P.B., and Renandya, W.A. (2001). Exploring teacher's beliefs and the process of change. *The PAC Journal*, 1, 43-64.
- Richards K. (2003). *Qualitative inquiry in TESOL*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Richardson, V. (2003). Preservice teachers' beliefs. In J. Raths, & A. Mc Aninch (Eds.) *Teacher beliefs and classroom performance: The Impact of Teacher Education*. USA: Information Age Publishing.
- Richardson, V., Anders, P., Tidwell, D., & Lloyd, C. (1991). The relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices in reading comprehension instruction. *American Educational Research Journal*. Vol. 28 (3) pp.559-586.
- Ropo, E. (2004). Teaching expertise. Empirical findings on expert teachers and teacher development. In H. Boshuizen, R. Bromme, & H. Gruber (eds.) *Professional Learning: Gaps and Transitions on the Way from Novice to Expert*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Rubdy, R. (2003). Selection of materials. In B. Tomlinson, (ed.) *Developing Materials For Language Teachers*. Continuum. London.

- Rubin H., & I. Rubin (2005). *Qualitative interviewing. The art of hearing data*. London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Senior, R. M. (2006). *The experience of language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- SEP. (2009). Secretariat of public education. Retrieved 11 January, 2011, from, http://www.sep.gob.mx/en/sep_en/.
- Shapiro, J., & Kilbey, D. (1990). Closing the gap between theory and practice: teachers beliefs, instructional decisions and critical thinking, *Reading Horizons*, 31(1), 59-73.
- Sheldon, L. E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal* 42 (4) pp. 237-246.
- Shulman, L. (1986). Those who understand: knowledge growth in teaching. *educational research*, 15(2), 4-14.
- Smith, J., and Heshusius, L. (2006). Closing down the conversation: The end of quantitative- qualitative debate among educational Inquirers. In A. Bryman, (Ed.) *Mixed Methods Vol. I*. London: Sage publications.
- Soares, D. (2008). Understanding class blogs as a tool for language development *Language Teaching Research*. 2008 12: 517
- Szesztay, M. (2004). Teachers' ways of knowing. *ELT Journal* 58/2, 129-136
- Tamez Guerra, Reyes (2004). Sistema educativo de los estados unidos mexicanos. Principales cifras, ciclo escolar 2003-2004. Mexico City: *Dirección General de Planeación, Programación y Presupuesto Secretaría de Educación Pública*. ISBN 968-5778-12-4.
- Tashakkori, A., and Teddlie, Ch. (2009). *Foundations of mixed methods research. Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioural sciences*. Thousand Oaks: sage Publications.
- Teddlie, Ch., and Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research*. Thousands Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Teddlie, Ch., and Tashakkori, A. (2003). Major Issues and Controversies in the use of Mixed Methods in The Social and Behavioural Sciences. In A. Tashakkori, and Ch. Teddlie (eds.) *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioural Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Tercanlioglu, L. (2004) Pre-service EFL teachers' beliefs about foreign language learning and how they relate to gender. *Electronic Journal of Research In Educational Psychology* 5-3(1), pp. 145-162.
- Tok, H. (2010). TEFL textbook evaluation: From teachers' perspectives. *educational research and review*. Vol. 5(9), pp. 508-517.
- Tomlinson, B. (2009) *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tomlinson, B. (2003). Are materials developing?. In B. Tomlinson, (ed.) *Developing materials for language teaching*. London: Continuum.
- Top 200 Universities (2009). *Times Higher Education*. Retrieved 12, February 2010, from, <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk>.
- Tsui, A. B. M. (2005). Expertise in teaching: perspectives and issues. In K. Johnson (Ed.). *Expertise in second language learning and teaching*. pp. 167-189. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tze-Ming Chou, P. (2010). Advantages and disadvantages of ESL course books. *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. XVI, 11.
- Urmston, A.W., & Pennington, M.C. (2008). The beliefs and practices of novice teachers in Hong Kong: Change and resistance to change in an

- Asian teaching context In T.S.C. Farrell (Ed.) *Novice language teachers: insights and perspectives for the first year* (pp.89-103). London: Equinox.
- Verloop, N., Van Driel, J., & Meijer, P.C. (2001). *Teacher knowledge and the knowledge base of teaching. International Journal of Educational Research*, 35(5), 441-46.
- Waters, A. (2005). Expertise in teacher education, Helping teachers to learn. In K. Johnson (Ed.) *Expertise in second language learning and teaching* pp. 210-229. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Williams, A. (2003). How to write and analyse a questionnaire. *Journal of Orthodontics*, Vol. 30, 245–252.
- Willis, H. (2008). *Textbook materials and foreign language teaching: Perspectives from the classroom*. The NECTFL Review 62 Spring summer. pp 5-28.
- Woolley, C. M. (2009). Meeting the mixed methods challenge of integration in a sociological study of structure and agency. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 3(1), 7-25.
- Woods, D. (1996). *Teacher cognition in language teaching. Beliefs, decision making, and classroom practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Woods, D. (1991). Teachers' interpretations of second language teaching curricula. *RELC Journal*, 22, 1-19.
- Zacharias, N. (2005). Teachers' beliefs about internationally-published materials: A survey of tertiary English teachers in Indonesia. *RELC Journal*, 36 (1), 23-37.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

LANGUAGE TEACHERS' USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

This survey is part of a study I am doing about language teacher's views about the use of instructional materials*. It will take 15-20 minutes to complete and the information you provide will be treated in confidence. Your responses are important for this study. Thank you for your participation.

*Instructional materials may include: textbooks, internet, video and audio tapes, magazines, pictures, wall charts, realia, and any other kind of visual, printed or electronic aids.

Section 1: Experience in Language teaching

This section asks about your experience in English language teaching. Tick one option

- 1.1 Age
- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| less than 25 | 26-35 | 36-44 | more than 44 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 1.2 Experience in teaching English at university:
- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1-5 yrs | 6-10 yrs | 11-15 yrs | 16-20 yrs | more than 20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section 2: Instructional Materials

This section asks about what kinds of materials you use in your language lessons and how they are chosen.

2.1 In your opinion who should select the instructional materials you use in your language lessons? Tick one option.

- a. Myself
- b. The language teaching staff (language academy)
- c. The faculty of languages' coordinators
- d. The faculty's head teacher
- e. Other (please specify)

2.2 Who actually selects the instructional materials you use in your language lessons?

Tick one option.

- a. Myself
- b. The language teaching staff (language academy)
- c. The faculty of languages' coordinators
- d. The faculty's head teacher
- e. Other (please specify)

2.3 Which one of the following best describes the materials you most frequently use in your language lessons? Tick one option.

- a. internet -based (materials from the internet and on the internet)
- b. textbook-based (mainly textbooks)
- c. authentic materials-based (e.g. newspapers & magazines, movies)
- d. a balanced combination of two or more of the above
- e. other (please specify)

2.4 How often do you incorporate instructional materials designed by yourself in your

Section 4: Textbook use

This section asks for your views about textbooks and their use in your language lessons

4.1 Tick the option that best expresses your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Textbooks help both teachers and students to achieve the course objectives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The textbook is a framework which helps accomplish course components on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Textbooks provide sufficient ready-made activities and tasks to satisfy my students' needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Textbooks allow me extend the class activities to the learners' homes by allocating homework.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Textbooks allow me a great deal of opportunity for adapting the course to my students' needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Textbooks allow me move ahead and back for future and past lessons if I need it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Textbooks allow me access to the culture of English speaking countries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Textbooks help me minimize the costs of producing other materials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.2 In your opinion when should a textbook series used by an institution be replaced by a new series. Tick one option

- a. when texts and pictures become out of date
- b. when grammar content does not match the course syllabus
- c. when I consider it to be necessary
- d. when the language teaching staff consider it to be necessary
- e. when learners' feedback suggests the series is no longer effective
- f. other (specify)

4.3 How often do you complement textbooks with any other type of materials?
 Always Frequently Occasionally Never

Section 5: Contextual factors and ELT materials

5.1 This section asks about how contextual factors may influence the use of instructional materials on your language teaching practice. Tick the option that best expresses your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. I have no choice in deciding which materials to use in my language classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I am allowed to use any materials as long as I achieve the course goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The length of the language courses is enough to achieve the textbook goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. The fact that some learners are allowed to use poor quality photocopies of the textbooks affects my teaching practice negatively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Criteria to select textbook series should be based on their usefulness in teaching rather than on the students' possibilities to afford them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. When I teach language courses which are not of the level I usually teach and have to use other textbooks my teaching is affected negatively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. I have identified some materials which would be of great utility in my teaching practice but they are not available at the Faculty of Languages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. The resource centre holds adequate material to support my language lessons.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 6: Further participation

In the next stage of this study I would like to talk to teachers about the use of materials and learn about how they use materials on their teaching.

Would you be willing to contribute to this stage?

Yes No

If yes please write your e-mail address and/or telephone number

Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire

Appendix 2: Interview schedule Interview two ME1

Interview Schedule Two (Participant One)

- Criteria to select materials (session one)
- Materials used as a plan or used spontaneously (four observed sessions)
- How decisions were made about what stage to implement materials (other than book)
- How materials drove activities (second session)
- How the ss' use of photocopies affects teaching (most students use photocopies others nor even have a book)
- How materials helped have ss engaged in class(fourth session teacher used a variety of worksheets)
- How materials helped achieve course objectives (four observed sessions)
- Criteria to use/ not to use textbooks (third session textbook was not used)
- How materials contributed to ss' skills development (third session focused on speaking)

Appendix 3: Qualitative field notes

Observation Sheet

Participant ME1

Observation number	Two	Number of Students	15	date	09/06/10
--------------------	-----	--------------------	----	------	----------

MATERIAL USED: CHART & handouts
 comments: No lesson plan
 Lesson started 7:30 (30 min late)
 Teacher shows a chart with names of colours. Ss read them loudly first in English then in Spanish (practice colours for a while)
 She says that is a speaking activity.
 Teacher moves on another activity.
 She distributes handouts (she calls them worksheets). Taking turns they read a short article about names.
 ME1 reads along with the ss and explains any word ss don't know. Teacher walks around
 The teacher asks students to tell each other about their names and how they were given those names
 Teacher continues working with handouts. SS are asked to complete an exercise in pairs.
 Teacher asks who did you receive your first love kiss? how old were you?
 Teacher works on handouts for 30 minutes
 Handouts are used following ME1's instruction. she asks them to swap their materials and check each other's answers
 *ME1 did not use textbook
 when they finish, ME1 provides further copies, then ss answer an exercise individually

warm up

from

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW

- How do you decide which material to start with?
- when you select materials do you have in mind the skills you are to practice?
- what is the role of materials in consolidating class objectives?
- How do materials drive activities?
- why did not use the textbook?

Appendix 4 : Sample of Interview transcript

Interview Two LE1 Interview Two

001	Interviewer:	Thank you very much for coming to this second interview, I would like
002		to introduce this interview, asking about your selection of materials;
003		are there any institutional polices you consider, impact or affect the
004		choice of the materials which you use in your classes?
005		
006	LE1:	Well, the institutional guidelines we have, are more related to the use
007		of the book as far as I know, I always try to, you know, mind to those
008		rules, procedures as far as for the book, now this time I didn't follow
009		those guidelines because I thought this was kind of a different course
010		given because of different reasons, and the first one it's too short it's
011		a summer course, and the second one is that I had the opportunity
012		to see my attendance list before teaching the course, and I saw that
013		there was only six of them , six or seven, and so I decided to, not to
014		follow, or continue using the book I was supposed to use, which was
015		"North Star" by the way, and to look at the course content and just
016		select materials specially from the two books found in the library, and
017		that's for the book, also that's what I did, I didn't use the book, so I'm
018		using like an anthology of selected materials,...if I wanted to say that
019		I tried to, I tried to do and teach whatever is going to be important
020		for the students in the long term, for example, I selected a couple of
021		appendixes from TOEFL preparation course, that is an anthology so
022		that was going to be the reference, and that's the reference we're
023		using for different details that come up when we're teaching, now
024		we're using the appendix that has to do with transition of words, the
025		use of, how to organize writings, but they're different things that I
026		think could be useful for the students not only at this point but also in
027		the future as far as for the other materials, like copies, series, or
028		movies, well, that's, I use those because I think that's the authentic
029		language and that students could benefit from it, in terms of,
030		different, pronunciation, vocabulary, and the main reason why I use
031		those is because, I think, students need to get different sorts of
032		input. But that doesn't have to do anything with institutional polices,
033		that's just my....decision.
034		
035	Interviewer:	Your choice, you mentioned something interesting about the benefits
036		that your learners might receive from using certain materials, exactly
037		why do you think that your learners might receive benefits, how
038		would you explain, which are those benefits that students might
039		receive?
040		
041	Teacher 2:	Well, not only language learning benefits, I'm talking about an
042		specific podcast, they listen, they listen to it every week, and that's
043		called "Imagen news" and that's a podcast from a news program that
044		is the radio here in Mexico, and this is a news program for mostly
045		Mexican news that is broadcast in English, so you know, it's about
046		language they are not very familiar with in English, and also in
047		Spanish because the students don't, like, what I do is that, I ask
048		them, "do you watch the news?, do you listen to news?, read the
050		newspapers?", and they're not very well informed, so It's not only
051		about expanding their vocabulary, but also kind of trying to get them
052		located in their own context,...
053		

055	Interviewer:	And informed.
056		
057	Teacher 2:	Yeah, informed, because they are not...in México we are not the type
058		of people that like to be good informed about different issues, so it's
059		not only about English, but also about, you know, trying to raise
060		awareness about the different issues that are happening.
061		
062	Interviewer:	And why to be "aware of their context"?
063		
064	Teacher 2:	Well, because they are living in this context and you cannot be apart
065		from what's going on in your city, region, society, country and
066		because that has to do with what you're doing and affects you
067		directly or indirectly, but that's just the way I perceive it, and plus, I
068		think, they get benefits from listening to that, because their listening,
069		you know, skill, develops and I can see that in their reports because
070		at the beginning they were giving me very short reports, and now
071		they give me long reports, you know, it's, I think it's a very subjective
072		way to evaluate it, but you know, it's a progress I think, and
073		sometimes they give me some vocabulary, perhaps they do not spell
074		it well, but at least they are developing that ability, you know, to listen
075		to specific words. And most of the times they are words that we don't
076		use in English because we don't know this context, but this is just
077		cognates, they just have to get an input where they can become
078		aware that there are different words that they can use in English as
079		well as in Spanish, that are just cognates,
080		
081	Interviewer:	And how do you relate this "awareness" of the news, of what is going
082		on in their context, with the aim of the lesson, with achieving
083		objectives, or yes, with the course content?
084		
085	Teacher 2:	Yeah, well that particular one, I don't relate it all the times, I just say
086		that's a way to improve listening and vocabulary, that one in
087		particular; the one that they're doing, there is another one that they
088		are doing, which is reading, they are reading a book which is called
089		"The cave" which is called "The Cave" by Jose Saramago that one
090		always have them reflect upon the things that we do particularly in
091		grammar and to look for the different because.. it is very fantastic
092		knowledge because, the... this course has a heavy purpose on
093		clauses, relative clauses, restrictive non restrictive and there is a
094		whole thing and has to be discussed as far as for relative clauses
095		and it is kind of difficult for them to see these topics isolated so what
096		I do is always have them read, you know, particular chapters, they
097		already have schedule and look for this particular grammar points
098		and use, which is from the book, I also, for example this week, I
099		don't remember when exactly, we were watching an episode of the
100		series, and I was pausing you know, first I let them see, but then we
101		repeat, but we were just focusing on language use, in relation to the
102		grammar point we've been dealing with, we've been dealing with the
103		relative clauses for like three weeks now...
104		
105	Interviewer:	Ok.
106		
107	Teacher 2:	..But, I think it's necessary.
108		
109	Interviewer:	When you said that your courses focuses on this particular points of

110		grammar, do you refer to the syllabus, I mean, the course syllabus,
111		or the material you provided to your learners.
112		
113	Teacher 2:	Yeah, yeah. It's the syllabus of course, and of course I try to select,
114		it's not, ...the course doesn't only have heavy focus on grammar,
115		because for example this week, I haven't touched grammar, but of
116		course, if we have a syllabus, we have to...you know match it, the
117		way we do every day, and that every day, whether we do it in class,
118		so the anthology has like, probably a 70% of grammar writing and the
119		rest is tasks, but we don't only use the anthology, we use other
120		materials, like in this particular course we're trying to develop, three
121		different types of essays, which are, comparison contrast, cause
122		effect and argumentative so, like this week we've been dealing with
123		only essay writing, so if I was to answer the question, if my course
124		has heavy focus on grammar?, it doesn't , but the anthology does.
125		
126	Interviewer:	..You said, well, something that was very interesting to me was, that,
127		the fact that you decided not use the textbook, I mean, the textbook,
128		which was suggested by the institution, but you provided some, as
129		you said, completion of materials from other sources, and then, do
130		you use,... in what ways this replacing the materials, is better, more
131		interesting, more attractive, than the textbook? what do you think is
132		the very reason, to replace the official book?
133		
134	Teacher 2:	Well, if you were to analyze the " North star" book...you will see , it
135		has a very heavy purpose on vocabulary building, readings, and they
136		focus on grammar is not that heavy readings at least on the surface,
137		the thing is that this particular book you have to devote a lot of time
138		to the readings because most of the readings are very extensive
139		readings, and you have to devote a lot of time to the vocabulary
140		building, and I thought that we were not going to have that much time
141		during the summer, I mean, it's the same number of hours but it is
142		not because having, you know a four session, you know.. during
143		five days a weeks, for eight weeks, it's not the best for, neither the
144		teacher or the students,
145		
146	Interviewer:	Which are not really eight, are probably six right, that are used in the
147		lesson..?
148		
149	Teacher 2:	Yeah, yeah, yeah, that get used, because in particular, because of
150		the schedule, it's from two to six, and at two o'clock some of
151		students need to eat something, it's really hard, it's been really hard
152		this summer or spring, I don't know, so it doesn't really amount the
153		same number of hours, so..and spending, plus, plus you have to
154		spend a lot of time only devoted to the readings, because in my
155		opinion, if I was to ask the students to buy the book and I didn't use
156		it, there's no point, so it's like a waste of time and money because,
157		for more of the students, of this students, in this part of the university,
158		is kind of ...difficult to get the books, not very cheap, you know...I
159		think the book is about 350 pesos, so... that is not cheap here in
160		Mexico.
161		
162	Interviewer:	What about, the use of photocopies in your course, the fact that your
163		learners use photocopies, how does it affect your teaching, or your
164		students learning, is there any way this is affected?

165		
167	Teacher 2:	Well. I haven't seen any negative aspects so far in particular, I'm
168		talking about this course now, but yeah, especially when you're
169		photocopying a book, a textbook, for example in other courses I have
170		given some of the students just photocopy the textbook, so it's very
171		difficult for them to, because they go for the cheapest copies, so it's
172		very difficult for them, they don't really go for the high quality copies
173		the 50c each, they go for...the cheapest and...
174		
175	Interviewer:	Poor quality.
176		
177	Teacher 2:	You know, poor quality, very cheap, so in those cases, it's difficult for
178		the students because, at some point they don't have the copy or, the
179		copy is very poor quality, or the images do not appear or things like
180		that, and yeah of course they have to, if they cannot work with their
181		copies, what they do is that they turn to try to look for a friend that
182		has the copies or,... I mean the book; and that they can work with,
183		but then they split the time, split the materials and ...that is like...
184		instead of joining a person who is working, they drag behind and they
185		...I mean...it happens, that sometimes the students do not have the
186		same materials, but they do because they have the copies
187		sometimes, not only the ones that don't have copies have difficulties
188		but they also they pass the difficulties to the other students, but in
189		this case, the selection of materials that compose the anthology were
190		not very colorful they didn't have a lot of images and color images in
191		this particular anthology, material, so I haven't seen any problems
192		yet, only the fact that maybe they do not bind them, they do not put
193		them together so sometimes they are like, if I ask them to open your
194		photocopies ...
195		Yes, in a folder.....In a particular page, they spend like two minutes
196		to look for the page number, but that's about it, but that's not too bad.
197		
198	Interviewer:	Do you believe the material; I mean ...the anthology you said is
199		better than the book for this particular class?
200		
201	Teacher 2:	For this particular moment yes, I think so.
202		
203		
204	Interviewer:	In what sense?
205		
206	Teacher 2:	Well, It lets me...you know... go with my own pace, teach with my
207		own pace, if I was to use the book, I would feel like I'm forced to
208		follow the lessons that the book is giving me, and that if I was to start
209		a lesson...lesson 1 in the book, in the textbook there is no way to
210		escape, from it because it's a whole package, if you start this you
211		cannot go backwards or skip, you see...so like I said before, it takes
212		a lot of time and for the anthology I'm using, I was careful to select
213		the things that I thought were going to be necessary, that matched
214		the syllabus, and also that provided me with enough time to finish on
215		time.
216		
217	Interviewer:	Would you say that the current materials you are using in your
218		course are facilitating you the teachings and the learners the
219		learning?
220		

221	Teacher 2:	I think so, and I have sensed with the students...you know...the
222		students always give you some subjective feedback about the
223		materials, and at the very beginning I told them "we're not using the
224		book, that's my call and we'll see what happens" and I think that their
225		response to the materials has been positive.
226		
227	Interviewer:	Talking about this collection, we commented that this was suggested
228		by the institution as the textbook for the course and obviously you...I
229		mean... you decided not to use it, do you consider there are any
230		other institutional polices that also...that might affect the choice of
231		materials?
232		
233	Teacher 2:	...err....other institutional polices...
234		
235	Interviewer:	So we have, for example various levels of authority here, we have
236		the head teacher, we have also the academy, the language
237		academy, and...or there may be student's conditions or other
238		contextual factors that might contribute to your choice?
239		
240	Teacher 2:	Well...for this particular course I think that I also thought about, well I
241		always think about the students when I'm going to select additional
242		material, or in this case an alternative material so the thing that...
243		
244		
245	Interviewer:	The student's financial situation?
246		
247		
248	Teacher 2:	Yeah, that and the number of students in each classroom, for
249		example, the fact that I have six or seven students which is not
250		normal...
251		
252	Interviewer:	Yeah It's initial....
253		
254	Teacher 2:	Yeah, we usually have from 15 to 20-25 students in each classroom,
255		you know...that made me think about how easy it would be for me to
256		try to implement an alternative for a material, because...
257		
258	Interviewer:	Ok.
259		
260	Teacher 2:	...it's not a large number of students that I needed to convince in a
261		way, that, that was the right choice, and because we have 15, 20-25
262		students, they always, they always know what, what the material's
263		going to be when they pass from subsequent level, so in this point I
264		thought " yeah it's only 6, I can deal with this..." sometimes students
265		already have the materials, they just look for the materials and they
266		don't,...they already assume they are going to use the textbook, so
267		sometimes you come the very first day of class, day one... one or
268		two students might already have the materials, so what I did was,
269		day one, I ask them "has anyone got enough materials yet, the
270		textbook yet?" and they say " no" so then I talk to them, with them ,
271		and I told them what are we using for the materials, go and buy it,
272		and plus I thought about their financial status, and I thought "oh it's
273		going to be cheaper" you know.
	Interviewer:	Do you consider materials contribute in some way to have the

274		students engaged in the lesson?
276		
277	Teacher 2:	Oh yes, yeah when the students don't like the textbook, of course it's almost impossible to address everybody's learning styles with only one particular textbook but, talking about the textbook, sometimes I've sensed that some students, just don't like the textbook, they just, they might have it, and I've seen it in my lessons, in my classes, they might have the book but they just don't use it.
278		
279		
280		
281		
282		
283		
284	Interviewer:	What would you suggest as the best way to select the textbook, I mean for the textbook to be right for your lesson?
285		
286		
287	Teacher 2:	...I don't know that answer...well...
288		
289	Interviewer:	I mean, my question is in relation to who should choose select the textbook for the...courses
290		
291		
292	Teacher 2:	Well I think there has to be a committee of course, and I think there is, but I just don't know who that is, they ****is the academy of Lengua Meta...we should include students of course, I mean, it's necessary...
293		
294		
295		
296		
297	Interviewer:	Is important? ...
298		
299	Teacher 2:	It is very important, although I don't know the conditions or the guidelines for that to happen because you have to invite students, not just any student, you'd have to be very careful with that, you also have to invite the Lengua Meta teachers, because sometimes the Lengua Meta teachers, because sometimes the Lengua Meta teachers just receive the order " you're going to use this book", ok, and then you have to deal with that, I guess ...and I'm guessing, wishing that somebody conducted an evaluation, as far as for the use of the books, the particular book we use, and of course there's always people that say you know, the book that we used before was the best and the book that we're using now is the best and the book that we're going to use in the future is will be the best, but yeah, there needs to be more people involved in this selection, I would suggest that you include students, I mean...it's just personal question...
300		
301		
302		
303		
304		
305		
306		
307		
308		
309		
310		
311		
312		And the teachers in charge of the courses...
313		... there is no question about that, the students should be involved in that, and the teachers of course sometimes so they know what's going on, or sometimes they tell us " send us your suggestions" but it's very, whenever that happens I sensed that we're very informally...very.." send it to us, but it's not for sure we'll listen to you" that's my...just...my feeling about that.
314		
315		
316		
317		
318		
319		
320	Interviewer:	Ok. Great. In the previous interview you raised the issue about the... that you like, or that you are very interested in implementing the internet as broadcast, blogs, and also videos and other electronic resources in your practice, and I saw that, you are really using this in your practice...in your opinion, this materials are used because they are to contribute to your teaching practice, or to achieve your
321		
322		
323		
324		

325		objectives, in what ways do you think these materials contribute to achieve your objectives?
326		
327		
328	Teacher 2:	Well, I think that there's two main reasons, first is that they're authentic, most of them are, defined download video, series or whatever, it's always something that hasn't been adapted for teaching purposes, so I think it is authentic and students appreciate the authentic material, in particular at this point, when students are in a upper intermediate higher level, they appreciate authentic materials because in contributes to the engagement of the lesson...that's my opinion, when students only work with the textbook in higher levels I think that they would do it but they're not really engaged, there are just following the process, they are just following the procedure, but they are not really engaged and when the students are engaged there is a better environment and everything flows, natural, so that's what I think, students feel like there is more, there is more to discover than the textbook and the fixed materials, so that's what I do, and that's how I think that contributes to the lesson.
329		
330		
331		
332		
333		
334		
335		
336		
337		
338		
339		
340		
341		
342		
343	Interviewer:	So..it's important, from your view point, that for the language teachers, to go beyond the textbook content and to explore other areas, and as you said, this is, you mentioned that this is particular important for advanced learners, do you then, do you believe that this is, as the students are going to upper stages, they should become less and less dependent from the textbook?
344		
345		
346		
347		
348		
349		
350	Teacher 2:	I think so, because the textbook will not help them in real context, and the textbook is not going to be with them, and they are not going to be carrying the textbook everyday, when they go teaching, when they go, when they go abroad, when they have a real life speaking, second language speaking situation, they will have a textbook to go for the reference, so this is the grammar that you have to use now, that doesn't happen. So yeah, I mean, it's always good to have a basis, it's always good to...I mean , I say " let's go trough the books and just go freely teaching whatever, comes to our minds" but yeah they have to be complementary that's what I'm tying to say, they have to be complementary.
351		
352		
353		
354		
355		
356		
357		
358		
359		
360		
361	Interviewer:	Alright, well a final question is, at some point in the previous interview you literally said that the textbook is, well, a very important resource, and now you have said that it is not...that....it should not be a central material in, how would you explain this contradiction that it is important and at the same time it is not? In what other aspects the book should be central?
362		
363		
364		
365		
366		
367	Teacher 2:	Erm...well I think is that, whether we like it or not, syllabus are based in textbook, I mean..people might say that that's not true, but it is true, so when we have a syllabus that is based on a textbook, it's very difficult, you know, not to challenge into the basis of lesson, because teachers also experience pressures, they have to finish, and for example if it was me, I would feel, frustrated if I had a particular period of time to finish six lessons, six chapters of a particular book, and I didn't finish those, because...I would feel sad, because my
368		
369		
370		
371		
372		
373		
378		

379		students spent some money you know, to get something at the end,
380		like a service, but on the other hand, teachers also have to always
381		remember that it's not all about the book, I mean teachers, every
382		single teacher learnt using the book, but also by experiencing real life
383		situations, real speaking situations, I'm talking about the second
384		language, so it's a combination of both, it's very easy just to follow
385		the book and just forget about everything else, that's easy because
386		with the book you have everything, you have exercises, you have
387		explanations, you have readings, you have almost everything, almost
388		everything so it's in a way, it's very easy, but you know, if you really
389		want to make your teaching, at least, I don't know if more effective,
390		but at least different, probably is best to compliment with different
391		materials, the ones that you want, the ones that you think are
392		suitable for that particular class of teaching, but yeah, you have to
393		complement at some point, if you don't want to become a boring
394		teacher or I don't know, there might be, and there are students that
395		like it, you know, that like just to follow the structure of the textbook,
396		not everybody.
397	Interviewer	Ok, it was very interesting, thank you very much for this interview, it's
398		been very rewarding.
399		Thank you.
400	Teacher 2	You are welcome

Appendix 5: Transcript used in actual analysis

ME1
Angeles

Interview 1

APPENDIX

Teacher One (ME1) Interview One		
001	Interviewer:	First of all thank you very much for your help
002		
003	Teacher 1:	Oh, you are welcome
004		
005	Interviewer:	Can you please tell me about your experience in language teaching?
006		
007	Teacher 1:	Well, should I say my name?
008		
009	Interviewer:	No, no
010		
011	Teacher 1:	Well where should I start? I can say that of all the teaching I have gone through I think is the most rewarding feeling when, when someone finds you in the street and says "hello teacher, do you remember me?" and..and not just basically because they remember you but because something they learned, I hope, is still in their heads and I take it as a satisfaction, um reward, but most of all I feel it when I am in the classroom, and..and for me if it wasn't for the students I don't think I would be here, I mean it's been so long and every single group, every single individual is so different, and there are times when I am amazed and amazed every time I go into a classroom there are so many ways of learning, that everyone one has a personal style, a different way of understanding. I have tried everything and I am still surprised of the things that they, they grasp when I think they are not understanding by their gestures whatever, but every time I am more amazed how quick they get the idea and...and it has to do with where we are living now, we are living very fast, internet and there are good advantages and what worries me sometimes is the creativeness they are losing because of these new gadgets that we have and technology no?
012		
013		
014		
015		
016		
017		
018		
019		
020		
021		
022		
023		
024		
025		
026		
027		
028		
029		
030	Interviewer	How long have you taught at university?
031		
032	Teacher 1	Oh university? Well here in this university I've been working for almost 26 years so..it sounds easy but I have learnt also with the students not only teaching but I learnt things from them too which I..I think that it is the most surprising events that happens to me when I walk in I have to forget all about my life and I have to deal with them what do they need what do they want and it depends on them if they want to.. ok teacher I did not quite understood this grammar structure could you give us a little bit more feedback or could we do something else? But they don't have to tell me I can see it in their face you know...so
033		
034		
035		
036		
037		
038		
039		
040		
041		
042	Interviewer	Ohm let's talk a little bit about materials you have used in this long years in.. in.. English teaching erm.. How would you describe the..usefulness of materials; in general materials of any kind in your practice?
043		
044		
045		
046	Teacher 1	Oh It's such a wonderful thing ah.. I remember when I first began to teach in this university I remember that most of my colleagues were against games It's a waste of time flash cards it's children stuff, they didn't really take it into a count, but for me it has worked beautifully, it has worked for me because maybe I have worked with students that are..
047		
048		
050		
051		

Teaching Experience

Yrs' experience

Views about materials

052		that are sometimes behind or don't understand quite well, what we want
053		form them.. what objectives, and of course many times I have students
055		that are weak students many times I have students that are repeating a
056		"lengua meta" (language course) or language subject a foreign language
057		subject and I try to understand what their real problem is, and of course
058		this has to do with, from the beginning of their learning and teaching
059		process, most of all it's because of resources you know!? Erm.. many
060		times students didn't have all the needs covered and many times for
061		example our situation in Mexico doesn't help a lot and the teachers have
062		to be creative of doing something with what we have in our hands and
063		we what we could afford because this is a ermm.. I didn't think that was a
064		problem but it is! social culture it's along story and you know that! But as
065		I went through all the years I... I realized that they had problems in your
066		own language so I had to make it a little bit easier for them, and I realized
067		that I was lucky because I know my mother language, my mother tongue
068		language and I could help them a little bit more because there were
069		times where they didn't even know what was a subject what was a verb
070		"what are you talking about teacher"? This is English no Spanish.. but
071		they didn't have their ideas clarified in their mother tongue and its going
072		to be very very difficult for that student to progress.
073		
074	Interviewer	So, what you mean is that materials have helped you support your
075		language teaching?
076		
077	Teacher 1	Yes a lot!, I would say a 90 percent because students are very erm.. their
078		styles are more like observing, listening and very teacher dependant so I
079		try to use different activities with different materials but I most focusing
080		on their means because I know the theory part they say "Oh yes"! Now
081		the worst question that you can ask the students is "did you understand"?
082		Everyone says: yes! I say what a wonderful teacher I am everybody
083		understands but that's not true!, we assumed they understood! but little
084		by little I know there is all kind of students whilst students shies to be
085		afraid to make mistakes that's one of the biggest problems that we have
086		here in this university, that they are afraid to make mistakes I say: make
087		them! Make them! Ha-ha (laughs)
088		
089	Interviewer	What would you say has been most supportive material in your practice
090		over the years?
091		
092	Teacher 1	Erm.. I would have to say work sheets exercises, as soon as I give the
093		theory of a grammar point I have to jump in with the practice, to have a
094		little bit more clarified or understood or.. to have the grammar instructions
095		a little bit more clear with the examples erm.. most of the time I use a lot
096		of diagrams, charts, something that they have to see and when I know
097		there is a..erm. in the launch teaching, that is amazing that you spend
098		hours and hours trying to explain things to the students until I get tired
099		and I say hey! What's happening here?! Why don't you really grasp the
100		rules of this grammar? and well, they didn't know what to say to me so I
101		started ok' I'm going to work with you and you are going to give a
102		presentation, after grammar points, you know the amazing part was,
103		students to students understood better than students with teachers, do
104		you follow me? Like if they needed to listen to maybe their ..erm.. their
105		how can I say, their code?! Or something happens between students to
106		students and they understood a little bit better when the teacher says in
107		use all this theory part erm.. most of them are aware most of them are

Main features of her SS!

Relevance of material in her lesson

Rationale for using work sheets

How she uses worksheets

Appendix 6: Research Participant Consent Form

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

School of education The University of Leeds

TEACHERS' USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ON A BA ELT IN MEXICO

Who is doing this research?

This study is being conducted by Eliphelet Rivera Cuayahuitl, a postgraduate student from The School of Education University of Leeds. He can be contacted on eder@leeds.ac.uk. His supervisors are Dr. Simon Borg and Dr. Martin Wedell.

Purpose of Research

This study aims to understand language teachers' use of instructional materials.

What will participating in the study involve?

Participants will first complete a questionnaire. A smaller group will then participate in, two interviews and four observations.

Specific Procedures to be Used

- A questionnaire will be administered first, few days before the first observation.
- Then I will observe four teaching practices, supported with audio recording and field notes.
- Participants will take part in two interviews lasting 20-30 minutes each. The first will take place before the first observation session and the second, after the fourth observation session. The interviews will be audio recorded.

Duration of Participation

You will collaborate for about one week.

What will you do with the information you collect?

The study has been approved by the University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee. Data will be protected following the regulations of the University of Leeds. I will transcribe interviews and together with information from questionnaires and from observation sessions will be used to write an account of how you actually use instructional materials in your teaching practices. All data will be managed in full confidence. This means that only the researcher collecting the information and the two research supervisors from The University of Leeds will have access to any collected information. Your identity will not be disclosed.

Benefits to the Individual

Discussing your teaching with the researcher may provide you with opportunities to reflect on your work. The knowledge and outcomes generated from this work will be of great value for the faculty of languages BUAP, and hence to all staff there.

Consent

I agree to participate in this study voluntarily. I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

If I have any questions about this research project, I can contact Dr Simon Borg S.Borg@education.leeds.ac.uk or Dr Martin Wedell M.Wedell@education.leeds.ac.uk

I have had the opportunity to read this **consent form**, ask questions about the research project.



26th May, 2010

Participant's Signature

Date

Maria de los Angeles Preciado

Participant's Name



26 May 2010

Researcher's Signature

Date

Appendix 7: Sample material from LE1's anthology

Definition: We use the relative pronouns to refer to a noun mentioned before and of which we are adding more information. They are used to join two or more sentences and forming in that way what we call "relative sentences".

Relative pronouns

Who, Whom, That, Which

whoever, whomever,

whichever

For example:

- People **who** speak two languages are called bilingual.
* In this example, the relative "**who**" introduces the relative sentence "speak two languages" that describes or gives more information about the noun "people".

Relative pronouns: Subject or Object

As the relative pronouns relate to another noun preceding it in the sentence, they connect a dependent clause to an antecedent (a noun that precedes the pronoun.) Therefore, relative pronouns acts as the subject or object of the dependent clause.

For example:

- The chef **who** won the competition studied in Paris.
* Here, "**who**" relates back to (or is relative to) the noun "Chef". "**Who**" also acts as the subject of the dependent clause and the verb "won".
=> The dependent clause: who won the competition.
=> The independent clause: The chef studied in Paris.
- The shirt **that** Carl bought has a stain on the pocket.
* Here, "**that**" relates back to (or is relative to) the noun "shirt". "**That**" is also the object of the verb "bought".
=> The dependent clause is: that Carl bought.
=> The independent clause: The shirt has a stain on the pocket.

Referring to people: Who, Whom, Whoever, Whomever

These pronouns take a different case depending on whether the relative pronoun is a subject or an object in the dependent clause.

1. Subjective case

Use the subjective case when these relative pronouns are the subject (initiating the action) of the dependent clause: **Who, Whoever**

For example:

- Negotiations were not going smoothly between the two leaders, **who** made no bones about not liking each other.
* "**Who**" relates back to the noun "leaders" and is the subject of the dependent clause and the verb "made".
- Most workers, **whoever** was not employed by the auto manufacturer, toiled at one of the millions of little minnow companies.
* "**Whoever**" relates back to the noun "workers" and is the subject of the dependent clause and the verb "was employed".

Objective case

Use the objective case when these relative pronouns are the object (receiving the action) of the dependent clause: **Whom, Whomever**

For example:

- This is the approach taken by journalists, **whom** some consider to be objective.
* "**Whom**" relates back to the noun "journalists" and is the object of the verb "consider". The subject of the dependent clause is "some".

- The three representatives, **whomever** the committee chooses, should be at the meeting tomorrow.
* "**Whomever**" relates back to the noun representatives and is the object of the verb "chooses". The subject of the dependent clause is "Committee".

Referring to a place, thing or idea: Which, That

When using relative pronouns for places, things or ideas, rather than determining case, the writer must decide whether the information in the dependent clause is essential to the meaning of the independent clause or simply additional information.

When information is **critical** to the understanding of the main clause, use **That** as the appropriate relative pronoun and do not set the information off by commas.

For example:

- Russian generals have delivered a message **that** is difficult to ignore.
* "**That**" relates back to the noun "message" and is necessary for the reader to know what "message" the sentence is about.

- There is another factor **that** obviously boosts the reputation of both of these men.
* "**That**" relates back to the noun "factor" and is necessary for the reader to know what "factor" the sentence is about.

Appendix 8: Sample from LE3's handouts

REIGNING CATS AND DOGS DEPT.

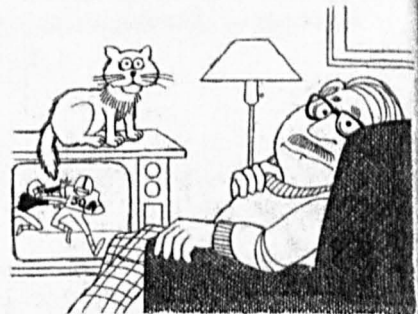
YOU KNOW YOU'RE REALLY

YOU KNOW YOU'RE REALLY A PET OWNER WHEN...



... you're constantly taking your dog to the Veterinarian for a check-up... and you haven't seen your own Doctor in years.

YOU KNOW YOU'RE REALLY A PET OWNER WHEN...



... you have your Tomcat "fixed"... and now all he does is sit around and stare at you.

YOU KNOW YOU'RE REALLY A PET OWNER WHEN...

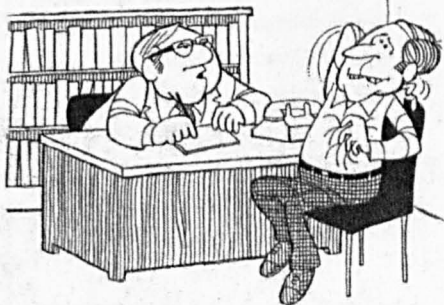


... you force yourself to venture out during a howling blizzard because you discover you're out of cat food...



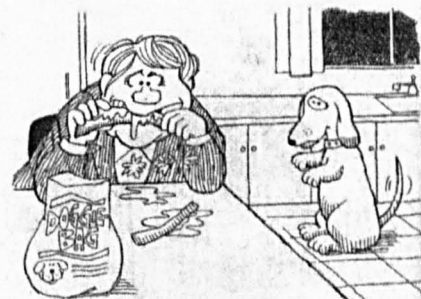
... and then she refuses to eat!

YOU KNOW YOU'RE REALLY A PET OWNER WHEN...



... a Dermatologist charges you twenty-five bucks to come up with a diagnosis of your skin problem... mainly, fleas.

YOU KNOW YOU'RE REALLY A PET OWNER WHEN...



... you decide that the stuff you brought home in the Doggie-Bag is too good to give to a dog.

FOCUSED PRACTICE

1. Discover the Grammar

Read the conversation between Tom and a friend. Underline all the tags.

- Kay:** Hi, Tom. Nice day, isn't it?
- Tom:** Sure is. Not a cloud in the sky. How are you doing?
- Kay:** Pretty good, thanks. You don't know of any vacant apartments, do you? My son is looking for one.
- Tom:** He is? I thought he was staying with you.
- Kay:** Well, he just got a new job, and he wants a place of his own. Do you know of anything?
- Tom:** As a matter of fact, I do. Some friends of mine are moving to New York next month.
- Kay:** They are? What kind of apartment do they have?
- Tom:** A one-bedroom.
- Kay:** It's not furnished, is it?
- Tom:** No. Why? He doesn't need a furnished apartment, does he?
- Kay:** Well, it would be better. He doesn't have much furniture. But I guess he can always rent some, can't he?
- Tom:** Why don't you give your son my number, and I'll give him some more information.
- Kay:** Will you? Thanks, Tom.

2. Getting Ready to Move

Roberta and her husband are talking about their move. Match the statements with the tags.

Statement	Tag
<u> i </u> 1. You've called the movers,	a. can we?
<u> </u> 2. They're coming tomorrow,	b. do we?
<u> </u> 3. This isn't going to be cheap,	c. is he?
<u> </u> 4. You haven't finished packing,	d. isn't it?
<u> </u> 5. We don't need any more boxes,	e. aren't they?
<u> </u> 6. Paul is going to help us,	f. have you?
<u> </u> 7. We can put some things in storage,	g. isn't he?
<u> </u> 8. Jack isn't buying our bookcases,	h. is it?
<u> </u> 9. We need to disconnect the phone,	i. haven't you?

Appendix 10: Sample from ME1's worksheets

1-5 SIMPLE PRESENT AND PRESENT PROGRESSIVE: SHORT ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

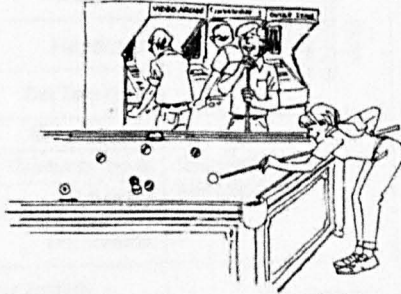
	QUESTION	SHORT ANSWER	LONG ANSWER
SIMPLE PRESENT	Does Bob like tea?	Yes, he <i>does</i> . No, he <i>doesn't</i> .	Yes, he <i>likes</i> tea. No, he <i>doesn't like</i> tea.
	Do you like tea?	Yes, I <i>do</i> . No, I <i>don't</i> .	Yes, I <i>like</i> tea. No, I <i>don't like</i> tea.
PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	Are you studying?	Yes, I <i>am</i> . [*] No, I'm <i>not</i> .	Yes, I <i>am studying</i> . No, I'm <i>not studying</i> .
	Is Yoko studying?	Yes, she <i>is</i> . [*] No, she's <i>not</i> . OR: No, she <i>isn't</i> .	Yes, she <i>is studying</i> . No, she's <i>not studying</i> . OR: No, she <i>isn't studying</i> .
	Are they studying?	Yes, they <i>are</i> . [*] No, they're <i>not</i> . OR: No, they <i>aren't</i> .	Yes, they're <i>studying</i> . No, they're <i>not studying</i> . OR: No, they <i>aren't studying</i> .

^{*} *Am, is, and are* are not contracted with pronouns in short answers.
INCORRECT SHORT ANSWERS: *Yes, I'm. Yes, she's. Yes, they're.*

□ EXERCISE 9: Complete the following dialogues by using the words in parentheses. Also give short answers to the questions as necessary. Use the SIMPLE PRESENT and the PRESENT PROGRESSIVE.

- A: (*Mary, have*) Does Mary have a bicycle?
 B: Yes, she does. She (*have*) has a ten-speed bike.
- A: (*It, rain*) _____ right now?
 B: No, _____. At least, I (*think, not*) _____ so.
- A: (*You, like*) _____ sour oranges?
 B: No, _____. I (*like*) _____ sweet ones.
- A: (*Your friends, write*) _____ a lot of letters?
 B: Yes, _____. I (*get*) _____ lots of letters all the time.
- A: (*The students, take*) _____ a test in class right now?
 B: No, _____. They (*do*) _____ an exercise.

6. A: (*You, know*) _____ Tom Adams?
 B: No, _____. I've never met him.
7. A: (*Your desk, have*) _____ any drawers?
 B: Yes, _____. It (*have*) _____ six drawers.



8. A: (*Jean, study*) _____ at the library this evening?
 B: No, _____. She (*be*) _____ at the student union. She (*play*) _____ pool with her friend.
- A: (*Jean, play*) _____ pool every evening?
 B: No, _____. She usually (*study*) _____ at the library.
- A: (*She, be*) _____ a good pool player?
 B: Yes, _____. She (*play*) _____ pool three or four times a week.
- A: (*You, know*) _____ how to play pool?
 B: Yes, _____. But I (*be, not*) _____ very good.
- A: Let's play sometime.
 B: Okay. That sounds like fun.

Appendix 11: Table 8.1 Main findings of the study

Participants			Main themes emerging from LET and MET's practices											
LE1 LE2 LE3 ME1 ME2 ME3	Teaching approach		Gaps between teachers' words and actual practices	Materials	Main materials used in lessons	Complementary Materials	Advantages of complementary materials	Freedom for using materials	Reasons for using / not using textbooks	Contextual factors teachers' felt influenced the use of materials				
	Materials													
		Anthology												
		Handouts												
		Set Text book												
		ICT materials												
		Grammar book												
		Dictionary												
		Worksheets												
		Provide real English, listening and vocabulary	ICT materials											
		Provided further practice	Grammar book											
		Provided vocabulary and Pronunciation	Dictionary											
		Clarified grammar/ were different from textbook	Worksheets											
			All freedom											
			Some freedom											
	Lack of time	Main reasons	Not use											
	Too much content in textbook													
	Resistance to the fact of not being involved in textbook selection	Other possible reasons												
	Small size of group													
	It is compulsory at the faculty	Main reasons	Use											
	It ensures learning and students' pass													
	Central assessment is textbook-based	Other possible Reasons												
	The textbook is the syllabus													
	8 weeks in theory / 6 weeks in practice	Course length												
	4 hours	Lesson length												
	Materials out of fashion	Resource centre												
	Broken down computers	Facilities												
	School authorities select textbooks	Not being involved in book selection												