Textbooks and other instructional materials are one of the three main physical components of the English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) classroom, along with students and teachers. Unlike teachers and students, who are perceived as interacting curriculum participants, textbooks are mainly viewed as static physical objects that are often judged by their formal characteristics (e.g., content, organization, layout). This fact is obvious from frequently posed questions, such as these: “Should teachers use commercially published textbooks or design their own materials?” “If textbooks are to be used, how should they be selected?” “What are the criteria for selecting a good textbook?” “What is a good textbook?” “How does it look?” “What does it contain?” These are important questions, but they tend to emphasize the formal side of textbooks, as entities that are intrinsically good or bad and therefore only need careful selection. What remains outside this discussion is textbook use—the highly complex context in which textbooks and other materials inevitably operate, that is, the ways in which teachers and students can use textbooks as dynamic educational tools in the classroom. Table 1 shows the distinction between varying concepts of how to use textbooks.

Being unaware of the difference between these two perspectives on textbooks has serious implications for the classroom. For example, Teacher A, who for various reasons follows the course textbook as an authority, believes or is informed that he should cover the material as presented by the book. This means that the teacher and students must engage with content that is structured and imposed from outside. While doing so, Teacher A may discover that the students are not getting what they need, and, consequently, are losing interest in the subject.
Frustrated teachers and students may try to liberate themselves from the tyranny of the book by resorting to alternative teacher-made materials, which may or may not work as expected. If used as objects of authority, these materials also may become a cumbersome and controlling imposition. Inevitably, such materials take center stage when teaching and studying the book becomes the ultimate goal of education. Thus, instruction is shaped by the textbook-and-lecture model of education that defines the traditional paper-and-pencil classroom and equates learning the book with learning the content.

Teacher B, on the other hand, who treats the book as a tool for achieving learner-centered objectives, believes in reevaluating and restructuring the book’s content to achieve course objectives that are based on learner needs. That may be a difficult task, especially with beginning-level textbooks, but once Teacher B is aware of the difference between a textbook as a fixed object and textbook use as an evolving construct, she may be able to adapt and supplement the book in order to refocus content from the book to the students. For example, she may use the book to create authentic projects in meaningful contexts by adapting existing exercises; providing additional communicative activities; building transitions between units; grouping material according to preferred themes and concepts; increasing or decreasing the level of difficulty by adapting task instructions; introducing game elements; adding Web-based components; focusing on and prioritizing communicative functions, skills, and learning outcomes as needed; and designing assessment tools that reflect these modifications. Thus, in the hands of a skilled teacher, the book becomes a dynamic tool for developing desired learner competencies within a project-based model of education that defines the modern technology-enabled classroom and supports broader cross-disciplinary networking.

### Table 1. Different Concepts of Textbook Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used as Authority</th>
<th>Used as Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>static objects</td>
<td>dynamic constructs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside the curriculum</td>
<td>integrated into the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may be in conflict with curriculum</td>
<td>in harmony with curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occupy content foreground</td>
<td>may play different roles in curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stand-alone, fixed, and inflexible</td>
<td>shaped by curriculum processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control teaching and learning</td>
<td>serve as teaching and learning tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encourage teaching the book</td>
<td>support teaching the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>back a single discipline approach</td>
<td>back a cross-disciplinary approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on a textbook-and-lecture model</td>
<td>based on a textbook-and-project model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
skills (e.g., collaboration, systems thinking, self-direction, communication; Lohr, 2008).

In short, textbook use in general remains to be explored as a dynamic component of the ESOL classroom ecosystem in particular and as a constituent of larger educational and social ecosystems in general. But *Using Textbooks Effectively* does precisely that. It analyzes textbook use as part of the ESOL curriculum process, not just the textbook as a finished product, by examining textbook use in relation to three major ecological subsystems: the classroom, the world outside the classroom, and the different communities of language practice. Furthermore, this volume links ESOL textbook use to the three corresponding uses of English: for academic purposes, for social interaction, and for pragmatically appropriate expression in different discourse communities in and beyond the classroom.

It asks one fundamental question: How can teachers teach the students, not the book? In seeking answers to this crucial and all-encompassing concern, the authors of this volume’s chapters address the following questions:

- How does ESOL textbook use relate to ESOL curricular factors in the classroom (e.g., program and course objectives; student expectations and needs; learning strategies; teaching methodologies and techniques; language and subject content; communicative competencies; assessment and evaluation tools; proficiency, local, and national standards)?

- How does ESOL textbook use relate to broader societal factors beyond the classroom (e.g., language change, language policies, educational policies, technological innovations)?

- How does ESOL textbook use relate to the different communities of language practice in and beyond the classroom (e.g., academic and professional, formal and informal, global and local, standard and nonstandard, native and nonnative, written and oral)?

By posing these and related questions, *Using Textbooks Effectively* treats textbook use as part of a system whose effects emerge from the interaction of its components. The authors view textbook use as interconnected in a curriculum system that constantly changes due to the interaction of its components (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). In short, applying complexity theory to the analysis of ESOL textbook use enables us as educators to view textbooks as part of an complex and dynamic ecosystem (Larsen-Freeman, 1997).

Chapter 2, “Thinking Out of the Textbook: Toward Authenticity and Politeness Awareness,” by Clarice S. C. Chan, juxtaposes curricular factors and communities of practice factors, such as the language included in textbooks and its use in the corresponding communities of practice. More specifically, Chan analyzes the discourse of business meetings in and out of the textbook to highlight the importance of contextual clues that are often missing from textbook representations of oral communication in business meetings. She questions the effectiveness of
textbook dialogues that seem to use language regardless of the context in which it occurs. Furthermore, she sensitizes readers to the importance of the socioculturally determined contextual variation that is typical for business meetings in real life. Based on original research on the discourse features of business meetings, this chapter offers classroom-tested suggestions for updating business English textbooks with authentic language and activities that encourage its use in authentic situations.

Chapter 3, “Updating the Science Textbook to Help English Language Learners Integrate Science and Technology,” by Eileen N. Whelan Ariza, Philomena Marinaccio-Eckel, and Elena Webb, captures the interaction of curricular factors (e.g., subject content, learning strategies, teaching techniques), societal factors (e.g., technological innovations), and communities of practice factors (e.g., academic communication). In particular, the authors demonstrate how technology can be used to help linguistically diverse students critically assess scientific concepts, find the most recent discoveries in science, and take ownership of their own learning. Their account is based on an elementary-level science class in which students researched information on the planets to supplement and update the scientific facts in their textbook. It discusses how ESOL students work with native-English-speaking students on teacher-scaffolded projects to update textbook chapters with online illustrative animations and to prepare slideshow presentations of their projects. Overall, this chapter provides a rationale for learner participation in updating science textbooks and presents practical tips on engaging students in the use of technology in science education.

Chapter 4, “Learning to Read and Reading to Learn a Science Textbook,” by Marietta Bradinova, is a detailed study of several interrelated curricular factors in the context of a specific community of practice. Bradinova highlights curricular factors (e.g., course objectives and outcomes, learning and teaching strategies, subject content, communicative competencies) as they relate to academic communities of oral and written practice. She examines some of the challenges that students face when trying to comprehend information texts and offers ways of addressing them when teaching ESOL students how to read and learn from a biology textbook. To improve students’ ability to comprehend new academic concepts and to prepare them for the end-of-year standardized biology test, Bradinova offers scaffolded instruction that supports readers in constructing meaning and helps ESOL students learn and remember biology content and vocabulary better. She also provides examples of pre-, during, postreading strategies that help students deepen their understanding of disciplinary content and hone their ability to connect prior and recent knowledge.

In chapter 5, “Speaking the Reading: Orally Reconstructing Written Texts,” Christopher Stillwell discusses curricular issues related to the mismatch between the communicative competencies supported by the textbook and the additional communicative skills students need in order to reach target proficiency levels. Based on analysis of reading texts for an adult community outreach program,
Stillwell suggests ways in which these could be used to develop oral skills as well. He outlines a project in which students reconstructed a text from key words that they selected while reading it and describes the different project-related tasks (e.g., reading a text for general comprehension, selecting the five most important words in it, compiling a list of the words selected). Stillwell also offers multiple reconstructions of the text using words from the list. In addition to strategies for developing paraphrasing and summarizing skills, this chapter provides ideas for variations on reconstructing written texts to meet various objectives and student needs.

Chapter 6, “The Case of a Playful Text,” by Madhavi Gayathri Raman and Vijaya, promotes using authentic materials to provide a richer and more interesting environment for developing crucial communicative competencies that are needed for academic and social contexts as well as to bring course content closer to student expectations and needs. Raman and Vijaya describe how, instead of a textbook, they used a play as a stand-alone text in an ESOL integrated skills course for teenage students at an English-medium high school in India. They share the communicative activities and language games that they designed to provide contextualized pronunciation, vocabulary, reading, and writing practice based on the play. They also show how student interaction in authentic tasks using authentic texts may be a close approximation to real-life interaction. The authors report positive student feedback about their experimental curriculum and offer suggestions for using their instructional model with other students and in other educational contexts.

In chapter 7, “Adapting a Japanese High School Textbook to Teach Reading Microskills Communicatively,” Patrick Rosenkjar analyzes the conflicting relationship between major curricular components and methodology that cannot support updated curricular goals resulting from recent national ESOL proficiency standards. More specifically, he argues that contemporary demands for adequate academic and professional communication skills can hardly be met using traditional grammar translation textbooks alone. To illustrate this claim, Rosenkjar discusses a unit from a reading textbook for first-year high school English courses in Japan, showing that the text’s primarily form-focused activities do not adequately meet students’ need to be able to read in English for communication. In addition, he suggests ways of adapting the text to enhance students’ ability to read for meaning by developing reading microskills and offers ideas for supplementing standard practices of teaching reading for fluency in grammar-focused contexts.

Chapter 8, “Beyond the Book: Using Teacher–Learner Co-Constructed Texts to Supplement ESOL Textbooks,” by Graeme Ritchie, dispels the myth that a textbook alone, even if designed by the teacher who uses it, can be the ultimate authority in the ESOL classroom. Furthermore, Ritchie points out that the notion that commercially published books are flawed simply because their content is based on broad assumptions of learner needs is far too simplistic. He emphasizes that all materials, mass-produced as well as individually crafted ones,
Using Textbooks Effectively

require adaptations to fit an ever-changing educational environment. The focus of this chapter is the supplementation of textbooks, by teachers but also by students, who can be actively involved in the process. Ritchie describes a project in which the students and teacher co-construct texts that are then used as the basis for language analysis tasks. He argues that such activities have the potential to offer rich motivational and language learning opportunities tailored to students’ needs and interests.

Chapter 9, “A Choice-Motivated, Textbook-Anchored Curriculum for Advanced Language Learners,” by Natalie Hess, delves into the common but complex curricular dilemma of choice versus no choice in making short- and long-term curricular decisions regarding textbooks. Hess illustrates how choice is not only possible but also inevitable in the creative interpretation and adequate use of textbooks as tools for teaching the students rather than the book. She explores how even a well-liked textbook selected by the teacher can be used as a tool rather than as an authority for a student-centered and choice-motivated curriculum and not just as a reader that contains some exercises. More specifically, she looks into the way textbook material could be arranged from easier to more challenging by integrating language knowledge, communicative skills, and learner practice. This chapter focuses on curricular choice and examines the multiple possibilities that a textbook may offer as an anchor of ESOL content. Last but not least, Hess uses her own heartfelt teaching experience to suggest ideas for creative curriculum design anchored in an ESOL textbook.

In chapter 10, “Macroadaptations of Textbooks for Particular Classroom Settings,” Jia Zhimei, Xu Mengqing, Li Ning, and Li Hailin focus on the need to update curricular decisions to reflect emerging societal and communities of practice developments. They argue that, despite the wide range of published materials, simply choosing an appropriate textbook cannot meet evolving classroom needs in a rapidly changing world. They discuss how China’s recent economic boom and entry into the World Trade Organization has led to an emphasis on a functional communicative competence for which China’s current educational system, and ESOL education in particular, need to make adjustments. In this context, the authors describe the adaptation of a textbook unit through the application of macroadaptation strategies (e.g., omission, addition, reduction, extension, modification, replacement). They also discuss the content and purpose of these preprogram content changes, namely, an added oral component in a primarily reading-centered unit as well as the resulting increased student motivation and classroom participation.

Chapter 11, “Working With Texts to Develop ESOL Reading Strategies,” by Deoksoon Kim, discusses the social implications of curricular components, that is, the importance of effective reading skills for academic and professional success. Kim reports on her research into the application of a set of reading strategies that include forming extratextual connections and making intratextual analyses of the rhetorical features of reading texts. Kim acknowledges existing reading research
that focuses on activating schema and demonstrates how an application of the full range of reading strategies might help teachers improve reading education by using reading materials more effectively. She defines and illustrates these reading strategies and offers ways in which they could be applied in reading classes in different ESOL contexts.

Chapter 12, “Unlocking the Visual Puzzle: Understanding Textbook Design,” by Tammy R. Jones and Gabriela Kleckova, advocates the need to examine curricular issues in a broader framework of design principles and practices, and, more specifically, of textbook design. Jones and Kleckova follow the trend toward a heightened interest in consumer design and its practical implications. They claim that, even at their best, curricular and textbook designs are locked in a visual puzzle that may well hinder students’ ability to follow the material and progress through the course. In an attempt to facilitate textbook navigation, Jones and Kleckova address issues associated with helping students define the elements of visual design, recognize those visual elements, and use them to locate information and activities more effectively. To that end, the authors describe a project that allows students to make their own legends for the graphic organizers of their textbooks, and they provide an example of how teachers can help students make their own visual keys or legends for their textbooks.

Using Textbooks Effectively appears in a world of rising societal concern for productivity, effectiveness, and accountability in many spheres of human activity. In ESOL education, this is a particularly important issue, especially at a time when, in a historical shift from a textbook-and-lecture model to a textbook-and-project model, traditional textbooks are quickly evolving into multimedia and multimodal packages that tend to blur the line between mass and individually produced materials, between authors and users, and between real and virtual classrooms. This volume’s collection of chapters on the ecological perspectives of textbook use as part of a complex system of dynamic curricular processes is written by outstanding ESOL researchers and practitioners. Readers will find many insights on effective classrooms and, specifically, on applying tested strategies for the effective use of textbooks as tools for student learning.

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