CHAPTER II

MATERIALS PRODUCTION: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

Using language for communication is a unique human trait and the written form of language evolved from a complicated network of signs and symbols to its present form through a gradual process. And as if to reiterate the fact that the spoken form of language developed before the written form, dissemination of information, be it for academic or non-academic purposes, had been largely in the oral tradition, till publishing became a full-fledged industry. The first scrawls our progenitors made were on cave walls and subsequently on clay, parchment, leather and papyrus. Information came to be stored in the form we are all so familiar with now — in books — only since the fifteenth century, when a man called Johann Gutenburg invented the first movable type, the precursor of the modern printing press. With the proliferation of books and the rapid expansions in the field of education, from reading for leisure to reading for scholarship, the dependence on the written text was almost complete. Chapter I set the tone of the study by briefly stating its context and significance. This chapter explores the history of textbook writing and publishing and the literature available on materials production in the hope that some insights can be drawn from the theoretical database.
2.1. Stirrings: The Beginning of English Language Teaching and Learning in India

English textbook writing in India did not evolve overnight. It has a legacy and a history closely connected to the arrival and establishment of the East India Company and eventually the British Raj. Thomas Babington Macaulay's famous 1835 'Minute on Education' laid the foundation for bilingualism in India and its sole aim was "to create a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect" (Macaulay par. 30). This controversial piece of work is regarded by many to be the seed-bed for several future issues relating to the teaching and learning of English in India. The study of English was foisted upon the natives in the so-called name of enlightening them and on the short-sighted perception that the vernacular languages were not a suitable medium to pursue higher studies. The colonisers were also of the opinion that of all foreign languages, the one best suited for education was English. So what started off as a calculated attempt to enrich the poor and rude dialects spoken by Indians by exposing them to the self-assumed superiority of the English tongue, gained momentum as the lingua franca or the language of wider communication for a nation that was linguistically and culturally pluralistic. But it needs to be understood and accepted that "the Indian bourgeoisie was demanding English-language education as much as the missionaries and educators, seeing knowledge of English as an essential tool in gaining social and economic
prestige” (Pennycook qtd. in Hohenthal. screen 7, par. 7). This perception continues to prevail in modern India where a consensus regarding a national language is still elusive and English continues to be not only the link language but also “the language of political discourse, intranational administration, law, media” (Kachru qtd. in Hohenthal scr. 9, par.5) and to a large extent, pedagogy.

2.1.1. Early Days: An Introduction to Textbook Publishing in India

The position of English in early and in higher education automatically created a perennial market for English textbooks and from modest beginnings, textbook writing and publishing became a full-fledged industry. And even though publishing came to India in the mid-sixteenth century and its scope was limited to vernacular works (Albuquerque 246), the post-independence era saw a surge in publishing activities. “Today, India is, by any standard, a major publishing country. In terms of numbers of new titles and new editions of titles issued annually, it ranks among the world’s first ten publishing countries. On the same basis, it ranks third, after the United States and Britain, in annual production of titles in English. 40% of the titles published in India are English” (Israel 16). 75% of this market is devoted to publishing textbooks. This was however not the case in the early part of the twentieth century and the first English textbooks used in Indian schools were imported from England.

“Textbook production was started in India in 1877 by the School Book Society of Calcutta” (Santhanam iv). But “even in the 1920s the books used in
Indian schools were mostly those produced and printed abroad, and mainly meant for children in schools there. These textbooks and supplementary readers were far removed from the reality of the average Indian child as the content and the idiom were totally alien and unfamiliar. Without any departmental prescription of textbooks, the choice of books was left to the discretion of the schools and the availability of books in the market. This phase was followed, in the mid twenties, by a burgeoning of the publishing enterprise in the country" (Subramaniam 2001). Even then, according to Subramaniam,

[...] there was no real indigenous publishing as it was the Indian branches of foreign publishing firms such as Macmillan, Longman, Oxford University Press and Blackie & Sons who were involved in textbook publishing. They published textbooks catering to the needs of Indian students but which continued to be written by native speakers of English, some of whom were teaching in Indian schools. Locally published books arrived on the scene shortly thereafter and English textbooks and other subject books written by Indian authors and edited by the native speakers became available. Simultaneously Education Departments set up Textbook Committees to supervise and control the prescription of books by schools. Publishers to the Committee set up reviewers to scrutinise, assess, and eventually, approve of or reject the books submitted (op. cit.).
2.1.2. ‘Indigenisation’

History shows us that we did not start learning the language by choice. It was the bitter-sweet legacy of an era long gone. But that does not detract from the fact that English is an indispensable part of the nation’s psyche. Apart from other parochial considerations, “it is the main medium of instruction at the postgraduate level, and it is taught as a second language at every stage of education in all states of India” (Hohenthal screen 14). And even though the feeling that “English is the link language of the elite is justified, with the obvious failure of the Three Language Formula (developed for the educational load to be more fair, to promote national integration, and, to provide wider language choice in the school curriculum)” (Srivastava qtd. in Hohenthal, screen 14) one isn’t left with much choice but to accept the language that has unified the nation linguistically.

The aftermath of World War II saw an augmentation of educational infrastructure all over the country — “one that was matched by a rise in school enrolment. Consequently there was a large-scale demand for textbooks and supplementary readers, a situation that predictably called forth commercial exploitation. Publishers, big and small, joined the bandwagon of wholesale publishing and books of Indian authorship, with Indian themes, the majority of which were qualitatively and quantitatively inferior to those written by native writers teaching in India, flooded the market. This was the norm until the early fifties (the Central Bureau of Textbook Research was established in 1954)
when educational authorities in many states in the country, inspired by ideas that originated in the Education Department of London University, complied and introduced a new type of syllabus for the teaching of English as a foreign language. But unfortunately, miscomprehension of the aims set out in the new syllabus led to some very artificial writing” (Subramaniam 2001). This stage was crucial in the sense that it spawned the awareness to teach English to non-native speakers with emphasis on their special needs. The textbooks reflected this transition — that of prescribing the books written by true-blood native speakers writing in their mother-tongue, for their own audience to prescribing books written by indigenous authors writing in a foreign language, but in their own milieu. “The introduction of the public examination system at the final year of the secondary school curriculum necessitated the prescription of a common textbook for the final year in all schools and soon the nationalisation\(^1\) or departmentalisation of all language textbooks to be used in the entire school course was introduced” (op. cit.). “With the merger of the Central Bureau of Textbook Research with the NCERT in 1961, a new phase of directional development was lent to the area of textbook development” (Santhanam iv). With the coming of age of indigenous publishing, the writing and publishing of textbooks became an industry in itself and growth\(^2\) in this field has been impressive, as earnings from book sales have risen from very modest beginnings to a multi-crore industry.
The English textbooks used in schools today have, as mentioned earlier, evolved into their present form gradually. From imported books whose content was totally unfamiliar to child learners, to quasi-indigenous textbooks that foreign publishers brought out in collaboration with native speakers, to wholly indigenous textbooks written by Indian teachers who were in close contact with the language learning situation — the textbook has indeed come a long way. But then and now, there is no doubt that the textbook is what the teacher makes of it. "Beautifully produced, gorgeously bound and attractively illustrated textbooks" (Subramaniam 2001) with child-friendly methodologies and learner-centred curricula need not necessarily mean that the textbook is used to its best potential. An exceptional teacher can use a poor textbook very effectively, and an extremely good textbook can be under-utilised by a mediocre teacher. Whichever way it's looked at, there is no refuting the fact that textbooks have become synonymous with education, with pedagogy. The textbook is not only the dominant tool of classroom instruction but is, more importantly, the yardstick to measure the progress made by the learner in the course of study. "It represents the linear, unbroken, and graded progression of the course and teachers, students and parents draw comfort from the concreteness and stability offered by the coursebook" (Sheldon 3). The textbook is an amalgam of creativity and commerce and caters to certain pre-determined needs of the pedagogic community. "A classroom tome" (op.cit.), it is at the very centre of language teaching and learning. And in spite of being
called “a flawed creation” (op. cit.), the textbook has endured the shifts and changes in language theory, for whatever the theory expounded, the medium to carry it has always remained the same — the textbook. It also has to be mentioned that traditional book publishing has had to face competition in the form of electronic publishing. But, both in India and abroad, e-publishing is still in its nascent stage and it would be a while before the electronic medium supersedes or even, replaces the printed form.

"The textbook means different things to different people and there are primarily three persons involved in the textbook question" (Sheldon 2) — the writer or author, the publisher and the end-users — the teacher and the learner. The author is the creator of ideas; the publisher the seller of those ideas; and the classroom is the venue for the dissemination of the ideas by the teacher to the learner. The textbook is thus a potent instrument that symbolises the fruition of the creative, the commercial and the pedagogic. The amazing fact is that even though textbooks have been part and parcel of the educational scenario, "what is noteworthy is the lack of communication between the parties involved in the textbook question. Authors, publishers, educational administrators and teachers are often ignorant of one another’s true priorities and constraints" (Sheldon 2). In fact, textbook writing has been regarded as a "neglected and thorny issue" (op. cit.) and the purpose of this thesis is to take a closer look at the issues involved in the writing and publishing of textbooks, specifically ELT textbooks. Apart from analysing the operational constraints of
each party individually, the study tries to emphasise primarily on areas where conflicts occur, and how to overcome these contrarieties. However, first and foremost, it is important to fully understand this phenomenon — the language textbook — and the role it plays in the classroom both from its detractors and its supporters.

2.2. Textbooks: Sugar-coated Pill?

[...] a ‘textbook’ may be loosely defined as a published book most often produced for commercial gain, whose explicit aim is to assist foreign learners of English in improving their linguistic knowledge and/or communicative ability. (Sheldon 1)

In the light of this derogatory definition, it is pertinent to take a close look at some of the other accusations levelled against textbooks.

Leslie Sheldon (1987) feels that the textbook often is a “cobbled collection of disjunct one-offs” (op. cit.). He says that

1. textbooks are tantalisingly vague about target learners. This means that even though the text is intended for a particular age group at a particular class or grade, the text’s definition of entry/exit language levels does not correspond to the actual level or age it is intended for. This is because it is not very easy to correctly predict learning capabilities or aptitudes. (‘high school’, ‘intermediate’)

2. grammatical explanations take too much terminological/linguistic knowledge for granted

3. workbooks force students adopt microscopic handwriting

4. textbooks often have density of text or diagram

5. few progress tests are built into the textbooks

6. the course rationales are rarely explained for the teacher's benefit

7. no indication of needs analyses or pre and/or post publication trials undertaken. (Sheldon 3)

To Adrian Underhill (2000) one inherent problem is that "the coursebook is written by someone else, somewhere else, who has never met my students or me, and does not know our backgrounds or our learning styles. The resulting textbook is necessarily a record of the author's and publisher's general assumptions about what my students may need to learn, and about what process of learning is likely to be good for them. Do I share these values? [...] Why impose material from somewhere else if they can make their own using their own resources as well as mine?" (par. 5-6)

Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner (2001) want to "declare a five-year moratorium on the use of all textbooks. Since with two or three exceptions all texts are not only boring but based on the assumption that knowledge exists prior to, independent of, and altogether outside of the learner, they are either worthless or harmful. If it is impossible to function without textbooks, provide
every student with a notebook filled with blank pages, and have him compose his own text” (par. 1).

The arguments above are indicative of what many practitioners of classroom pedagogy think about the most dominant tool of instruction. This textbook or coursebook revulsion syndrome had its origins in the early 70s and the numbers of those attacking its use in the classroom have since swelled. “Pre-eminent in the list of coursebook attackers are luminaries like Dick Allwright (Why do we need materials), Julie Tice (The Coursebook Straightjacket) and Mario Rinvolucri (Coursebooks are a human, cultural and linguistic disaster)” (Harmer 5). Textbook bashing continued into the 80s and 90s and it is no surprise that the twentieth century has witnessed the spawning of a high-tech version of textbook haters, members of e-groups, who are practising a ‘jihad’ on materials-driven lessons. One such prominent e-group is www.teaching-unplugged.com, previously ‘Dogme ELT.’ This is their contention: “[...] the view that language is an emergent phenomenon, and that the learning of it is a jointly constructed and socially motivated process, contingent on the concerns, interests, desires, and needs of the user, then the argument for coursebooks starts to look a bit thin. To treat language learning on par with other subjects like history and geography whose teaching revolves around a textbook is anathema because language is not a subject — it is a medium. Teaching language through textbooks would only paralyse its capacity to convey messages” (Thornbury 11).
This brings us to a very fundamental question. What is the value of textbooks in EFL/ESL learning? Christopher Brumfit's (1983) 'Seven Last Slogans' provide grist for the mill by paving the way for the eventual rejection of certain widely held beliefs in the world of EFL. But they also, though dogmatically, give clarity to the argument of whether or not textbooks are to be used. Five of the ‘slogans’ are replicated here with slight modifications to suit the ESL context. The relevance of the slogans to the context of the study is indicated within parenthesis.

1. **Exciting techniques make good teaching.**

   While there is some confusion about what makes good teaching, everyone is sure what constitutes bad teaching. The techniques used for language teaching have to be exciting because they motivate the teacher who in turn inspires the learner. But learning has also to be calm, slow and steady at times. Vigour and excitement have to be balanced by steady development and systematic planning, for education is not about performance, it is about development — development that gestates and evolves. (The implication this has on materials development is that for textbooks to be used to their optimum capacity, they should excite and inspire, and more importantly lead to the holistic development of the language learner.)
2. Textbooks help teachers

Even the best textbook takes away initiative from teachers by implying that there is somewhere an 'expert' who can solve problems for your students and your class. (Why is this opinion finding more and more acceptance? It may be because both publisher and author have not made an effort to change public opinion that textbooks are nothing more than moneymaking rackets. Conscientious publishers need to work towards rectifying this majority belief.)

3. The testing of published materials can be left to the open market; it is not the responsibility of the publisher or author. (The days of unedited manuscripts being directly sent to the printing press have not ended. However, piloting is a concept that has gained acceptance at least with cash-rich publishers who evaluate new materials in real classrooms. Both authors and publishers are aware of the long-term consequences of marketing materials that have not been field-tested and are therefore more conscious of their value. But this is more the exception than the norm.)

4. A 'scientific' grading of reading materials is not only possible, but useful. (Students read not what is linguistically appropriate but what they are interested in. And the publisher needs to get as much feedback (or evidence) as possible on what interests the student most. This is not
difficult to gauge because the teacher is the best judge of what her students like to read and providing interesting content for classroom teaching need not be as demanding a task as it is made out to be. Feedback from teacher to publisher to author would ensure that the materials produced are effective and interesting.)

5. EFL teaching needs more specialisation. (Apart from its obvious connotation, the real issue here in the context of materials writing is that, ‘experts’ need to have a first hand experience of the teaching situation they are writing for. Writers displaced from the milieu they are addressing have led to the production of incongruous, artificial materials. However, such ‘top heavy’ specialists who design syllabuses and materials need to be oriented to classroom realities even if they have no direct classroom participation (130-132)).

Looking at these points of view one would think that textbook writing and publishing is a dying industry. But that claim is largely exaggerated. While the arguments set forth by those who feel the textbook is an obsolete classroom tool is recognisable, it would be a while before language learning dispenses with it — what ever the limitations it imposes on the teaching-learning equation. And even though textbooks are condescendingly called “commercial ephemera that is aggressively marketed and which naturally involves a compromise between the pedagogic and the financial,” (Sheldon 3) the fact is that textbook publishing is a global enterprise and the numbers joining its ranks
are increasing rather than decreasing. The real threat in the writing and selling of textbooks comes from within — when both author and publisher are at loggerheads or when they “conspire together to market masses of rubbish” (Brumfit qtd. in Sheldon 4) without giving language learning or teaching it’s due. Author and publisher should arrive at a “golden mean” (Tickoo 42) to help them uphold the larger principles of language learning/teaching. The perceptions and experiences of theoreticians and practitioners in the field of materials writing will provide a foundation for the ensuing discussion.

2.3. Materials Writing

In this section, which is divided into five sub-sections, the entire process of materials writing is analysed and explained by experts who have first-hand experience in producing materials for language learning at different levels and situations. It provides a holistic picture of several issues that surface when one embarks on writing materials.

2.3.1. Materials in Language Learning

“It is hard to make history boring unless you write textbooks”: this is how Subhadra Sen Gupta (IRB 40) describes the state of affairs as far as the writing of history textbooks for children goes. But this is equally applicable to those practising the art of materials writing in other subjects. And the onus of providing inspiring materials is very high on those writing English textbooks because it is not just a subject that is being taught here. Language learning is
altogether different and materials have to follow stringent guidelines in order to be effective. This is however the exception rather than the norm.

According to David Hall (1995), “there are three facts about language learning that are fairly obvious and uncontroversial, but are not often enough stated together. First, just about everyone learns to communicate fluently in at least one language. This is normally the L1 or mother tongue. Second, very few people learn to communicate fluently in a new language learned entirely in a formal language class. Third, most people who learn to communicate fluently in a language which is not their L1 do so by spending a lot of time in situations where they have to use the language for some real communicative purpose” (Hall 9).

Hall says that “the need to communicate is at the heart of learning a language. So if students or learners want to learn English, they must be put in situations where they need to communicate in English. And for real communication to take place, there are three conditions:

1. We must have something we want to communicate
2. We must have someone to communicate with
3. We must have some interest in the outcome of the communication.

Unfortunately, these conditions are missing in almost all language-teaching materials and in most language-teaching classrooms” (op.cit.). Hall illustrates the fact that “it is unrealistic to expect these conditions to exist all the
time with the following situation: A secondary school class of 40 pupils and their teacher cannot all have the need to communicate in a foreign language for their own purposes all the time. Nevertheless, given the lack of success of conventional classroom teaching, it is perhaps worth making the attempt to approximate as closely as possible to the three conditions (Hall 10). On the issue of writing materials, Hall feels that “materials writers should bear this in mind: You do not write to conform to anybody else’s model. You look at other people’s models and you read current theory, but in the end your materials and the writing of the materials will not be the simple passive implementation of someone else’s ideas. They will be developed in the interaction between the writers, the teachers and the students. They will contribute to the sum total of materials writing experiences. Both your own and other people’s beliefs about effective language learning will be modified and enriched by your experiences” (Hall 23-24).

For Peter Viney (1999) “Writing a textbook is like other forms of creative writing.” This is what he has to say about it:

1. **Hone your ear for dialogue.** This means watching TV with awareness, listening to colleagues, noting how language is really used.

2. **Make sure** you know the nuts and bolts of the language backwards, forwards and sideways. I’ve seen recent beginners’
books that forget to teach possessive adjectives, or
demonstratives or countability or whatever. They just use the
structures without any awareness that they are new to the
students, and fail to present them in any systematic way. This
could be due to carelessness or incompetence. Even if your
approach never mentions grammar, never teaches structure, you,
the writer, have to be aware of the structure and difficulty of
every single word.

3. Research stuff for yourself.

4. Don’t leave the picture research entirely to the publisher.
Describe exactly what you want in a picture. Better still, find the
pictures yourself. Describe requested illustrations in great detail.

5. Don’t plagiarise. The most successful books don’t copy others.

6. Don’t try to be the “next” anything. The next major success
won’t be a clone of anything. It will be totally different and
establish its own character. (par.14)

2.3.2. Materials Writing: Creativity amidst Constraints

“Writing instructional materials is certainly a complex and skilled task,
involving a large number of decisions. It is my view that it is best seen as a
form of operationalised tacit knowledge rather than an algorithmic set of fixed
operations based on some kind of (mythical) objective, scientific knowledge”
(Maley 220).

Maley (221) feels that persons engaged in the task of writing textbooks
work on their own instincts and beliefs falling back on objective knowledge
and procedures as and when necessary. This means that materials writing is
more of an art than a science as “it is not a tidy, mechanical process with
predictable outcomes. Rather it is disorderly, recursive, creative, and
unpredictable” (op.cit.). Textbook writing is unique in that it works on a
different set of principles and paradigms and while the idiosyncratic or intrinsic
features of creative writing are replicated, the extrinsic or extraneous
characteristics are unique, to say the least. But it is possible to arrive at some of
the crucial ingredients that should make up materials. That is, “materials should

1. have brevity

2. be interesting

3. not be too linguistically demanding

4. be varied/offer a range of choice

5. not be culturally offensive to any particular group” (Maley 232).

Once this broad framework is followed, certain other features need to be
considered. Maley calls these the “variables that he operates with while writing
materials.
They include:

1. the belief systems about the nature of language learning and about human nature itself;

2. the characteristics of learners (age, previous language learning experience, degree of motivation, learning purpose and cultural orientation) or in other words a mental picture of the notional class for whom the materials are being written; and

3. the phantom teachers (teaching experience, knowledge of the language and of teaching methodology, motivation) who would eventually use the materials in the classrooms have to be considered too for they can sabotage or subvert the materials they have had foisted upon them because they don’t understand the materials or cannot empathise with them. Eventually the material writer has no control over the way the materials will be used for each individual teacher will interpret them differently, and the same teacher will not use them identically on two different occasions. (Maley 221-224)

Maley further identifies what he calls “Materials Factors” that come into play in materials writing. These are:

1. **Level**, which is an awareness of or a notion of what is appropriate for the level of the students who will be using the materials. Level for most writers means linguistic level, but equally
important are the cognitive and affective maturity of the students. Reconciling these is a major challenge but if ignored it could lead to simplistic and trivial texts or activities, but most experienced writers have an intuitive sense of the level most appropriate for a given group of students. This is an intractable problem because all learners are different but we design materials for them as if they are the same.

2. Content, which is the very essence of the materials, includes topic content or the input from texts and activity content or what we do with the input. Several criteria should be kept in mind while selecting both input and activities. They should, for example,

a. have the potential to promote learning

b. be accessible

c. be non-trivial

d. be intrinsically interesting

e. have relevance to the learners, both personally and instrumentally

f. be sensitive to the ideological messages they may be conveying
3. **Focus relates to learning purpose and may refer to**

   a. **Skill focus** — do I need to give more emphasis to listening, or to writing, for example? Or should I be aiming for a better balance of integrated skills?

   b. **Accuracy/fluency focus** — do the students need more attention to the formal properties of the language or to functional use?

   c. **Special purpose/general purpose focus** — am I aiming to work towards a set of pre-determined target needs or is it more important to provide for immediate and on-going learning wants? (Maley 224-226)

   “Logistical Questions” is the third category of constraints that every materials writer faces and Maley (226-227) lists them as:

1. **The system** — which may require students to follow a syllabus and prepare for an examination. This might include the length of the course (for example, eight hours of English a week) and the teaching mode, which will specify the number of students per class (for example, 45 students per class). Materials will be constructed keeping these variables in mind.
2. Material constraints — if, for example, there are no cassette
recorders or video machines, it will be a waste of the author's
time and publisher's money to develop audio/video material. This
means that the writer does not have the freedom to integrate all
the features that go in the making of a wholesome textbook. The
writing will have to suit each specific situation, some with plenty
of resources and some other situations of extreme deprivation.
This scenario is rare in cases where the publisher starts working
with a blue print of the materials he intends to publish. However
if there is a change of mind half way or at the fag end of the
production process, it would necessitate an enormous amount of
reworking of the materials.

3. Publishing constraints — publishers work to tight budgets and the
writer has to be ever conscious about

a. the length of the book and this can be quite frustrating as
often there is limited scope for the expansion of ideas; the
constraint of fitting the ideas into a fixed format is
crippling and the compact size of textbooks — a sure way
to keep the price down — does not allow room for
leisurely interpretation. Also another big disadvantage of
many published materials is the rather limited range of
text-types they offer.
b. the effect of the materials if it's published in black and white instead of full-colour printing

c. the balance between text and exercise material, type of activities and page layout and on which the in-house editor is sure to have firm ideas. (Maley 226-227)

2.3.3. Textbook: 'What Is' or 'What Should Be'?

In situations where the “composite textbook is the sole source of support” (West qtd. in Tickoo 1995: 31), it is not often easy to persist with the belief that the textbook is “a mirror of social reality” (Tickoo 37) and this is an area of constant compromise for the materials writer. And the idealists are on both sides of the fence — among writers and the critics (people in public life and the press) who are of the view that school texts have to present not ‘what exists but what ought to exist. Tickoo’s experiences in writing materials for a “state-level system in a multilingual and multi-cultural developing society is that it often became necessary to satisfy different sets of criteria which in some cases do make contradictory demands. Some of them arise from such a society’s need to teach the values it wants to foster. Some arise in the desire to make education a handmaiden to economic progress and social reconstruction. A few important ones stem from the need to provide for the less fortunate, poorer, or historically abused sections of society, e.g. the lower classes or castes, women, farm hands, or the rural poor. To answer all of them cannot be
an easy task. What can help is to accept the fact that a perfect textbook is an ideal, and the best means towards that ideal is to keep the textbook always standing in print” (Tickoo 39).

The issues that came to the fore while working on the materials for a state-level schooling system are categorised by Tickoo under two broad headings:

1. Thematic or subject matter of the materials (content) that were largely influenced by the beliefs of British linguist and phonetician Henry Sweet about second-language teaching materials. Firstly that young children, in particular, have a great dislike to being offered what is aggressively babyish, or too obviously intended to serve moral or pedagogic interests. And in fact prefer the other extreme glimpses of something a little beyond them. And secondly, that an English reading-book for French learners ought to deal with scenes of modern English life rather than with Lacedemonians (Tickoo 32). Adherence to these beliefs forced the writers to make several compromises, as was realised after the first field trial. The most startling discovery was the reaction to the materials: untrained teachers and first-generation learners found the materials too alien and unreal given its anglicised background. On the contrary, teachers and learners from the middle class strata found the materials a novelty. Trying to balance out both viewpoints was the real challenge that faced the team of materials writers because even among
them there was differences of opinion. Some felt that it was not necessary to compromise on the social backdrop of the materials because English as a world language was meant to do what no Indian language did, i.e., to give students a glimpse of another world. The other contention was that basing materials on the lives of the affluent sections of society made students feel not only inadequate but also vulnerable. That is, the problems of grappling with a new language whose systems differed from their mother tongues was further compounded by the subject matter which was both alien and exotic. Some of the other issues that came up during revision were: to guard against sexist bias and type-casting; to be conscious of what Michael West said about the “mental age of the materials corresponding with the chronological ages of the learners” (Tickoo 38) and an awareness of national policies and norms — (family planning/ 2 child norm etc).

2. The elements or aspects of language to be included in the materials was the second important consideration in writing materials. This included choosing appropriate language items, sequencing them on the basis of frequency of occurrence, ease of teaching and a movement from the centre to the periphery within the syntactic system of English. And all this had to be worked within the confines of a pre-selected and pre-sequenced syllabus that became a stranglehold against creativity for the more the materials conformed to the syllabus the more artificial and
bizarre they became — the tension between controlled composition and natural language was, according to Tickoo, obvious throughout the text. Lessons had to strictly adhere to syllabus specifications even at the cost of naturalness. The other problem encountered was whether to uphold spaced controlled repetition in support of accuracy and how content words that were part of the active vocabulary could be incorporated without being counterproductive, artificial or unnatural. The compromise was thus between what was unreadable and unreal, and it proved a difficult choice for the materials writer. (Tickoo 41)

“Upholding the ideology of the language teaching programme as envisioned in the approach and the syllabus, without compromising on the optimum value of the materials was an achievable goal and the changes made were:

1. A two-level syllabus which included a pre-textbook(s) and a post-textbook(s).

2. The freedom to alter sequence of items in the syllabus.

3. End-of-the lesson exercises gave the author the freedom to include new vocabulary that was not part of the syllabus” (42).
2.3.4. Textbook Writing: Research and Planning

The experiences of working on the paradigm of a highly controlled system more or less replicates the experiences of textbook writing. Even though there are other variables in play in each individual writing situation, the constraints and compromises encountered are to a large extent similar. Jack C. Richards (1995) takes a look at another important aspect in textbook writing and reiterates the importance of research and planning before starting to write a book. This is a chore that has to be divided equally between author and publisher because time spent on finding out the needs and wants of the end users — teachers and learners — is time well spent. Writing course materials or textbooks based on such needs analysis (and followed by a field test) will not only enhance the quality of the materials but would also reduce the chances of the book failing commercially. Systematic and methodical planning should preempt the implementation of the programme and for Richards (97-104) the following broad framework is mandatory in materials production:

1. Researching the need for the series/textbooks
2. Developing syllabus specifications
3. Developing the unit format
4. Piloting the sample unit
5. Writing the first draft
6. Revision based on editorial feedback
7. Final manuscript
Writing materials for publication involve a great deal of flexibility on the part of both author and editor. This is because, although both work on their intuitions and ideas, eventually it is the synergy of their efforts that culminates in the publication of commercial materials. This is an area of considerable strife because revision is a dirty word in the author’s dictionary and the editor, as the publisher’s representative (includes both copy/development editor and content editor) is extremely particular about what goes into the book as it could make the difference between a book that sells and one that doesn’t. “It is the role of the editor to see that the ‘writers’ intentions are both realisable and successful. And successful materials are materials that have been fine-tuned through a gradual process of revision and improvement” (op.cit.).

Richards (109) goes on to list the features of a successful book as one that

1. has clear goals and procedures
2. produces the kinds of learning outcomes it was designed to teach
3. is at an appropriate level of difficulty
4. has value for both teachers and learners in terms of interest, usefulness or relevance.

He also adds that this is not an impossible goal to achieve if both author and publisher are open-minded. The writer must be willing to submit his/her work for critical review (Richards 110) or scrutiny and must be willing to
stomach the frank comments and suggestions of reviewers. Material writing will be very stressful if authors and editors embark on a warpath during the period of planning and completion of a coursebook. The ultimate goal for both is producing a book to the best of their combined abilities and that goal should never be lost or compromised.

2.3.5. Textbooks: Practical and Theoretical ‘Considerations’

Ted Rodgers (1995) concurs with the school of thought that says “good theory is highly practical” (Rodgers 250). “When applied to the area of textbook writing this translates into what he calls the KILA Model of instructional design: that is, Knowledge Considerations, Instructional Considerations, Learner Considerations and Administrative Considerations play a role in successful materials writing. Successful materials design is a tapestry in which all the considerations are woven together. Knowledge considerations very simply, refer to the input which is the content of the text and the output or the outcome the instructional materials have on learners at the conclusion of the period of study. Instructional considerations are concerned with what the teacher does with the materials and learner considerations look at the age, proficiency levels and developmental stages of the learners. Administrative considerations refer to the scale, pace and style of educational delivery and include the establishment, interpretation and implementation of overall policy” (Rodgers 251-254). KILA as a whole is relevant because the person setting out to write materials should have a very clear idea of all these
considerations before embarking on writing. Whether the author applies all these considerations is debatable but the ideal writing process is one that encompasses these features.

2.3.6. Common Perceptions on Materials Writing

Several issues are involved in the writing of instructional materials and the author working on a project has to work within these limitations. Looked at through the eyes of several experts in the area, one is forced to accede that writing a textbook is not child’s play. Each one of the experts quoted above has worked in a unique situation but what is inferred from their varied experiences is the common perception that those embarking on materials writing assignments have to be firstly, well armed with certain prerequisites and secondly, have to accept the impediments or constraints as part and parcel of their field of operation. This section essentially looked at and analysed the common perceptions on materials writing. Occupational hazard would be a term that aptly suits this scenario, because without these pressures there will be no writing virtually. If there are constraints there will automatically be compromises. The following section looks at the whole issue from the publisher’s point of view and analyses notions of marketability and ideology driven publishing.
2.4. Publishing: The Scenario

"Publishing has been called an industry (as against a profession) because it deals with the production, distribution and promotion of a product. And the product in question being books, successful publishing is an amalgam of three heterogeneous attributes: business aptitude, interest in marketing plus creativity and literary effort" (Albuquerque 246). The publisher's challenge lies in incorporating these disparate features into a synchronised entity and be it books of educational or cultural content, textbooks, paperbacks (fiction and non-fiction), art books, children's books or those produced by the feminist press, publishing encompasses the following activities:

1. Selection and commissioning of manuscripts
2. Preparation of manuscripts for printing
3. Designing the final appearance of the books
4. Having them printed and bound
5. Marketing the finished books

All these activities are co-ordinated by three 'departments': editorial, production and marketing.

1. Editorial: Identifying authors and commissioning manuscripts, conferring with experts in different fields for their opinion, preparing typescripts or disks of manuscripts for printing, liaising
with authors and dealing with contracts, copyright and subsidiary rights are the main responsibilities of the editorial team.

2. Production: Preparing the manuscript for publication whereby it is transformed into a marketable entity is the main concern of this department. The 'look' of the book or its appearance with regard to shape, size, cover, number of pages, type of paper, style of typeface and illustrations are decided in consultation with the editorial team.

3. Marketing: Selling the book is the obvious responsibility of the marketing team, but it also includes planning and researching before and for sales campaigns apart from looking for potential buyers in schools, colleges, universities, bookshops, and libraries.

(Albuquerque 248-250)

The above description is common to book publishing in general and each genre will have its own unique attributes: the publisher of paperbacks will face a different set of constraints from those publishing textbooks or juvenile fiction.

2.4.1. Educational Publishing

The world of textbook publishing (80% of the total school textbook requirement is being met by nationalised presses), especially ELT textbook publishing, and more specifically the operational constraints of academic
publishers is the focus of the thesis. This is further narrowed down to a small minority of committed private publishers who still have some interest in the business of school textbooks, even though their clientele is restricted mainly to private, especially unaided schools. This is in contrast to the profiteering, unscrupulous kinds who are recognisable by their lack of ideological and ethical moorings. The constraints the former face in the production and selling of English language textbooks are analysed as opposed to the larger, government-run monopolised-subsidised publishing. This is reiterated because in the Indian context,

[...] the process of 'nationalization' started in the 1960s has closed a very lucrative area of operation to Indian publishers in the private sector. Monopoly in the preparation and publishing of this important educational tool is not healthy and that, therefore, the private sector must be allowed to operate in the school textbook field along and in competition with the private sector. This, it is argued, will lead to higher standards all round. It will also, industry spokesmen state quite frankly, help to bring financial stability to the industry, which sections of it lack today (Israel 12-13).

Just as the author writing a textbook should hone his skills so as to achieve a near perfect balance of ideas that are pedagogically feasible, the publisher has to tread the tight rope of what can be published vis-à-vis what can
be taught. “Publishing is a business and it should be said that those engaged in the production of ELT textbooks must produce a profitable return on capital employed and provide the owners of the enterprise with something to show for their trusting investment in so volatile an activity as the selling of ideas” (Zombory-Moldovan 86). And this is not an easy task by any standards, because the publisher has to also reckon with the ‘big brother attitude’ of the academic community, who are better informed as far as subject matter goes. On the flip side, “publishers’ anxieties are not taken seriously by anyone except themselves. Even to themselves they have to explain why, if their sector of publishing is as vulnerable as they fear, it is such a favoured area of investment; why most academic and professional publishers show a higher level of profit than other kinds of publishing [...]” (Graham 75). Also, a publisher has to juxtapose an understanding of the criteria by which to assess new ideas for instructional materials with the realisation that the criteria needed to judge whether a book is publishable are notably different from, if not contrary to those applied to the assessment of teachability. This duality or dichotomy in the publishing process has to be acknowledged and accepted by authors because several misconceptions have their origin in the dogmatic and uncompromising positions held by authors who have only a vague awareness of publisher constraints. Persuading customers to buy the books in bulk, consistently for several years and at a price that would ensure a profit, is a tall order especially in the language textbook market place. A brief look at the
commercials involved in textbook production would set in perspective the issues that often overwhelm the most tenacious of publishers.

2.4.1.1. The Textbook Publishing Business

The entire process of book publishing revolves around four stages, which it should be mentioned is generic for all marketable goods: "market research, planning, implementation and control. Market research includes understanding the environment for which the book is targeted, studying buyer behaviour, and evolving a unique selling proposition based on the competitors offering. Planning involves the identifying, researching and selecting of target markets, forecasting demand and determining pricing strategies. Implementation and control go hand in hand because all the throughputs of the previous stages culminate in the selling of the textbook. Sales promotion, organising marketing strategies, warehousing and distribution complete this final phase" (Kotler vii-viii).

Another area of importance is the expenditure the publisher will incur on the investment he has made on a new series of textbooks:

1. The initial investment (fixed cost).
2. The recurring costs of materials; printing and shipping (variable cost).
3. The salaries of those involved in this endeavour.
4. Costs of running the business, including lunches for authors (overhead).
5. Costs of authors' royalties (varies from 10 % to 7.5 % of the net or published price).

6. Tax payable on sales made.

7. The interest costs of the money borrowed to finance all this activity (Zombory-Moldovan 86-87).

The above description would give a fair idea of what goes on in the publishing arena once the author has completed his brief. Transforming a manuscript to book form entails huge monetary commitments and the pressure to achieve profitable sales subsumes all other preoccupations. “Economies of scale also play an important part: printing costs come down steadily as the print run gets longer, although for many types of books the publisher cannot really hope to hit the jackpot in terms of dramatically reduced unit costs (and thus of course, dramatically improved profit margins) until the print run stands at about 100,000” (Zombory-Moldovan 87).

Another area of concern is whether the book sales will be at least proportionate to the amount spent on marketing it if not higher because “given the constantly and indeed increasingly changing nature of teaching methodologies and syllabuses, the ELT publisher cannot, like the publisher of fiction, look forward to steady sales extending over the decades. A title that peaks after three years, and may no longer be economic to reprint after five or six, is not the joke it might once have been; it remains a profoundly depressing prospect to publisher and author alike” (op.cit.). Yet another problem, according to Moldovan is that, what the author perceives as a niche-filler does
not reduce the time and resources the publisher has to spend on its editorial, design and production; big or small the publisher's "overriding consideration must be the suitability and acceptability of the material under consideration for its given and clearly defined market" (Zombory-Moldovan 88). In other words, a single book or a whole new series require the same attention to detail because to the publisher there are no shortcuts to reach that often-elusive goal of optimum sales and maximum profit.

If there are market forces that make or mar the success of a book, another important consideration is that the book will have to stand up against a perfectly adequate title from a competitor, in an often microscopic market that does not provide enough elbowroom for all players. Here the conflict of interest is on two levels — firstly from like-minded competitors who have a recognisable publishing programme, marketing ability and staying power and secondly from those trying to under-cut the market by bringing out anything that would make a decent profit. The latter scenario is especially severe at the university level because the potential market for English at this level is vast, the stakes in it running to several crores of rupees or as Rukun Advani (1992) puts it "where the bread is most thickly buttered" (Advani 118-119). This trend was begun under the colonial system, where textbooks were prescribed, not just recommended or approved. That is why publishers vied with one another to get their textbooks prescribed.
Another of the publisher's predicaments is the fact that often, after extensive field surveys and research on what the market needs, the decision to use such market driven materials is beyond the control of the end user. So what is the point in investing resources in pre and post publication surveys if at the end of the day an individual who exercises his subjective whims and fancies in textbook selection is the final authority on its prescription? And especially when the "czars of education have forgotten their childhood long ago" (Gupta 39). Also, the person selecting the book for prescription is often far removed from the worlds of both the teacher and the learner. Trying to meet user needs with selector whims is an unenviable task for the beleaguered publisher, who is already facing flak from authors on issues like editorial interventionism, having a "closed shop" (Zombory-Moldovan 89) of authors, etc. The associated problem to him is that though publishers are accused of being slow to react to changes in ELT theory, there is sound business logic behind such a stance. A major textbook project would take anything between three to five years to gestate and take form as a published entity. During this time there are bound to be at least a few novel theoretical developments and no publisher will be able to keep altering the framework of his project to meet these specifications. That is neither practical nor reasonable. A standing example would be the "near suicidal conversion to the functional bandwagon" (op.cit.) some years ago. So, while not steering away totally from the tried and tested path of materials production, he has, for his survival, "to smuggle in progressive ideas under the
mantle of acceptable material; or in other words reform by stealth” (op.cit.). The publisher is a businessman, but he has the added responsibility of being scrupulous. These qualities are conflicting in a sense because the marketplace is often not the best place for morals. Commerce and creativity make strange bedfellows and the publisher has to be both a canny businessman and an incurable idealist. What has to be reiterated is that as in any business, “the common objective is to make a profit and this inevitably involves a trade-off between what is theoretically desirable and what is practicable. In managing those resources available, time and labour, as well as money and materials it should never be forgotten that books are published to be sold. Given the purchasing power of the language schools, those who ignore or deride this pragmatic brand of logic must surely do so at their peril” (Kitto 81). And it also helps to remember that the world of the private publisher is “not the rosy world of subsidies or subventions” (Advani 117).

Two images emerge at the end of these discussions: one of the author and the other of the publisher battling their respective ‘demons.’ This description is expected to throw some light on each of the stakeholder’s domains. The next section moves on to a very crucial area of materials production where the author and publisher work in unison — within the interface — and combat the challenges in their collective path.
2.5. The ‘Interface’ and the Notion of Compromise

“The EFL coursebook is a genre with the potential for mass communication. This is one of its greatest strengths but also a source of great constraints” (Edge and Wharton 300). This dichotomy needs to be addressed in order to analyse the textbook and the issues that the author and publisher, as the main parties involved in its creation, encounter. “Compromise has to be a benefit” is the notion held by Jan Bell and Roger Grower (1998) who have extensive experience in writing course materials at a global level. The compromises they made and confronted in their line of work offer insights into the world of textbook writing and the conclusions they draw are equally applicable to any individual case. But it needs to be understood that textbook writing involves making compromises on a whole range of issues. However, while some of these are common to all writing situations, it has to be realised that there will be some that are unique to each, individual writing situation. The variables will change depending upon individual operating situations.

2.5.1. Areas of Compromise

Compromise is inevitable but it has to be a benefit. And when collaborating to publish textbooks, authors will have to modify any initial ambitions they may have had. This is the experience of Bell and Gower (116-126) and in their analysis of the notion of compromise in writing course materials for the world they comprehensively list several dichotomous areas where authors and publishers need to adopt a middle path. These are:
1. **Balancing the old with the new**: Successful materials are those that have achieved a sensible balance, a compromise of principle between innovation and conservatism. You will find in it a blend of the new and the different with the reassuringly familiar.

2. **Aesthetic versus pedagogic principles**: Clash of interests is inevitable between the designer and the writer and what is good design to one need not necessarily be the case for the other. To be noted is the fact that a well-designed book need not be successful pedagogically, because the teacher is more concerned with the content of the text rather than its design. Poorly designed books have been huge success stories.

3. **Pedagogy versus practicality**: To the author a killer idea has to be introduced what ever the constraints. But this great idea may not translate into a good teachable unit. And it falls flat in the classroom. And a book that does not work well in the classroom translates into poor sales. Finding that harmony between idea and practice is crucial for the textbook writer.

4. **Teaching experience versus writing experience**: Not all teachers are textbook writers and vice versa. Teaching experience should act as a launch pad for writing.
5. Publishing wisdom versus author’s experience: The publisher knows what will sell and the author knows what’s to be taught. Bringing these two contraries to work as one is daunting but not impossible.

6. Syllabus requirements versus learner needs: Trying to match the demands of the syllabus to the known and perceived needs of the learner is to say the least, very difficult. But materials cannot over-ride the syllabus nor can they ignore the learner. Arriving at the via media is to be pursued aggressively.

7. Teacher needs and/or expectations versus learner needs and/or expectations

8. Activity versus skill

9. Time versus quality

10. Practical constraints like fitting material into a page, balancing visuals with text, awareness of time — how much time would be required to complete a lesson
Bell and Gower (127-129) further refer to five areas where principles were compromised during the writing process. These areas were:

1. Structure

a. The idea of a flexible textbook was not fully understood by teachers: they thought it sacrosanct to teach the units exactly in the order in which they were presented.

b. Using the Workbook as a supplementary resource did not materialise because most students did not have access to one.

c. Innovations like a “deep-end approach” wherein the first four units served as review units that activated the passive language of the learners and offered remedial measures if necessary, did not have the necessary impact because most of the target group failed to understand it. Straightforward presentation of the main language items was preferred.

d. Several practice activities were pruned or edited due to paucity of space, a constraint imposed by the publisher. This had to be remedied by providing extra materials in the Teacher’s Book in later editions on the complaint from users on the dearth of practice activities.
2. **Methodology:** Finding materials that contained clear examples of the language item being taught with interesting content proved to be extremely difficult. Also, the approach to grammar which was in the form of analytical exercises wasn’t very popular as they were considered too serious and made huge demands on learners. Compromises were made by reducing the number of such exercises.

3. **Texts:** Resisting publisher pressure to make texts more intellectual was negotiated by achieving a balance in choice of text. Other compromises included finding texts with a generative topic of the right length and the right level of comprehensibility for the level; further an accessible degree of cultural reference and humour was not easy. A compromise had to be made and the simpler option was to use texts that were just interesting without considering the other variables. The compromise was one of logistics, publisher pressure and student expectation along with the realisation that some of the initial ambitions that the authors had were unrealistic.

4. **Content** is an area where one cannot please everyone and compromises had to be made. The authors did not want to fight shy of sex, drugs, religion and death (still THE taboo subjects in EFL coursebooks) but had to and were expected to. Content also had to be politically and culturally correct: men versus women; women holding important jobs; no stereotyping or sexism, to give a few examples.
5. Piloting the materials in the final edition was difficult because there were schedules and budgets to be met. So authors had to rely on their own and their advisers experience.

Bell and Gower (129) conclude their analysis by stating that “compromise almost by definition is a subtle art if all sides are to be satisfied with getting less than they originally wanted and it has not always been possible to tease out and identify all the compromises that were made when and by whom. We know we compromised on our ambitions and we have no doubt our users have had to compromise on theirs. We were lucky in that the publishers respected our lead in terms of the content and methodology and also compromised. Compromise is not only inevitable it is probably beneficial. […] without certain compromises we would have produced worse materials. If we had made other compromises — and been more aware of the areas where we should have compromised — we might have produced better materials” (op.cit.).

2.5.2. Compromise or Collaborate?

The above descriptions are as close an approximation of the experiences of textbook authors and publishers. But other considerations also play a big role in the whole process of textbook writing and publishing. “Whether the author is working alone, or as a pair, or as part of a larger team, or under a lead author, where the negative effects of professional and personal disagreements
have to be considered; the size of the project and the time awarded to complete it; the amount of spade work and planning that precedes the actual writing; inputs from the marketing team which sets the parameters within which the writer operates; design parameters, where learning to write a tight artbrief may be the most difficult subskill of the EFL writer's trade” (Prowse 130-145) are some of the other areas where compromises may have to be made.

Tomlinson (1998) provides a different angle to the whole issue:

If writers do not enjoy writing the materials and are not proud of them this deficiency is detected by the users and the credibility of the materials is diminished. If the publishers, Ministry or other sponsors are not satisfied with the materials then they will not be active in promoting them. In my experience the way to satisfy all the interested parties is not compromise but collaboration at all stages of the project. Compromise might take the edge off the writing process resulting in poor motivation and even frustration. Materials are written primarily to meet learner expectations. But the needs of teachers, writers and publishers cannot be ignored too. Compromising on believed-in principles would only undermine the materials but this also throws up another argument: if the stance taken is stiff and unrelenting, the materials will turn out to be inflexible and wouldn’t serve the purpose for which they were written. So this itself calls for a
middle path, whereby there is a consensus on the establishment of agreed and justifiable principles followed by procedural compromises which cater to different preferences, providing they are driven by one or more of the established principles. That is, any materials writing project has to work from a framework of agreed principles the most important one being that different learners learn different things and in different ways. And over and above all this, advice, feedback and positive encouragement are what writers need to write successfully. (Tomlinson 147-148)

Yet another facet to this argument is provided by Gordon Graham (1988). He says that, any group of authors, publishers, printers, booksellers and librarians will agree immediately on their desire to travel harmoniously and successfully together. They have long combined adversarial relationships with total interdependence, which can be healthy when these are fixed positions and the partners generate their own quarrels, but become hazardous when threatened from without. [...] Among the phenomena which have dislocated old-established relationships are:

1. A few companies control a large part of the business and large companies are less acceptable to authors, who prefer personal publishers to mobile editors. Yet corporations have financial resources for ambitious projects. Corporations are less sensitive to book trade relationships and more sensitive to government
relationships. In the corporate suite, growth is a way of life, with which the scholarly community has little sympathy.

2. Titles of books and journals have proliferated with the result that authors feel that their books receive too little marketing attention.

3. Production technology has become cleverer and simpler and is moving the role of the printer into the publishing house and even on to the author's desk. Desk-top publishing tempts some institutions to be their own publishers. They find that publishing is easy, but selling is hard.

4. Journals have gained market share over books.

5. Copyright has become a battle field and has dislocated publisher-author relationships. Copyright holders remain uneasy and vigilant. The database still poses unanswered questions about intellectual property. Technology has made copyright emotive.

6. Public funding has been reduced in real terms and that students should have up-to-date textbooks in their possessions is no longer a matter of high public concern. The political view that the book is just like any other commodity undermines the sense of mission which once surrounded it.
7. Prices have shot up and price increases are found burdensome, to say the least, by teachers and students, who suspect publishers could control prices better than they do.

8. Competition has intensified and caused publishers to question the cost of selling.

9. Database publishing is extensively in the hands of non-print publishers, who have no tradition of relations with authors. They deal directly with end users. There is no treaty between this group and print publishers, even those who have diversified into database publishing.

The combined effect of these developments has been to blur boundary lines and change roles established in the nineteenth century. [...] What had once been a straightforward linear relationship, starting with the author as creator and progressing through the publisher as catalyst, the printer as manufacturer and the bookseller and librarian as disseminators to the reader as consumer, has become multi-directional and confused.

(79-82)

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to highlight the workings of the author-publisher interface as expressed in the literature available on materials production, apart from bringing in inputs from publishing and marketing.
However, the majority of the theoretical expositions on the process of textbook or coursebook writing and publishing are those provided by experts who have no direct exposure to the ground realities of textbook writing in the Indian context. Their insights do have a universal relevance. But there are problems unique and inherent to writing and publishing instructional materials for an educational culture that is "firmly dug into the rock of 'received' knowledge. Under our very different climate and historical circumstances, the influential American curriculum theorist, (Ralph) Tyler would have been happy to find such a large number of people who are used to accepting the validity of one particular structuring of educational knowledge. And [...] the ease with which disassociation between curriculum and the child's immediate socio-cultural and physical milieu is accepted" (Kumar, Worth Teaching 1). The point is, over and above the constraints that are common to all writing situations, there are also context specific constraints that textbook writers and publishers need to reckon with. And that is the validity of Krishna Kumar's statement. The case studies in the following chapter will try to confirm both these beliefs.
Notes

1 Ominous developments were taking place in the sixties that were seriously to limit the area of operation of private-sector publishers. Like a ground-creeper, 'nationalisation' of school textbooks had, from small beginnings [...] spread its roots and sprouted [...] and by the seventies, had covered the whole ground as far as education under the state systems was concerned. Only the central system which is followed by certain unaided private schools (including the so-called Anglo-Indian schools) and the central-government-run Kendriya Vidyalayas and schools for children of members of the armed forces, remains open to private publishers. But even in the case of the central system, there is strong competition from the books published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). Thus, just as Indian publishers began becoming active as publishers of school textbooks, the opportunities began shrinking as a result of nationalisation and the activities of state-based textbook publishing units (Israel 85).

2 Like book industries in many countries, the Indian industry faces the problem of rising costs of materials and services. The price of paper, its chief raw material, has quadrupled over the years. At a time when shortages were acute and prices high, the Government of India rendered timely aid to the textbook sector of the industry by directing paper manufacturers to
devote 30% of their capacity to the production of utility-quality paper which was made available for approved textbooks at a concessional price.

The pro and anti textbook arguments are highlighted in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why use textbooks</th>
<th>Why textbooks should be banned</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Offers a coherent syllabus the result of the combined experiences both from research and discussions with teachers, consultants and publishers</td>
<td>1. No original ideas in syllabus; result of many years of carbon copying;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Good for teachers under pressure of time; and with inadequate resources infrastructure and low confidence; spurs teacher creativity</td>
<td>2. Embodies authoritarian knowledge of teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Contains a wealth of extra information be it in workbooks, teachers’ guides, tapes, videos, Internet companion sites, CD-ROMs etc.</td>
<td>3. Disseminates cultural and educational values that are ignorant or indifferent to learner needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Good to look at with attractive illustrations, photographs and design</td>
<td>4. Overly priced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gives student feeling of security and can record progress made</td>
<td>5. Makes tall claims on learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Agent of change in that it promotes interaction among colleagues with regard to methodology and technique</td>
<td>6. Pre-selected and pre-masticated materials by absentee textbook writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Invaluable tool in teacher training, on how to write a textbook, how to choose a textbook and whether textbooks should be used or not (Harmer 8-9)</td>
<td>Stifles imagination of both learners and teachers with texts that are dead on the page and the teacher has to reanimate them; tasks/activities mere passivities; not vehicles for communication; don’t stimulate only simulate (Thornbury 12-13).</td>
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