

Becoming a Do-it-yourself Designer of English Language Teaching Materials

Mark Wyatt

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Abstract: Many language teachers around the world design materials to supplement those they are provided with to address the needs of the learners in their particular context. This is a task which requires practical knowledge of various kinds relating to learners and language learning, teaching and materials design. However, while there is a growing body of research into the practical knowledge of language teachers, little of this is longitudinal and there is a lack of research into how teachers develop as materials designers. This article focuses on one teacher's growth as a DIY (do-it-yourself) designer of English language teaching materials during an in-service BA TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages) programme in the Middle East. Using qualitative case study methodology, I follow the teacher's development over three years, exploring changes in ideas and teaching practices. Implications for in-service language teacher education are discussed.

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1. Introduction

Many English language teaching (ELT) contexts around the world are characterized by a top-down approach to curriculum design, with all materials provided to teachers, together with instructions on how to use them. Other approaches to curriculum development, in contrast, allow teachers to design some of the materials they use themselves, which, it can be argued, may be beneficial. Yet, there is little existing research into how teachers actually develop the practical knowledge and skills that help them design materials, although such research might be useful to teacher educators. In this article, I investigate how a teacher developed as a DIY (do-it-yourself) designer of ELT materials while studying on a three-year BA TESOL programme (teaching English to speakers of other languages) in the Middle East. [1]

This article is structured in the following way: First, I discuss relevant literature and then explore the research context. There is then a focus on the research methodology used. I next present findings and discuss these, before offering a conclusion. [2]

2. Teachers as Materials Designers

As EL-OKDA (2005), working in the same national context as the one in which I conducted this research, writes: "Curriculum development in almost all Arab countries follows a top-down model in which teacher involvement is confined to the implementation of pre-designed packages of teaching materials" (p.33). While an advantage of such a system is that it allows for rapid centrally-controlled changes in the curriculum, as EL-OKDA explains, there is a danger, too, that it can leave teachers feeling disorientated and lacking in self-confidence, as passive recipients of change rather than agents actively involved in manufacturing it. [3]

There may be different reasons for policy-makers working in diverse national contexts to adopt such a top-down approach to ELT curriculum development, as ALLWRIGHT (1981) indicates. These include a "deficiency view", which holds that learners need to be protected from teachers' deficiencies as materials designers, and a "difference view", which acknowledges that teachers possess expertise, but in different areas. By leaving the materials writing to experts, this view holds, teachers should be free to concentrate on using their interpersonal skills to foster learning in the classroom. [4]

Yet, there is anecdotal evidence that teachers and learners in different contexts can be frustrated by the teaching materials they are asked to use, many of which are mass-produced in the West and used worldwide. BRUTON (1997), for example, reports of teachers he informally surveyed in Spain indicating that neither they nor their students liked their course books very much. The few teachers who were more positive reported that they adapted considerably. Working in a Japanese context, DAVIES (2006, p.9) reports of survey data gathered over time which "consistently reveal that general English textbooks do

not inspire my learners, who often find topics, activities, and level do not match their needs or expectations". BANEGAS (2011), writing in Argentina, complains that such ELT materials tend to focus on uncontroversial topics such as family and hobbies, which are of little interest to teenagers; these materials also over-romanticize Western cultures. [5]

As BLOCK (1991) argues, there is a case for teachers adopting a DIY approach to materials design, with a view to supplementing or replacing part of the course book with their own contributions. He explains that this allows teachers to respond to the geographical and cultural context of the learners, draw upon the topical in referring to current events, and provide a personal touch. [6]

Other criteria are important, too. To support language acquisition, MASUHARA and TOMLINSON (2008) argue, learning materials should provide exposure to English in authentic use in meaningful ways, promote such use and provide opportunities for feedback. They should interest the learners, engage them affectively and cognitively, stimulate discovery and set achievable challenges. They should also sustain positive impact, encouraging the culturally appropriate and meaningful use of the international language outside the classroom. [7]

Designing materials, however, that meet such criteria, is by no means a straightforward process. Reflecting on his own engagement in this area over a long career, DAVIES (2006, p.9) describes materials development as a complex, "multi-faceted and multi-skilled process [drawing on] a wide understanding of all aspects of teaching and learning". In analysing this process, JOLLY and BOLITHO (1998) provide a framework which hints at the constant self-questioning of teachers, as they design, trial and evaluate materials: Are these materials focused on overcoming shortcomings in the course book? Do they address specific language aims and involve authentic communication? Do the materials seem appropriate for the context, given the learners' age, language proficiency, culture, previous knowledge? Are they suitably graded and sequenced? Does the staging of the materials incorporate varied interaction and sufficient practice? Are the materials physically attractive and easy to use? Is the classroom organization appropriate for the use of the materials (with clear instructions, sensible grouping of learners, focused monitoring and helpful feedback)? Do the materials appear to motivate the learners? [8]

Focusing on the cognitive processes involved in materials design, JOHNSON (2003) found that more expert task designers tend to do the following: 1. they demonstrate good logistical control; visualising students doing the task and simulating what they might say, exploring possibilities rapidly, thinking through consequences and abandoning false trails easily, analysing design problems, making higher-level decisions first and adopting breadth-first strategies, designing cyclically and reviewing constantly; and 2. good task designers also enrich their tasks, according to JOHNSON's analysis, through their sensitivity to task logistics, the learners and their context, their tendency to create choices, accommodate variables, and explore ideas while also drawing upon repertoire. However, while it can be inferred that such knowledge and skills develop over

time, there is a lack of longitudinal research into the processes through which expertise in materials design develops. JOHNSON suggests that, besides experience, training in problem-solving might be highly beneficial. [9]

Encouraging problem-solving can be seen as integral to a constructivist approach to teacher education, i.e., one focused on the context-specific needs of the participating teachers (WILLIAMS & BURDEN, 1997). Other features of such an approach include the analysis and adaptation of curriculum materials used in the teachers' context and the encouragement of classroom-based action research, which can lead to sharing. Underpinning such an approach, too, is the encouragement of reflective practice, in the above areas and in the teachers' work in schools (DANGEL & GUYTON, 2004). Courses designed according to such principles are thought to have potential for supporting growth in both ideas and practices (FARRELL, 2007; MANN, 2005), and are thus able to influence teachers' practical knowledge, which ELBAZ (1981) describes in terms of the self, milieu, subject matter, curriculum and instruction. [10]

Practical knowledge has been defined by CALDERHEAD (1988, p.54) as "the knowledge that is directly related to action ... that is readily accessible and applicable to coping with real-life situations, and is largely derived from teachers' own classroom experience". Practical knowledge is informed by formal knowledge, and is also personal, tacit, systematic and dynamic, defined and refined on the basis of teachers' educational and professional experiences throughout their lives (BORG, 2006). As teachers develop in practical knowledge over time, supported by constructivist teacher education, I believe they may start to develop expertise in various aspects of their work, including materials design, though this process is likely to be lengthy. The experts in JOHNSON's (2003) study had many years experience. [11]

3. The Research Context

This study took place in the context of a BA TESOL programme run by the University of Leeds for the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman. This three-year in-service course was designed for approximately 900 Diploma-holding Omani teachers of English, studying in successive cohorts between 1999 and 2008 (my research was with the fourth of these cohorts: 2003-5). Programme goals included helping the teachers contribute to curriculum renewal. Course content included methodology, language and research strands, offering "a state-of-the-art coverage of the field of TESOL", according to the independent evaluation of RICHARDS and RIXON (2002, p.14). [12]

Various criteria used by DANGEL and GUYTON (2004) to identify constructivism in teacher education are evident in the BA TESOL programme design. This incorporated participant-centred, task-based, analytical and interactive work. Awareness-raising activities invited teachers to re-examine their beliefs and practices as teachers of English. Input was provided in the form of readings, videos of classroom practice, role-plays and scenarios of classroom situations to prompt teachers to engage with theoretical material and to connect this with their

own views and experiences. In addition, the teachers were encouraged to engage in action research. These features of the course seemed to allow for the possibility of deep learning. [13]

Apart from an eight-week summer school in the second year, held in Leeds in the UK, the programme was taught entirely in Oman through a combination of intensive and part-time study. There were 2-6 week blocks in the winter and summer, when the teachers were free from classroom duties. Then, during term-time, the teachers were released from school once a week to attend classes led by regional tutors, such as myself, who were based full-time in Oman. Key aims of these day release sessions were to give teachers opportunities to review material covered in the intensive blocks and to enable them to reflect on their attempts to use this material to inform their classroom practices. Once a semester, regional tutors visited the teachers in their schools to observe classes and to discuss these with teachers; these observations were not assessed and the focus of the discussions was on helping the teachers reflect. [14]

As to the curriculum of the BA, of most relevance to this study were modules that involved teachers in evaluating, adapting and designing materials. These included, most notably, a module in the third year entitled "Materials Design and Development" (MDD), which included reference to JOLLY and BOLITHO's (1998) framework for materials design (referred to above). The MDD content also drew upon early methodology modules, such as "Teaching English to Young Learners" (TEYL) and "Tasks in Language Learning" (Tasks), which introduced teachers to notions of communicativeness (with a focus on CAMERON's 2001 model of a communicative task, which contains preparation and follow-up elements around a "core" communicative activity). The assignments for these modules and later ones of relevance, such as "Teaching Speaking and Listening" (TS&L), involved teachers in analysing their curriculum materials, considering how these materials might be adapted, and then designing, implementing and reflecting on tasks they created and used with their learners. More generally, the MDD module, too, built on modules that addressed issues such as: "Language Acquisition and Learning" (LAL), "Assessing Children's Language Learning" and "Researching TESOL" (for a fuller description of the BA TESOL programme, see ATKINS, LAMB & WEDELL, 2009). [15]

The BA Programme was part of a broader curriculum renewal project. Some teachers were already working with a newer curriculum in highly modern, state-of-the-art schools with smaller classes (maximum 35), and faced challenges in interpreting the new approach they were being asked to use. Other teachers, such as the one in this study, working in older schools with larger classes and an older curriculum being phased out, may have benefited more directly from the BA Programme in other ways, e.g. in its focus on adaptation, as the curriculum they were using was very open to this. [16]

Pedagogically, the older curriculum left much to be desired. In supporting the teaching of English, it adopted a bottom-up (rather than an interactive) approach to the teaching of reading and writing, with a focus on phonics, whole word

reading and accurate oral reproduction. Speaking activities included controlled practice in open pairs, again focusing on accuracy. There was a lack of communicative purpose, there were no stories designed to surprise (only narratives to reinforce grammatical structure) and it did not include group work. Many of the activities drew (for pronunciation, vocabulary, the grammatical construction of sentences) on the use of word cards and flashcards, which were simple line drawings on a white background. There were no colourful posters or games (as in the new curriculum). [17]

In short, there was scope for adaptation and for the sharing of innovative ideas with school colleagues who had not yet attended the course. However, notwithstanding the shortcomings of the older curriculum, attitudes towards adaptation in the education sector varied; DIY materials design was not always encouraged. Officially, according to directives from the Ministry of Education, teachers were allowed to adapt, provided they achieved curricular aims. In practice, however, some of the school inspectors, including the one who supervised the teacher in this study, frowned on this. [18]

4. Research Methodology

My research questions are as follows:

1. To what extent did a teacher's practical knowledge in materials design develop through the three-year BA TESOL programme?
2. To what extent was the teacher able to share this knowledge with fellow teachers who had not attended the course?
3. How did the course, which seemed based on constructivist principles (DANGEL & GUYTON, 2004), appear to help the teacher? [19]

To put these research questions, focusing on one particular teacher, into a broader context, I will first provide an overview of the larger research project from which this article emerged (WYATT, 2008). This was a multi-case study (STAKE, 2006), which examined the development of five teachers throughout their three-year course. It explored practical knowledge and teachers' self-efficacy growth in relation to different topics that emerged in the individual cases; e.g., one case study focused on communicative language teaching, another on developing reading skills, another on using group work (WYATT, 2008). Thus, while the multi-case study had binding concepts (practical knowledge and teachers' self-efficacy growth), each individual case was "organized and studied separately around research questions of its own", as STAKE (2006, p.9) explains the relationship between individual cases and the multi-case study. In my dissertation (WYATT, 2008), five successive chapters of findings focused on individual cases (five teachers' stories), before a cross-case analysis chapter highlighted common themes in the development of practical knowledge and teachers' self-efficacy, such as the development of analytical and reflective skills and attitudes. There was then a discussion of these themes in relation to the literature. In the

discussion, some attention was paid to the various topic areas addressed in the individual cases, but the primary orientation was towards the binding concepts. [20]

This orientation has shifted as I have, subsequently, developed articles out of the multi-case study. As well as producing comparative studies of teacher development focused on common themes that emerged, such as their growth as action researchers (WYATT, 2009a, 2010a; WYATT & BORG, 2011), I have also produced in-depth case studies focusing on individuals' development (WYATT, 2009b, 2010b, 2010c). In several of these articles (e.g. WYATT, 2009b), topic areas have been explored in greater depth, while I have made less use of the original binding concepts. Indeed, one of these binding concepts, teachers' self-efficacy, is beyond the scope of the current study. In restoring the individual cases to a central position in these articles, one which they possessed during stages of the analysis, but perhaps lacked in the final thesis, I have been able to explore again their "self-centering, complexity and situational uniqueness" (STAKE, 2006, p.6). [21]

The materials design focus of this article developed as it coincided with the interests of one of the teachers. Waleed (pseudonym used) expressed a strong interest in materials design in early interviews, an interest which was maintained throughout, up until and including his submission of his dissertation (the final piece of assessed work on the course). For this major assignment, he chose to focus, with the help of action research methodology, on materials design. As this topic became central to his development, so it also became central to my case study following growth in his practical knowledge. I thus aligned my research interests with Waleed's professional concerns, with an aim to improve the study's ecological validity (COHEN, MANION & MORRISON, 2007). This seemed important, as "teacher-researchers are teachers first" (MOHR, 2001, p.9), concerned about nurturing the well being of others while seeking knowledge and understanding. [22]

In selecting Waleed as one of five teachers for the original study (WYATT, 2008), I used a process of purposive and then theoretical sampling (SILVERMAN, 2000, outlines how such a process might be followed). Aiming for balance and variety in the selection of cases, but also, guided by STAKE (2000), considering the opportunities the teachers provided for me to learn from them, I started with sixteen volunteers, then reduced this to ten, retaining, while mindful of balance and variety, those who seemed most relaxed and engaged throughout and had the most interesting stories to tell. [23]

An ethical issue I would like to raise here is that, since the research participants were my students, it seemed important that all were given equal opportunities. I identified benefits that those taking part in the research might accrue, such as extended opportunities to reflect on their work through increased interaction, and then resolved that all students, whether taking part in the research or not, would have similar opportunities. On a related matter, I was also very careful about not hurting the feelings of those I no longer needed to research; this may have become an issue if those I had stopped researching felt, in any way, I was giving

more attention to their peers. Fortunately, however, since I made use of naturally occurring opportunities to collect data, such as observations and post-lesson discussions I conducted as part of my job, I was able to continue with these activities without giving those students I was no longer formally researching any sense of receiving less attention. However, I no longer recorded my discussions with them or sought the ongoing consent (BLODGETT, BOYER & TURK, 2005) I had always obtained before recording took place. At the end, I thanked everyone for taking part, emphasising the valuable role that all had played. [24]

In further reducing the ten research participants to five, my decisions were made on theoretical grounds. Firstly, I selected, for the final study, teachers whose final-year dissertation research designs involved them in researching their own practice (rather than that of others), as I felt this might be more conducive to their self-development. This stance relates to my position as an insider researcher (see below). Secondly, but related to this point, I included an opportunity for "deviant case analysis" (SILVERMAN, 2000) by selecting, as one of the five, a teacher (discussed at length elsewhere, WYATT, 2008, 2010d) whose practice seemed partially resistant to course input. By including this case, I felt I could test my assumptions more rigorously. [25]

In the final selection of five, I achieved balance and variety in several ways. The five included both male and female teachers who were working in very different types of school in different locations (including a city centre, a coastal town, a rural village and a village in the mountains). There is a gender divide in Omani schools: The girls' schools are staffed by female teachers; the visiting parents are generally the mothers. The converse is true of boys' schools; the teachers are male and they consult the fathers. Girls and boys only have the opportunity to study together between Grades 1 and 4 in the newer primary schools (with female teachers). [26]

Since, in this article, I am focusing on a male teacher working in a boys' school (in other articles, e.g.; WYATT 2009b, 2010c, I have focused on female teachers), I would briefly like to mention girls' education in Oman for the sake of readers unfamiliar with the Middle Eastern context. The situation, in fact, is fairly positive in that attempts at a national level to provide girls with equal opportunities have met with some success. Similar proportions of girls and boys both attend school and gain admission to the most prestigious local university (Sultan Qaboos University); certain faculties, such as education, accept more females than males (RASSEKH, 2004). Furthermore, in the context of such courses, women generally do well. Indeed, in the particular University of Leeds BA TESOL programme that is the focus of this article, female teachers tended to perform better academically than males (LAMB & AL-LAWATIA, 2009). Both of the female teachers I have written about extensively (WYATT 2009b, 2010c) were high achievers; however, the male in the present study also seemed capable. In short, gender did not seem to be a particular issue as I developed this study. [27]

However, I need to clarify my stance. In conducting the research, I should acknowledge that I was an ideologically committed insider, intimately involved, as

a teacher educator, in developing the qualities I was investigating. This links my research to critical theory (COHEN et al., 2007), and to HOLLIDAY's (2002) progressive qualitative paradigm. However, in some respects my role as a "change agent" (KENNEDY, 1996) was limited, both in the influence I had over Waleed's teaching context and on his overall programme of study: The BA TESOL programme was designed for numerous participants throughout the Sultanate, as noted above, although content could be adapted to a certain extent to suit local conditions; e.g. through loop input activities (WOODWARD, 1992). As a regional tutor on the project, working in one particular location where I was responsible for programme implementation, I supported the development of thirty-five teachers throughout their three-year course. [28]

I followed strict ethical guidelines set by the university and the local Ministry of Education in conducting the research. Waleed was a volunteer, who signed an informed consent form promising anonymity and the right to withdraw at any time (WYATT, 2008). He never expressed any wish to do so, was able to meet me six months after the course for "member checking" (STAKE, 1995), and has remained in e-mail contact since, asking for advice, for example, about the focus of his Masters dissertation. [29]

Key to the research design was its longitudinal, qualitative nature. In the language teacher education literature, longitudinal research is rare as it can be difficult to sustain, but is needed to provide access to teachers' cognitive change processes (BORG, 2006). I followed the teachers' progress for as long as I worked with them; i.e., until they completed their degrees. Qualitative inquiry is required to furnish understanding of what teachers say or do. My own stance as a qualitative researcher is that "meaning is negotiated mutually in the act of interpretation", rather than discovered, a perspective drawn from philosophical hermeneutics (SCHWANDT, 2000, p.195), though the social constructionist view that tales told through qualitative research can empower readers and help them understand themselves also informs my work. [30]

The outcome of this study is a teacher's story in the tradition of narrative accounts of practical knowledge (ELBAZ, 1981; CLANDININ & CONNELLY, 1986); a qualitative case study, which aims to be realistic (STAKE, 2000), offering a rich, vivid description of events blended with analysis, focusing on the individual and seeking to understand his perspectives (HITCHCOCK & HUGHES, 1995). I hope to facilitate vicarious experience and provide a sufficiently clear picture of the phenomenon being studied to allow the reader to function as a coanalyst (BORG, 1997). [31]

My primary means of collecting data was through the qualitative semi-structured interview, which, as KVALE (1996, p.42), outlining the postmodernist view, puts it: "is a construction site of knowledge". To complement and contrast the data gathered through interviews, I drew upon direct observational data, gained chiefly in the natural settings of classrooms, in which my role was as a "non-participant observer" (COHEN et al., 2007). Observations are often used together with interviews to collect descriptions of teaching to compare to cognitions elicited

beforehand or subsequently when the rationale behind the observed practices can be explored (BORG, 2006). In addition to these methods, I also analysed assignments produced as part of the course (for evidence of developing cognitions), feedback on these (for evaluations I could triangulate with my own) and field notes (to capture informally gained data). [32]

Analytical procedures were "interactive" and "iterative" (CALDERHEAD & SHORROCK, 1997), with the data reviewed many times, supported by note-taking and transcription, to help me use the data to "think with" (HAMMERSLEY & ATKINSON, 1995) and to allow the data in due course "in all its richness, breadth and depth" to be the star (CHENAIL, 1995, para.10). A "template approach" (ROBSON, 2002) to data analysis was adopted, with themes and categories developed, cross-linked and checked against research questions. [33]

In subsequently constructing the account, I used "thick description" (GEERTZ, 1973), aiming to allow readers to "extend their memories of happenings" (STAKE, 2000, p.442), derive expectations from tacit knowledge (KVALE, 1996) and draw their own conclusions (STAKE, 2000). While writing I triangulated, by juxtaposing reported thoughts (elicited through interviews) with observed actions, with a view to adding depth to the picture being painted, providing the "possibility of additional interpretations" (STAKE, 1995). Through narrative, I tried to render the concrete particularities of experience immediate, employ verbal imagery that appealed to the senses and reproduce the temporal tensions of experience, characteristics of a successful story identified by CRITES (1975, cited in CONNELLY & CLANDININ [1990]). [34]

Member checking (STAKE, 1995) informed the writing process. I met Waleed in July 2006, after e-mailing him from the distant region where I was living, sending him a draft of the chapter I had written about his development for my dissertation, which I entitled "Waleed's story" (WYATT, 2008), together with a list of sub-questions, such as: "Can he create materials that are appropriately motivating and challenging for his learners, and can he make practical use of these in a way that enhances learning?" At the start of the interview (conducted in the foyer of a hotel), Waleed asked me about these questions. When had I chosen them? I explained how they had developed through progressive focusing. "Why do you call it a story?" I told him about the use of stories in qualitative research. He complimented me on the style, reporting: "It encouraged me to read until the end". He was surprised that I had included so many details. Then, he addressed the hypothesis, checking with me "there was a prediction before for change, positive change?" I affirmed that there was. He reported that he had tried to answer the research questions: "I have the answers here", and then we went through his answers; "here on page 12 ... page 7 ... page 14". He had gone through the text carefully, and quoted my words and his, answering sub-questions and commenting on them; reporting confusion at one point, as two sub-questions were too similar. For another there were insufficient data. There were also data he was unsure if a sub-question addressed. This gave me a chance to explain interpretations that would become more explicit as I added argument to

the text. Answers to other sub-questions, he reported, were very clear (W1.8 – see Table 1, below, for the system of data coding used in this article). [35]

Reflecting on this interview afterwards, I realized that here was member checking that seemed to validate the research, both pragmatically and communicatively (KVALE, 1996). Not only could Waleed confirm that the details of the story were accurate, configuring with his own sense of reality, but in the way he engaged with it he assumed ownership. The member checking process also seemed to heighten his awareness of his own development. [36]

As I re-wrote following this interview, I reviewed the narrative logic underlying the structure of the text. Juxtaposing with an eye to storytelling and making transitions from one exemplar to another, as CHENAIL (1995) describes this method of arranging text, I was also conscious of the diachronicity of the narrative (BRUNER, 1991). This refers to the sequential patterns of events occurring over human time that can be represented through devices such as flashbacks and fast-forwards, as well as through the sequence of clauses and tenses embedded in the narrative discourse itself. Narrative logic had suggested I start one teacher's story, Sarah's (WYATT, 2008) with a flashback to childhood before providing a chronological account of her development over three years. However, Waleed's story began with the description of a lesson midway through the course, before I summarised, two pages later, lessons earlier seen. Again, narrative logic dictated this. I started *in medias res* to emphasise his development up until that point, before exploring how he had got there. Later, I picked up the story again from the beginning of the course and continued chronologically, juxtaposing elements and developing relevant themes (e.g., heightened awareness of the learners, heightened consciousness in designing and evaluating materials). [37]

I now tell Waleed's story, before addressing research questions. Data referred to are coded as follows (after BORG, 1998):

Teacher's pseudonym	Source of data	Number
Waleed – W	Assignment – A Feedback – F Interview – I (Field) Notes – N Observation – O	1-8

Table 1: The system of data coding used [38]

WO.4, for example, was Waleed's fourth observation. I draw on data from eight interviews, five observations, six assignments (including his dissertation) and feedback sheets (see the [Appendix](#) for the data collection schedule). [39]

5. Findings

5.1 Introduction

Waleed was a bright, ambitious English teacher in his late twenties when I met him in December 2002. He had qualified to join Cohort 4 of the BA Programme by securing a good score in IELTS (International English Language Testing System), which brought his studies forward by three years. He was really keen to start (WI.1). His career to date had been spent in a rural backwater, a rather shabby boys' school surrounded by farms, far from the regional capital, where he taught a limited range of Grades 4-6 of the older curriculum. Waleed had been educated at the school and still lived in a local village. [40]

Though fairly quiet initially during BA lectures and seminars, Waleed was insightful when he contributed to whole-class discussions, and gradually I asked him to take on more responsibility, e.g., in presenting a group's ideas, which he did well. As the course progressed, he grew in confidence, perhaps influenced by success, as he obtained relatively high grades. Though naturally shy (WA.1), Waleed helped others, often advising friends on course content and study strategies, as I learned while asking students about cooperation within the group (WN.1). In exploratory interviews, I found he could elaborate well on his ideas. [41]

The first time I saw Waleed teach, I was struck by his use of materials (WO.1), and afterwards by his concern about motivating learners (WI.1), a concern which, he reported, deepened while he worked on the LAL module. Later, he decided to focus in his dissertation on enhancing motivation through materials design, arguing that motivation was essential for learning (WA.6). He felt he could fulfil his "responsibility to motivate" (WI.2) through an appropriate use of materials (WA.6). [42]

I start by describing one of Waleed's lessons to provide insights into this materials use. First, though, I describe the scene for readers unfamiliar with the Middle East. Imagine the school, large, labyrinthine, cream-coloured and just off the motorway, already warm in the sunshine, just after 7 o'clock. I look for a shady parking place outside, am met at the entrance by a polite school administrator with limited English, who shows me into an office and offers Arabic coffee. Someone is assigned to fetch Waleed and he arrives with a smile; we shake hands and step outside for the school assembly. As the national anthem is played, boys in neat regimented lines troop off to their classrooms, and I follow Waleed to his. From the next floor up, there is a view of surrounding fields and date plantations. I follow Waleed into a classroom. Old wooden desks have been pushed together in clusters for group work. There is limited space, with over 40 students in the class, who stand at attention, respectfully. The warm, humid air is stirred by ceiling fans. The teacher greets his class enthusiastically. [43]

5.2 A snapshot of Waleed using materials creatively – October 2004

"Good morning, Class 6! What topic did we study yesterday? Ani ... yes, animals." Waleed had their attention and focused it on the poster of a dinosaur, on the wall at the back of the classroom. This looked as if it had been produced by one of the learners, as homework perhaps, in recent weeks. From the poster, he elicited parts of the body; "legs, tail, yes, a short or a long tail? Very good, and what's this? The neck, yes, a short or a long neck?" He was eliciting quickly, holding their attention. "What do we have here? Horns. Yes." It was a triceratops. "Two long horns." The focus then switched to the front of the classroom, as Waleed produced a colourful page of animal stickers and elicited names; tiger, horse, camel. "Tell me some other animals." They brainstormed another 10 or 15 (WO.3). [44]

Waleed then set up a word search activity, holding up an A3 sheet at the front of the class, instructing and demonstrating. "In your groups I want you to find animals' names and circle them." Hidden amongst the letters were the names of animals learned in the previous lesson and the previous year. "There is one word in each line." The learners worked in groups, each group with a large A3 sheet so that they could do it together. "Were the groups a little large for the activity?", I wondered at the time, but then noted a widespread eagerness to participate, with no evidence of off-task behaviour. On the contrary, even those who found it difficult to do so looked as if they were trying to see, "all huddled over task", I wrote. After sufficient time, Waleed brought the activity to a close, and feedback was provided on the whiteboard. The group that found most words was rewarded with the page of animal stickers to share between them (WO.3). [45]

Waleed then held up a flashcard showing an oryx in the wild. (This flashcard, which would have come with the course materials on plain white card, had been partially coloured in with pencil.) He elicited features, "Yes, it's got short horns and small ears", demonstrating the difference in meaning between "small" and "short", as he did so. "This is an oryx", he told them, recapping and starting to build up a description. Through eliciting, prompting, providing support and writing up sentences on the whiteboard as he got the information, he then established: "It is black and white. It has long legs. It has a long tail." Waleed then described a few animals orally, without naming them, "it has long ears and a short tail, it is ...", inviting the class to guess. "A goat?" (WO.3). [46]

There followed, to consolidate this oral activity, a second group work activity, this involving one learner, with the others' help, in filling in gaps to complete sentences in the description of an animal on an A3 worksheet. Waleed had created this worksheet by adapting a students' book page from the previous semester, tippexing information out to encourage thinking. Interest did not seem as high from the outset, though, and towards the end, as the time limit Waleed had set was exceeded, attention flagged further, with only a few learners in each group involved (WO.3). [47]

After organising feedback on this, Waleed picked the lesson up again. The focus shifted back to the front of the classroom, as he returned to the oryx, eliciting its habitat, and writing "It lives in the desert" on the whiteboard. Next, he asked which animals live in the desert, in rivers, on farms and in the mountains, eliciting camels, snakes, fish, cows, goats. This information provided the last input required for a guessing game, involving a learner describing a picture on an activity card drawn at random, and a peer guessing which animal was being described, giraffe, elephant, hippo, fox. Several sets of open pairs did this at the front of the class. One boy could not guess "crocodile", and the answer was thrown open, to one of the raised hands. Waleed gave homework, reading about the animals, as preparation for a development of the game in the next lesson (WO.3). [48]

5.3 Thinking over this use of materials: What did he do differently?

October 2004, twenty-one months into the BA Programme—I marvelled afterwards at the extent to which this Grade 6 lesson had differed from that suggested in the teachers' book. In the recommended procedures, the oryx flashcard was prominent, together with extended drills designed to help the learners internalise the grammatical structures. [49]

Waleed had used the oryx and had taught the structures, but had also provided substantially more variation. He had used learners' work (a poster, part of the classroom environment) to elicit from, and had brought in a page of animal stickers purchased cheaply (for 100 baisa¹) from a nearby shop. He had used his computer to design a word search activity, produced a worksheet that was an adaptation of a students' book page from the previous semester, and enlarged both onto A3 paper for group work activities that were his idea. Old discarded copies of students' books had been cut up, with their pictures used as activity cards in the open pair work at the end of the lesson (WI.4). [50]

While this use of materials had generally been motivating, not everything succeeded. The second group work activity disappointed Waleed, as the solitary learner writing in each group tended to dominate. To increase participation, could he have switched roles during the activity, so that other learners in each group also had a chance to write, I suggested, or could the worksheets have been cut up so that they had a sentence or two each? (WI.4). If the latter, this would also have saved time for more speaking practice later in the lesson. [51]

Despite this, there were many positives, and together we identified learning outcomes. The first group work activity had encouraged learners to scan quickly, with their eyes moving from left to right searching for meaning. It had also revised vocabulary, heightened awareness of spelling and been good for social skills, encouraging cooperation. The game with activity cards, which could be played in closed pairs or groups, set up for the next lesson through open pair work in this, appeared to promise a motivating chance to interact communicatively (WI.4). I

¹ A small unit of currency: 100 baisa is equivalent to approximately 15 English pence or 0.2 Euros.

was impressed by the materials, both those Waleed had designed (the word search) and those he otherwise made use of (the learner's poster, the animal stickers). This was the third lesson I had seen him teach, and, in materials design, was the most adventurous so far. However, it also seemed to follow a pattern in the way he used materials. [52]

In the first observed lesson, in October 2003, he had made his own word cards, cut out pictures from an old book to make activity cards for open pair work, and created an A3 worksheet for group work by taking a course book consolidation exercise from later in the unit and editing out a structure the learners had not yet covered. He had also taken flashcards from later in the course, showing characters the learners had not met yet and did not have any information about, for a speaking activity in groups (WI.1). Waleed's self-confidence in using materials already appeared high. [53]

A year later, teaching the lesson on animals described (in Section 5.2) above, was he more self-confident? Perhaps his October 2004 lesson design was more creative, owing less to the teachers' book. Perhaps, it was also more memorable, influencing my decision to describe it at length. However, I cannot argue that outwardly his teaching had changed very much, as his use of materials in October 2004 was consistent with his use of them a year earlier. Waleed had clearly developed as a materials designer since the start of his career, but much of the development seemed to have occurred before the research period. [54]

5.4 The role of experience in Waleed's development as a materials designer

Waleed's approach to materials design was rooted in his experience. "In the first year of my teaching" (1994/5), he told me, "I tried to follow the teachers' book and the procedures there. I tried to use the materials, follow the instructions, follow the procedures, but after two years I discovered that there is a problem with these materials" (WI.5). He had noticed that the children learned "very well" in Grade 4, during their first year of learning English, but when they moved to Grade 5 they "forgot everything" (WI.3). At the beginning, the pupils had "liked the materials", the flashcards and word cards, but then "disappointment" set in as the same materials were used "every year and with every lesson". Different pictures were used, but it was always: "flashcards, word cards, flashcards, word cards" (WI.5), and the activities were repetitive, "flashcards, word cards, making sentences, that's all for the story" or the teacher would introduce flashcards with word cards and students would "just match them and try to read what the teacher wrote on the board" (WI.3). Consequently, motivation and learning suffered. [55]

Before attending the BA course, Waleed had sensed it would be "good to change", but why exactly, what, how? In retrospect, he did not have "enough knowledge" for what could be done to adapt lessons, what should be focused on, "what are the logical procedures" (WI.1). On occasion, he had tried different techniques and activities, and some had "worked well", which encouraged him to use them again and again. However, on encountering problems in materials

design, he "gave up" because he "didn't have another choice, another thing to do" (WI.8). [56]

In several important ways, the BA Programme supported growth in his practical knowledge, helping Waleed develop awareness of young learners' characteristics and needs, chiefly in the first year (2003), and acquire analytical skills required for designing and evaluating materials that could be motivating. I explore these influences on his cognitions in the following sections. [57]

5.5 Waleed's heightened awareness of the learners

Waleed felt he had always been a caring teacher, building good relationships with learners:

"Young children always like their teacher, if the teacher works hard and considers their abilities and needs, they like their teacher, and are always asking about the teacher, if the teacher's absent; 'where's Mr Waleed?', 'where's our teacher?', 'when he will come?', 'what's happened to him?'" (WI.2). [58]

If they had problems and became "demotivated", he tried to change this. "Sometimes I sit with them and I tell them about their level, "you are good in English, what's happened to you? Why you don't participate in the class?" If the learners responded well, he could help them, but some were too shy to talk and he called their fathers to the school, learning sometimes of social problems or health issues. By taking an interest in learners, he developed good relationships with the boys' families, who appreciated his efforts. "This teacher's a helpful teacher", fathers told their children: "he can help you if you have any problem, talk to him" (WI.2). [59]

However, although he believed he had always been a caring teacher, Waleed reported that his understanding of young learners before the course was limited:

"We didn't know that much how to care about our students in the class and to look for their instincts, what they need from us and also to focus on their abilities. Before that just we teach them and we deal them as children, but ... they have special needs and special abilities and they need special activities according to their needs and abilities" (WI.2). [60]

As a result, he had found the first methodology module, TEYL, "the most interesting". Children "need TPR activities², they need fun activities, enjoyable activities. They want to come out to say something even if they use their Arabic". The module "opened up many things in our minds about the children" (WI.1). [61]

Other modules were influential too, including LAL. This provided input on motivation, "a very important aspect of learning" he had not known that much about before (WI.6). "Now I know", he told me,

2 Total Physical Response (TPR) activities involve the co-ordination of speech and action, as students act out instructions, such as "stand up, turn around, touch your head".

"how children, how people acquire language and learn language, what they need to do this ... what kind of strategies they use ... also the stages they go through to learn and to acquire the language, but before we think that learning comes from the teacher and comes from the books" (WI.2). [62]

He scaffolded learners' efforts in different ways now, influenced by Tasks and LAL. Before, he had over-supported learners, but now knew how to balance demands and support (WI.1). There were changes, too, in the comprehensible input he provided, influenced by TEYL. He had used too much Arabic before, but now knew "that using English 90% or 95%" would actually help students more (WI.1). [63]

For his LAL assignment, submitted in December 2003, Waleed focused on the affective filter (KRASHEN, 1982), investigating how it affected learners and trying to help them. He focused on strategies, such as encouraging learners with praise, rewarding them as "young pupils do not yet have powerful intrinsic motivation to learn", and caring, creating "an environment of trust", as he established good relationships. Reflecting on his efforts to lower the affective filter, Waleed concluded:

"It is my opinion that this hypothesis has a merit [in] directing teachers' attention to the need for varied and interesting input, to the need to take care over ... error-correction, [provide] meaningful communication and ... a learner-centred classroom that encourages learning, rather than punishes failure" (WA.2). [64]

The marker, in awarding him a high Upper Second, liked his focus on care, saying: "far too few teachers are aware of their pupils' backgrounds", and praised his "wise decision to focus on the things the teacher can do to help" (WF.2). This was Waleed; caring, practical, positive and trying to motivate learners through creating trust. Learner-sensitive methods were a means of enhancing motivation. [65]

5.6 Waleed's heightened consciousness in designing and evaluating materials

Learning more about appropriate methods for teaching young learners increased Waleed's dissatisfaction with the course book. "There are no motivating activities and no fun in the lessons", he told me in April 2004. "There is no need to use the language because it's in the textbook, it's already from the teacher, from the textbook, taught by the teacher, so ... so now, we understand the benefits of adapting and changing", he concluded (WI.3). As well as understanding this, he felt he could justify his adaptations if he was asked to explain them. "Now I can change and I can also tell why I changed ... and the inspectors can't, I mean, force me to follow the teachers' book procedures as before" (WI.1). [66]

From where had this growth in his practical knowledge come? "We have the two things" now to draw upon, Waleed reported in November 2003, not just experience in the classroom but also the BA. Using these together, he had developed his ideas and knowledge "about children's needs and abilities and also

about the curriculums and how to adapt them". In the process, his self-confidence had increased (WI.2). A month earlier, in October 2003, he told me:

"Of course, now I can apply different techniques from BA programme, the activities which have been done on the BA course during summer school, day release. I learned many things from that, how I can adapt my activity, how I can focus on preparing my students for the core activity and what's the suitable follow up for my students, according to the task and the level. So I learned many things, especially from the day release, how I can adapt activities, not just focusing on the textbook" (WI.1). [67]

Clearly, the Tasks module, in particular, had been influential. In the same interview, though, Waleed also told me that while he could "increase the procedures", and therefore had new ideas he could apply, he could not evaluate himself (WI.1). By October 2004, just one year later, this had changed. He told me then:

"I am a teacher but also I am an observer. I can assess myself, if I do well or not. Sometimes, after some lessons, I think today it's a very bad lesson, before I feel it's OK, no problem, valid or not. It's OK for me, I completed the lesson and all pupils behaved well. But now I can assess myself. Yes, I completed the exercises or the activities in the course book and I finished, I covered all the objectives and lesson plan but I feel it's not a good lesson. I didn't do well in that lesson. I know why, I know the reason sometimes. I didn't, I mean, prepare well, I didn't put some clear objectives for my lesson and sometimes the materials were not useful really in the lesson. So I can assess myself now. So when you assess yourself, you can see if you are changed or not" (WI.4). [68]

In Waleed's language here, in his concern with objectives and self-assessment, I can detect influences of both the Researching TESOL and Assessing Children's Language Learning modules, which he had received input on in the 2004 summer school in Leeds (see Section 3). [69]

5.7 The challenges of adapting materials in his context – October 2004

Waleed felt more autonomous in planning and evaluating his use of learning materials. At the same time, however, contextual factors made the process of adapting materials challenging. "Teaching is not easy, not an easy job for anyone", Waleed told me after we had discussed the lesson on animals described (in 5.2) above. "All the teachers say it's very hard, very difficult, especially when you find yourself doing very complicated assessment sheets and many things which you have to do." There were many responsibilities in the school that caused stress and sometimes he felt like giving up.

"We feel tired. We don't want to do more. This is the course book. We have to teach the students from the course book. It's not our fault, not our, I mean, I am not the one who made this course book, who designed this course book. If it's OK, the pupils will learn, if it's not, it's not my fault. I will try my best, but to adapt and to bring some

materials from outside, I mean to spend my money on teaching, and also you won't find good response from the school and from the inspectors, even from the pupils, some pupils" (W1.4). [70]

Some pupils compared him to other teachers, who had "another style, I mean just completing the course and the exercises, so they will feel something unfamiliar, but sometimes when they see the exercises, the activities are enjoyable and good, I mean, sometimes they are motivated but not always" (W1.4). [71]

About the other teachers in the school he told me that many did not like teaching any more:

"They gave up for many reasons, for salaries, for the course books, the designed course books, very old course books ... they taught these course books more than 14 years, nothing changed, and also for the school situation. Many teachers also say that it's not suitable to teach in this kind of situation, I mean more than 40 pupils in one class, difficult to control them, difficult to teach them well, difficult to check homework, many tests you have to do at your home" (W1.4). [72]

Sometimes he felt despondent, "when I see the other classes beside me, no-one teaching, they are just working to complete their plan and I am the only one who works hard". Nevertheless, he went on, "for me, still I can do something good, but sometimes, I mean, I don't know about these teachers, what's happening in our school" (W1.4). [73]

He was also critical of the school, which he described as "not organized well, not managed well" (W1.4), with the administration focused more on paperwork than people. During the assembly I had observed that morning, the headmaster talked at length to the boys, with a serious, sombre expression on his face. Waleed explained afterwards that a Grade 2 boy had been run over the day before, rushing out from behind a bus, killed by a car coming the other way. The young learners must be in shock, feeling "very frightened", Waleed told me. There would be no counselling for them, though, and no one would speak to their class or visit their homes (WN.1). Waleed was concerned. [74]

Professional support also left something to be desired. Waleed reported a conflict with an inspector six months earlier. He had been planning a reading lesson around a narrative, and tried to use some ideas from the Stories module. The teachers' book frustrated him, "just focusing on how to make sentences. Even they don't read the sentences, just see the picture and the verbs, match the picture with the verbs. I tried to make it better for my students". He wanted his learners "to predict and to imagine" what would happen in the story. This was difficult, though, because it was written in the course book. "So how to make it a story?", he went on. "It's not a story, but the course book says it's a story" (W1.4). He created and taught his own story to increase motivation and learning, but the inspector, who was observing, refused to accept this. He said,

"it is not a good technique in teaching reading', and we had an argument for more than 30 minutes. I told him that I studied this and someone said this. He said, 'this is something from the past. Please!' He told me to see what the procedures said in the teachers' book" (WI.4). [75]

Waleed did not give up, though, firmly believing that "teaching young learners involves more than only teaching the language". By providing suitable materials that stimulated learners in visual, auditory and kinaesthetic ways as they processed input, he felt he might be increasing their motivation. He had noticed that when he had been creative in designing materials, pupils seemed to participate better, and were more "attracted and engaged" (WA.4). Was this due to the materials? If so, could he help the other teachers in his school use materials more effectively, I asked him (WI.4). He had noticed that the materials provided for English teaching, the flashcards and the word cards, were often left lying around in the staff room, sometimes "thrown" in the corner, unused apparently by some English teachers, but picked up by other subject teachers and used for other purposes (WA.4). What use did other English teachers make of materials, in fact? If their use of them was inadequate, as they had lacked training, could he help them use materials more effectively, in the process, perhaps, improving their motivation? (WI.4). Waleed decided, after this October 2004 discussion, to research these questions for his dissertation, due in December the following year, and prepared a proposal accordingly (WA.4). [76]

5.8 Planning his research: How to motivate teachers and learners? – February 2005

When we discussed his research again, at the beginning of the next semester (February 2005), I suggested that some of the sources of the teachers' demotivation, relating to the school and curriculum, were outside his control. Waleed agreed, but argued that although it was not possible to change things completely,

"you can do something, make something new, make using materials maybe easy for teachers, make the materials motivating for teachers to use. Even if they don't like teaching, when they find the materials facilitate teaching and make teaching easier, they will start to use (them) ... we can change something" (WI.5). [77]

For his research, Waleed planned to observe three teachers in his school and afterwards invite them to observe his action research, when he would "use different methods ... different techniques" in showing how materials could be used easily and creatively in a motivating way. After that, perhaps higher authorities could disseminate the research. "Maybe they can do a workshop and try to train the teachers and tell them the methods that some teachers find in their schools and how to use them." Could not he do some teacher training himself, I asked him. Waleed explained he would need a special course to allow him to advise teachers. He was not a Senior English Teacher (SET) and lacked training and experience in doing workshops. However, by inviting the three teachers to

observe his lesson, he conceded he was helping them "indirectly" (WI.5), although he sounded cautious. [78]

"How could materials be used easily and creatively?", I asked. Each year, he reported, teachers received supplies, including flashcards and word cards in black ink on plain white card. These could be organized and stored safely, with accompanying activity cards cut up and flashcards coloured in. Then, realia could be used to supplement course materials, to "add interest" and encourage connections "with real life". Pupils' creations could be used, especially when learners needed to make things such as "a fort or a house". Pupils' posters on display, making "a rich environment", could be referred to when teaching vocabulary. Materials from other course books, such as flashcards from the newer curriculum, could encourage imagination. Technology could help, with the teacher creating exercises electronically or taking learners to the library to use computers there. There were also tape recorders (WI.5). [79]

What else had he told me about his use of materials? I went through observation notes of the three lessons observed since October 2003, and transcripts of post-lesson discussions. He had used materials for games to "encourage" and "motivate", as information gaps to help learners "imagine", "speak", "gain confidence", as word searches, as ordering and matching activities in groups to help learners "participate", "share", "correct each other", "work quickly", "use their eyes", "think", "find", "read", "remember", "sequence" (WO.1-3, WI.1-4). His easy and creative use of materials to stimulate his students seemed principled, knowledgeable, and he spoke about it self-confidently, although he sounded less sure about supporting other teachers. [80]

5.9 Carrying out his research: Teaching and reflecting – April 2005

Two months later, I visited Waleed's school to see at firsthand his action research into his use of materials to enhance motivation. The Grade 6 lesson would be observed by two teachers, besides myself, as well as a "cameraman" equipped with a video-recorder. I was asked to focus on the learners' levels of participation, engagement and motivation, and was given an observation tool for this purpose. [81]

The lesson objectives were to revise prepositions of place and give learners practice in both listening to identify location and practice in describing this. Further objectives were to help them structure descriptions using "there is" and "there are", and retrieve vocabulary items to do with the kitchen. To support these objectives, Waleed had prepared various materials. These included

- a hand-drawn poster of a bedroom (coloured on white card),
- A3 sheets depicting a half-empty fishing village, with envelopes containing pictures of buildings to be stuck to these with blu-tack (an adhesive substance) ,
- a self-recorded taped description of the village,

- a yellow poster depicting hand-drawn kitchen objects, together with handwritten word cards,
- A3 sheets of a kitchen, with boxed labels,
- a hand-drawn poster of a kitchen,
- course book pictures of a kitchen. [82]

Students had made the word cards and the posters. Producing the A3 sheets and pictures in envelopes had involved Waleed in copying, cutting and pasting (W1.6). How would he use these materials and why? To facilitate an analysis, I present, in the table below, my description, based on observation notes, side by side with a summary of Waleed's reflections, provided in an interview after the lesson.

Step	My description	Waleed's reflections after the lesson
1	Many students were eager to contribute as Waleed revised recently learned prepositions of place. Numerous hands went up as he pointed to the poster of the bedroom on the whiteboard. "Where's the picture?" he asked. "It's above the bed" came the accurate answer.	He reported he used a poster rather than the book, which had a similar picture, to make sure that everyone was paying attention, looking at the picture rather than somewhere else, focusing so that "they know where exactly the object is" when they hear another child describe it.
2	Waleed held up an A3 sheet of a half-empty fishing village (with buildings and boats washed away?), and asked; "What happened to my village?" sadly.	Waleed described this as: "a creative idea, a new idea. I didn't do this before". He had adapted a page from the Grade 5 course book, removing nearly everything from the village except the mosque, but leaving the beach and the sea. By asking sadly what had happened to the village, he might have given them the idea that "maybe a tsunami or something" had hit it.
3	Next, he distributed envelopes, containing pictures depicting different buildings and objects such as boats one would expect to find in a fishing village, and got the learners to name them in groups. He then elicited what they could see, checking vocabulary.	He explained this was in preparation for the listening, when they would find out "where to put these objects in the village". Waleed had made the tape himself, scripting the sentences and recording his voice.

Step	My description	Waleed's reflections after the lesson
4	<p>He introduced the listening activity, which would involve the learners in reconstructing the village, affixing objects to the right place. The learners' levels of participation, engagement and interest seemed high, to judge from the way they responded to him and worked with each other. Body language was generally very positive. The learners cooperated well together, listening and checking their answers, very focused on the task as he monitored, helping. They were using a lot of English. "Behind the school, behind the school", I heard one boy sitting near me say urgently to his group.</p>	<p>He had demonstrated the listening activity, Waleed recalled, by putting an A3 sheet of the village on the whiteboard, playing a segment of the tape for a sentence telling him where something was and putting the picture of the object in the right place. Several examples had helped the learners "understand the task".</p> <p>The sticking on of pictures had been easy, as Waleed had prepared this, quickly putting blu-tack on each picture "to save time".</p> <p>During the activity, he had repeated some sentences while monitoring to reduce the level of difficulty, he reported, and to give learners more exposure to the phrases "there is" and "there are", and to the prepositions.</p>
5	<p>Waleed checked answers by getting group representatives to come forward one by one to present their A3 sheet to the class. To help focus them here, he contributed utterances such as the following; "There is a fort in the middle of the village, yes or no?" There was clapping, but he insisted they listen, look and evaluate carefully.</p>	<p>Waleed said he had been concerned that while checking some pupils were not looking carefully. "So, I told them 'Please look carefully at the pictures. Are they in the correct positions?' I tried, I mean, to help them see the pictures."</p>
6	<p>The focus then switched to the kitchen. Waleed used the yellow poster of hand-drawn kitchen objects to elicit from, and then word cards to help the learners retrieve the written forms.</p> <p>Then a group work activity involved the learners in labelling kitchen objects on an A3 picture, taking words from a box. Engagement and motivation seemed high, although, as throughout the lesson, there were very few smiles, perhaps as a result of the presence of the video camera.</p>	<p>Waleed reported the learners had produced the poster and the word cards, as project work the week before. He invariably encouraged them "to try to do something" outside the lesson to practise or consolidate their English. The A3 sheet of the kitchen for the labelling activity was from a practice unit in the book. He had enlarged it for group work use so that "the good students in the group" would help the weaker ones.</p>

Step	My description	Waleed's reflections after the lesson
7	Waleed checked answers to the labelling activity briefly, and then focused on a hand-drawn poster of a kitchen he fixed to the whiteboard. He recycled high frequency and familiar vocabulary in the poster, such as the fruit on the table, did pronunciation work on the /p/ of the pen also in the picture, wrote the structures "there is / are" on the board, and encouraged descriptions such as "There is an orange on the table".	Waleed reported this poster had also been made by students. He said he had worked on the pronunciation of the /p/ and /b/ phonemes, "because, as you know, Arabic students have difficulties" distinguishing between them, and revised grammar points, checking their understanding. "So pupils told me that we use 'there is' with the singular, and we use 'there are' with the plural."
8	The learners then opened their books and described the picture in front of them in pairs and groups. Only at this point, when the bell rang, did attention start to waver (WO.4).	Waleed reported he had asked them to talk about the pictures in groups, as with 43 students in the class, it would have been difficult to bring them all to the front. Using group work gave them more chance to speak and learn from each other (WI.6).

Table 2: My description of Waleed's use of materials in an April 2005 lesson side by side with his reflections afterwards [83]

I was impressed by this lesson, clearly structured as a task containing preparation, "core" and follow-up elements (CAMERON, 2001), and designed to overcome deficiencies in the course materials. In the course book, controlled practice describing the location of objects in a bedroom (Step 1) led directly into controlled practice describing a kitchen (Step 8). It lacked "core" communicative activities, Waleed argued, and so, in this instance, he supplied a core listening (Steps 2-5), influenced by the modules; Tasks, and Teaching Speaking and Listening (TS&L), which emphasised the need for such activities. This task provided a familiar context, given that, post-Asian tsunami, Waleed's school was not that far from the sea. It also supplied an information gap, provided input for acquisition, and involved the learners in an interesting "while listening" activity, reconstructing a village. It was organised in an appropriate way, with clear instructions, careful monitoring and checking, and varied interaction, including group work. The materials created for the listening were attractive, easy to prepare, easy to use, and seemed to facilitate motivation and learning at every step. I would have liked to see the follow-up (Step 8) include a more meaningful speaking activity, but could see the value of drawing the attention of the learners to the course book. In design, this was the most adventurous of the four lessons I had seen. I thought it brave, too, to try out a new idea, the core listening activity, in the presence of so many observers. This was a self-confident act. [84]

5.10 Carrying out his research: Observing and reflecting further – April 2005

What about the criteria he had asked me to focus on while observing; the learners' levels of participation, engagement and motivation? What did he think? Their participation was "fine", he told me, despite the presence of three observers and a video camera. He suggested several reasons for this. Firstly, I had observed the same class the previous year, and was therefore not a total stranger to them. Secondly, the teachers observing were from the same school and were thus familiar figures. Thirdly, the video had been used on a previous occasion to help the boys adjust. Waleed was pleased with the participation, noting the learners were able to use English as they worked in groups, and responded well. "If they don't understand, they won't participate." Furthermore, they had been engaged throughout, focusing on the task rather than "shouting at each other, looking at their books, drawing" (W1.6). [85]

As regards ascertaining their levels of motivation, Waleed argued that in not all lessons can pupils "smile and laugh about the lesson because not all lessons are fun", but nevertheless "you can see" if they like the materials, if they want to "answer the teacher's questions", if they are interested in "asking each other, 'What does this mean?', 'How should we write?' or 'How should we complete the task?'. "So pupils' attention will be on the teacher, if they like the task, if they are motivated to answer the teacher's questions. You can see from their eyes, if they feel bored or they are interested in the posters". If they feel motivated, "they will focus on the task, they will pay attention with the teacher, they will try to answer, they will try to complete, they will try to imagine something different, they want also to finish before the others" (W1.6). [86]

Judging from these criteria, Waleed felt that the learners' motivation had been high, and was pleased with the materials. They had captured attention, added variety and interest, were well sequenced, and supported understanding. I agreed with him here (W1.6). [87]

5.11 Carrying out his research: Trying to motivate the other teachers

What had the other observers thought of the lesson (these teachers who Waleed had suspected a few months earlier did not use materials much at all)? How had his observations of their lessons been? One had been teaching a grammar lesson, Waleed told me. He had not used any materials; no flashcards, no word cards, "even he didn't use any realia" apart from classroom objects "maybe once or twice". The learners had not understood the grammar. It was difficult for them "to guess even the rule or the structure at the beginning", and they were asked to complete the exercise without having had enough practice, enough explanation. Motivation in the class seemed low, Waleed reported, and the teacher also seemed dispirited. Afterwards, though, he told Waleed that he liked materials. They were very useful. "So, why didn't you use them?" Waleed asked. "He said, 'it's not necessary today. Today, it's about teaching grammar, so it's not necessary'. So", Waleed continued,

"I wondered why teachers don't use materials during the class, and yet they have the idea that materials are useful for their lessons, for supporting learning. Maybe ... it's not easy for teachers to make materials ... and they don't know how to use the materials, how to produce the materials, what kind of techniques they should follow with these materials" (WI.6). [88]

One had indicated that the problem was that they had not had any training in using materials. They did not even know very much about the kinds of materials that pupils liked and found interesting (WI.6). [89]

Observing Waleed's lesson was beneficial to them. One said there were "many good ideas he could try by himself". They had liked the materials he had used, and seen how "involved" the pupils were (WI.7). However, this was a modest intervention, Waleed felt (WI.8), and perhaps the influence he could have was limited, particularly given the contextual factors described (in Section 5.7) above. Nevertheless, this was the first time he had encouraged other teachers to learn from him through peer observation, and the lesson had gone very well. Given that successful practical experiences can enhance self-confidence, I felt this experience would help him in supporting other teachers in the same way in future. [90]

He was also helped in this by promotion to SET a few months later. While before it had been difficult to set up observations as he had a crowded teaching schedule, now (from September 2005) it would be easier, easier, too, with his new authority, to "discuss many aspects of teaching ... how to use materials, what kind of techniques" could be used "to improve materials". "Of course this is a good chance for me", he continued,

"to present something for the teachers, something I have learned from my research, from my BA course. It will be easy to speak and to talk to them about what I have learned and what I think they should follow in their teaching" (WI.7). [91]

As well as observing lessons and organising feedback on these, he did, in fact, present two workshops in the 2005/6 academic year, one on research and one on using materials; successful experiences, which again benefited his self-confidence in supporting other teachers. Still, though, there was much to do (WI.8). Ideally, the teachers needed training courses as well to support their development (WA.6). In December 2005, one of them joined the BA Programme with Cohort 6. [92]

5.12 Influences of the BA Programme on Waleed's development in designing materials

What training in materials design had Waleed received on the course? "Many modules" had given him ideas, he told me in May 2005 (WN.1). Tasks was highly influential (Section 5.6, above), the "most useful", he reported in November 2003. "It gave me a clear idea about how I should organise my teaching" (WI.2). Practical assignments helped, though he did not do that well in Tasks, getting a Lower Second, as his core activity was too "complicated" (WF.1). He did better

for TS&L the following year, producing "a well-described communicative activity" (WF.3), in getting an Upper Second. Ideas he had tried to implement in his school included "using communicative tasks, using games" (WI.4). There was not a module specifically devoted to materials, though, before the 2005 summer school when Waleed took the optional module, Materials Design and Development (MDD). He found this very useful, liking the way it built on others he had studied earlier in the course, such as Tasks and TS&L (WN.1). [93]

The influence of these modules was very evident in the fifth of Waleed's lessons I observed, in September 2005. This was structured as a communicative task. The aims were to get pupils to ask and answer questions about people; name, age, job, place of origin and place of residence. Materials central to the core activity were photos of family members the learners had brought in. After focusing questions asked whole-class, the preparation activity involved unscrambling jumbled up questions, such as these words presented in this order: "name ... is ... What ... his ...?" in groups. There was a worksheet for this, and then, for checking, a poster giving the correct word order, on which he could highlight grammatical forms, if necessary. Then, for leading into the core activity, there was an enlarged photocopied picture from the activities' book, showing a character with whom the learners were familiar. This was for a rehearsal before the pupils' own photos were used. Follow-up was writing short descriptions, using a worksheet that provided sentence heads for support; e.g., "His name is ..." (WO.5). [94]

Waleed was concerned about communicativeness. When reflecting on materials he had designed for this lesson, he pointed out that in the course book there was "just a picture and information and then some lines to get the pupils to write", with a focus on producing grammatically correct sentences individually. There was therefore no indication as to how, where, why the learners should use the language. "So the first thing", Waleed had considered, was "how to make it interesting for the pupils, how to create a purpose for the pupils to use the questions, to use the language inside the classroom, how to involve pupils to work together, to help each other". Then they would be motivated. He wanted to develop not just their writing and their grammar, but also their speaking, which he felt was neglected. "Students need enough chances to talk and to interact with each other." They already had "some knowledge about how to structure a question", and in this lesson he wanted them to develop their speaking through using that knowledge "in a different situation, asking about" relatives. He had tried to create a meaningful context. "Pupils can imagine that they are sitting together, maybe at their homes or something like that, and one of them sees" a photo and asks questions. This was something that they might do in the real world, and he felt it was genuinely communicative and interesting (WI.7). [95]

The language of the Tasks module was present in each of the five post-lesson discussion interviews throughout the research period. Back in October 2003, Waleed described the first observed lesson as "just preparation activities" (5.3, above). His definition of a core activity then was fairly close to the language of the module:

"communicative purpose and interaction, one or two way, between pupils or teacher and pupils, a clear beginning and end, and clear outcomes, which should ... get the students to relate to the social situation, social lives. A core should have usable language [that] can be used outside the class, not just classroom language" (WI.1). [96]

I thought at the time (October 2003) this definition a little inflexible. Waleed's first lesson had included a group work activity calling on imagination, creativity and cooperation, which met the criteria of a core in many ways, though he did not seem to recognise this (WI.1). His definition may actually have limited his task design, for the first lesson could also have included closed pair work to allow for more speaking practice. If this had incorporated a game-like information gap element, it could have usefully approximated a core without fully meeting all of Waleed's criteria; specifically, without using real data from the learners' social lives. Fortunately, though, Waleed was soon using the term "core" much more flexibly, after the second lesson to include a problem-solving cooperative group work activity that took place after preparation and before follow-up (WI.3). [97]

Influenced by the Tasks module, the structuring of Waleed's lessons seemed to develop. Like the first lesson, the third (Section 5.3, above) involved mostly preparation activities and might have benefited from the inclusion of more speaking practice. The fourth and fifth lessons, though, were much better balanced. Waleed described the fourth in terms of the three-part structure of a communicative task (WI.6), and the fifth was also structured in this way. [98]

Evidence of development in his structuring of lessons around communicative tasks is also provided by his assignments. His TS&L task was criticised as "the main activity should really be longer than the setting-up; this is not the case here!" (WF.3). His MDD task, 18 months later, was much better balanced in this respect and the materials were praised. They "clearly demonstrate what you have learned from studying this module as they are carefully graded and sequenced and very well presented" (WF.5). [99]

Other modules were clearly influential too, including Stories (Section 5.7, above). Waleed's design of a word search for the third lesson (Section 5.2, above) had been influenced by a module on technology in language learning studied in the 2004 Leeds summer school (WI.4), and his support for the writing follow-up in the fifth owed something to summer 2005 input on teaching this skill (WI.7). This latter activity was a good example, he felt, of the "effective but simple ideas the BA gave us". These saved time and made it easier to overcome deficiencies in the course materials (WI.8). Finding "good techniques to go over the hard activities", and so motivate learners to succeed, was a strength he identified in himself early in the course, one he felt the BA Programme developed (WI.2). [100]

5.13 Waleed's reflections on his personal development throughout the course

Analysing his own growth throughout the three years, Waleed reported, in September 2005, that one change was that he had developed a strong belief in the importance of providing enough opportunities for children to take on active roles in the classroom. If students were active, this would increase their motivation and their willingness to learn (WI.7). I felt, though, this was evident in his practice early on. In the second lesson I observed, for example, there were four different group work activities (WO.2). [101]

"The first time I came to your school", I reminded Waleed, "I was struck by how active your lessons were". "Maybe", he said, "I tried by myself, but I couldn't justify my work at that time". Sometimes techniques worked, but he often was not sure what to do next and why. Now, he felt, he had a greater variety of choices available to him in the classroom, and he felt he could justify the decisions he made (WI.7). [102]

I reminded him that, in a very early interview:

I: "You told me actually, you said I can't evaluate myself and then in a more recent interview you said now I can."

W: "Things developed and changed throughout this course. Now I can evaluate myself, I mean, in terms of what I'm providing for my pupils, not evaluating my performance, how I'm doing in the classroom, but what I'm providing for the pupils, evaluating activities. Do the students like these activities, I mean, are they effective, do they relate to the pupils' cultural context? So, I mean, my ideas developed about this. Before I think just evaluating myself, but now evaluating my teaching, and this is the point I think" (WI.7). [103]

Waleed also indicated that he could now examine the ideas of others more critically. Rather than just accepting ideas when processing academic text, now he had "some confidence to say that this is not true ... not suitable or not related to our situation here" (WI.7). [104]

From conducting research for his dissertation he had learned "many things ... how to collect data, how to observe my students or myself and the other teachers, how to evaluate the materials, how to analyse them, how to interpret, how to make suggestions for the next cycle" (WI.7). "I learned that you have to put some criteria for observation. After that you can analyse very easily" (WI.8). [105]

When collecting data for his LAL assignment in 2003, Waleed had observed a lesson "under false pretences—there are ethical rules that should be observed" (WF.2). He reminded me of this much later, in February 2005, when we were discussing his plan for observing the three teachers in his study. Waleed wanted to make sure his methods were ethical (WI.5). In the event, his dissertation was awarded a high Upper Second. "Your research approach is appropriate for the

questions and the research design and analysis are good", the marker wrote (WF.6). [106]

5.14 Towards the future

Waleed felt he had done many things to improve materials, but there were still technical problems in the schools that required teachers to be resourceful. "We try to make materials from what we have, because not all teachers can copy by themselves the papers for the students every time, every day. They need some support, they need some materials provided by the schools." Limited school resources partly explained some of the decisions he made, such as his use of A3 sheets for group work (WI.7). [107]

He felt optimistic that he could meet the challenges. "Of course, my knowledge about developing, about adapting, about producing materials has developed, from my research, from the modules that I studied, from my experience also with the pupils", he continued (WI.7). His ability to design materials had developed very slowly, he felt, in the years before he joined the course, but then had accelerated very quickly in the first year of the programme (WI.8). [108]

Waleed felt he had cause to be optimistic in September 2005. "Many inspectors think it's better to just use what you have, follow the teachers' book procedures", but the Omani inspector who had been assigned to Waleed's school for the past year, a Cohort 2 graduate, encouraged him to use materials creatively. Also, class sizes were getting smaller in preparation for the new curriculum that would be phased into his school from the following year. And the school, itself, was being renovated, "with more facilities, materials, technology, extra rooms for the teachers" and more storage space. From that month, too, he had been promoted to SET, with all the possibilities that opened up for further supporting the school's teachers (WI.7). [109]

6. Discussion

I now address my research questions, focusing on the extent to which Waleed's practical knowledge in materials design developed during the three-year BA TESOL programme, the extent to which he was able to share this knowledge and how the course appeared to help him. In addressing these questions, I will draw on the various sources of inter-connected data (HOLLIDAY, 2002) used to construct the above narrative. [110]

I would argue, firstly, that there were various dimensions to Waleed's practical knowledge growth relevant to this study, including his understanding of the learners and learning. Waleed reported developing a much greater understanding of language acquisition processes (Section 5.5, above), which he felt informed his design of materials; e.g.; in supporting learners to take on active roles (Section 5.13, above). As ELLIS (2003) and MASUHARA and TOMLINSON (2008) have argued, an understanding of acquisition issues is crucial to producing materials that support learning. Waleed also reported developing practical knowledge in

analysing, adapting and evaluating materials, claiming as early as in the first year of the BA course that he felt better enabled to organize his teaching (Section 5.12, above). There was also discernible growth throughout the three years in his ability to justify his work (Section 5.13, above), so that he could defend innovative practice. In addition, Waleed gained self-confidence in sharing his knowledge growth with other teachers (Section 5.11, above), so that, in a limited way, cascading (WEDELL, 2005) occurred. I will now examine observational evidence for changes in Waleed's classroom behaviour in line with this reported cognitive development. [111]

Examining the lessons described above against criteria suggested by BLOCK (1991), MASUHARA and TOMLINSON (2008) and JOLLY and BOLITHO (1998), (Section 2, above), there is evidence that Waleed's teaching developed over time in several ways. One way was that the staging of the materials increasingly incorporated greater variety of interaction and gave the learners more practice. The first lesson was mostly in whole class mode, with group work at the end (Section 5.12, above); the third (Sections 5.2-3, above) and fourth (Sections 5.9-10, above) incorporated much more variety, but could still have included more speaking practice; the fifth (Section 5.12, above) was best balanced of all. A second area of improvement related to the grading and sequencing of materials: While in the third lesson, a group work activity distorted the balance (Sections 5.2-3, above), there were no such problems with either the fourth or fifth. These last two lessons also best met a third criterion, in focusing the learners through meaning-focused peer interaction on achieving communicative aims: In the fourth lesson, for example, there was plenty of semi-authentic listening and problem-solving group work (Sections 5.9-10, above), while the first lesson, in contrast, though including a group work activity at the end that allowed learners to work imaginatively, focused mostly on accuracy (Section 5.12, above). Towards the end of the course, therefore, Waleed was preparing his learners more for English language use outside the classroom, a fourth criterion, and his organisation of lessons seemed to support this. These lessons were increasingly structured as communicative tasks, a finding from observational data that can be triangulated with that from assignments and interviews (Section 5.12, above). Structuring lessons in this way would seem consistent with the "strong belief" he reported developing through the course, "in the importance of giving enough chances for pupils to take on active roles in the classroom to increase their motivation and willingness to learn" (WI.7) (Section 5.13, above). [112]

However, observational data also reveal that, in many respects, Waleed's teaching did not that develop that much during the course, as growth had occurred beforehand, prompted by earlier experimentation. He was already able to identify shortcomings in the course materials, and make adaptations to support language learning aims, in the process creating materials that were appropriate for the learners' context, physically attractive and easy to use. Employing these materials in a well-organised classroom, like BLOCK (1991) he was able to use them to motivate his class. Waleed did emphasise, though, that prior to the course, both his practical knowledge of the learners and learning (WI.2) and of materials design had been more limited and that he had lacked the problem-

solving skills to deal with any design flaws that appeared, so that he "gave up" because he "didn't have another choice, another thing to do" (W1.8) (Section 5.4, above). He therefore felt the course was instrumental in his cognitive development as a materials designer (Section 5.13, above). [113]

The course appeared to help Waleed in a number of ways, providing a range of learning experiences, through summer and winter school and day release sessions, some of which were highly practical in nature, involving problem-solving, which, as JOHNSON (2003) suggests, facilitated the development of materials design skills. Waleed received feedback on assignments for which he designed materials and conducted action research, which supported his own development and provided an opportunity to share. He engaged in feedback sessions following observed lessons, in the process developing as a reflective practitioner (MALDEREZ & BODÓCZKY, 1999) and gaining practical knowledge in analysing and justifying his work. In addition, in studying in his own context, to which he could apply his new ideas, he was fortunate, for, as MANN (2005, p.108) argues, in such circumstances "the experience usually leads to sustained development". [114]

Course content helped Waleed in several important respects; in raising his awareness of young learners' characteristics and needs, and in developing the analytical skills required for designing and evaluating materials. Sometimes, perhaps, it took time for concepts to be fully accommodated, such as the "core" activity of a communicative task (Section 5.12, above). Waleed, nevertheless, quickly absorbed much of the course input and developed rapidly as a materials designer. By continually revisiting materials design through a succession of modules in a constructivist way (DANGEL & GUYTON, 2004), the BA course helped him develop from strengths as a caring, organized, hard-working and reflective teacher to enhance motivation and learning more fully. [115]

7. Conclusions

My focus in this article has been on Waleed's practical knowledge growth as a materials designer, which was considerable. By the end of the course, he was better able to help his learners, his colleagues and himself; he was more autonomous and more confident in his role in the school. As was the case with several other teachers from the same multi-case study (WYATT, 2008), the course seemed to empower him. Mariyam, for example, working with primary grades 1-4, reported that the course helped her become more open-minded and more flexible in her approach to problem-solving (WYATT, 2010c); Sarah, working in a girls' secondary school, enthused about her newfound ability to adapt her teaching to a more communicative, facilitative style, declaring that her learners were the beneficiaries (WYATT, 2009b). These studies all used "thick description" (GEERTZ, 1973), with the teachers' words explored in relation to their observed actions. [116]

Returning to the specific focus of this article, materials design, this is a topic which I believe is worthy of study, since despite the preference shown in diverse

national contexts for a top-down approach to curriculum development, there will always be a need for DIY materials design skills in language teachers. Given, too, the dearth of previous research into how teachers develop the requisite practical knowledge to move towards expertise in materials design, I believe this article may provide the reader with some valuable insights. The aim was to facilitate vicarious experience through the use of thick description, thereby allowing the reader to form "naturalistic generalizations" (STAKE, 1995). I would now like to add my own assertions or propositional generalizations, as STAKE describes these, with regard to in-service language teacher education, indicating how the findings of this particular case study seem to confirm others' assertions. [117]

On the basis of Waleed's experiences, support can be offered for the following arguments:

- If a teacher education programme is coherent, in allowing participants opportunities to revisit concepts through a series of inter-related modules, this can lead to deeper learning (FREEMAN, 1989; WEDELL, 2004). The thick description provided in this article highlights how Waleed made such connections.
- Theoretical input on language acquisition, supported by reflective activities, is required to provide a basis for practical knowledge growth in the developing ELT materials designer (ELLIS, 2003). Waleed highlighted how learning about language acquisition processes was valuable to his own development.
- Practical, hands-on activities, including problem-solving tasks that involve the analysis of materials used in the teaching context, provide valuable support (JOHNSON, 2003). Waleed emphasized how such activities had helped him.
- A supportive environment for teaching practice, characterised by the encouragement of experimentation and reflection through tutoring and mentoring, is preferable (DANGEL & GUYTON, 2004; WIDEEN, MAYER-SMITH & MOON, 1998), though, in the real world, growth may occur in less than ideal conditions, providing that regular opportunities for experimentation are possible. Waleed's school context allowed sufficient freedom for the adaptation of teaching materials, which enabled him to persevere despite obstacles. When challenged by an inspector who disliked change, Waleed was sufficiently empowered by the course and the mentoring he received through it to defend his teaching methodology; he felt this was appropriate and could cite literature to justify his innovations.
- Involving teachers in action research can encourage a sharing of practical knowledge in schools (ALTRICHTER, POSCH & SOMEKH, 1993). While conducting research for his dissertation, Waleed began to take on the responsibility of sharing his ideas on materials design with others; he continued doing so after the course. [118]

Returning to issues concerning research methodology, I have produced a narrative account of how one teacher, working in a specific teaching context and benefiting from a language teacher education programme that was unusual as it was constructivist (DANGEL & GUYTON, 2004), developed over time. In doing

this, I have been able to triangulate data from various sources, while creating thick description to highlight the particularities of his experience (STAKE, 1995). However, I am also conscious of methodological limitations of the research, chiefly, that data-gathering opportunities, while regular, were not constant. Constrained by work commitments and motivated by the ethical concern to apportion contact time fairly to all 35 of my students, regardless of whether they were taking part in the multi-case study research or not, I was only able to observe Waleed once a semester. I did nevertheless see him teach five times, though, over three years, and as he adapted materials in each lesson I could see patterns of development. The research design, too, allowed me to triangulate lesson observations with analysis of assignments and cognitions elicited through interviews, a combination of methods recommended by BORG (2006). Clearly, while findings need to be treated cautiously, they were based on a fairly substantial body of data. In addition, I sought to be reflexive in my analysis and followed procedures for member checking that were rigorous. [119]

Narrative studies of language teacher cognition are still comparatively rare (BORG, 2006), while practical knowledge growth in materials design is a hitherto largely unexplored area, notwithstanding JOHNSON's (2003) study of expertise. Studies of the practical knowledge of language teachers have tended to focus on grammar teaching and literacy instruction (BORG, 2006), though communicative language teaching is also of increasing interest to researchers (SATO & KLEINSASSER, 1999; MANGUBHAI, MARLAND; DASHWOOD & SON, 2004; WYATT, 2009b). Only limited attention (e.g., HAYES, 2005) has been paid to the practical knowledge of language teachers outside the English-speaking West, while the Middle East is an under-researched geographical area. Further research is required in other contexts to see if the conditions that appeared to support practical knowledge growth in materials design in this context are meaningful elsewhere. [120]

Appendix: Information on Data Collection

Date	Code	
18/10/03	WO.1 (Waleed Observation 1)	WI.1 (Waleed Interview 1)
22/11/03		WI.2
21/3/04	WO.2	WI.3
10/10/04	WO.3	WI.4
6/2/05		WI.5
25/4/05	WO.4	WI.6
24/9/05	WO.5	WI.7
9/7/06		WI.8

Table 3: List of observations and interviews

Date	Module	Code
22/10/03	Tasks in Language Learning (Tasks)	WA.1 (Waleed Assignment 1) WF.1 (Waleed Feedback 1)
17/12/03	Language Acquisition and Learning (LAL)	WA.2, WF.2
26/5/04	Teaching Speaking and Listening (TS&L), Part 1	WA.3, WF.3
6/11/04	Researching TESOL	WA.4, WF.4
12/11/05	Materials Design and Development (MDD)	WA.5, WF.5
5/12/05	The Dissertation	WA.6, WF.6

Table 4: List of assignments referred to in this article and feedback on them

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Author

Mark WYATT is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Languages and Area Studies, University of Portsmouth, UK, where he teaches on a range of courses relating to English language and linguistics, and language teacher education. Mark conducted the research on which this article is based while working on a Ministry of Education / University of Leeds BA TESOL Project in the Sultanate of Oman. His research interests are in teachers' self-efficacy and practical knowledge growth, and in how such growth, explored through qualitative case study methodology, can be stimulated through constructivist teacher education. He is co-editor (with John ATKINS) of a volume entitled: "Research Perspectives on Education in Oman". Articles based on his PhD research have started to appear.

Contact:

Mark Wyatt

School of Languages and Area Studies
University of Portsmouth
Park Building
King Henry I Street
Portsmouth PO1 2DZ
UK

E-mail: Mark.Wyatt@port.ac.uk

URL:

<http://www.port.ac.uk/departments/academic/slas/staff/title.103627.en.html>

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