Introducing Standards for Evaluating Enrichment Materials (SEEM): Testing the Modern Framework with Football-Themed Materials

by Allison Crum

British Council's Master's Dissertation Awards 2021

Commendation

www.teachingenglish.org.uk/publications/elt-masters-dissertations

University of St Andrews | FOUNDED 1413

International Education Institute

Introducing Standards for Evaluating Enrichment Materials (SEEM):

Testing the Modern Framework with Football-Themed Materials

Student ID: 190025923

Date Submitted: 8 August 2020

University of St Andrews | FOUNDED 1413

International Education Institute

STUDENT ID: 190025923

DISSERTATION TITLE: Introducing Standards for Evaluating Enrichment Materials (SEEM): Testing the Modern Framework with Football-Themed Materials

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Mark Carver

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 14 August 2020

DATE SUBMITTED: 8 August 2020

DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this dissertation, which is 15,607 words in length, has been composed by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me, it conforms to the University's GAP Policy, and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree. This project was conducted by me at the University of St Andrews from February to August 2020 towards fulfilment of the requirements of the University of St Andrews for the degree of MSc TESOL with a Specialism in Teaching Young Learners under the supervision of Dr. Mark Carver.

ID number (in lieu of signature): 190025923 **Date: 8 Aug 2020**

Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank Saints Sports and Saints Football Club for allowing me to continue my studies at the university. Most importantly, I would like to thank my dissertation adviser, Dr. Mark Carver, for guiding and supporting me through this process. I would also like to thank all the TESOL tutors and lecturers at the International Education Institute at the University of St Andrews. Each of you taught me something that has stuck with me, helping me create this dissertation. Specifically, thank you to Mary Carr, Kerry Tavakoli, Kerith George-Briant, John Hughes, Janie Brooks, and Blair Matthews. Lastly, I would like to thank my TESOL classmates for changing my perspective, and my friends and family for cheering me on.

Abstract

The state of English teaching, and education more broadly, has changed with the 2020 global pandemic. This change has included the higher need for quality materials that teachers can send students to continue their learning remotely. However, lacking in the literature is a way to evaluate those materials to ensure they are high quality. This dissertation focuses on the presentation of the Standards for Evaluating Enrichment Materials (SEEM). The SEEM considers standards of credibility, engagement, learner autonomy, world English, and curriculum. These standards were chosen and crafted based on previous research in materials evaluation and second language acquisition theory, and adopted from criteria for self-access materials. These standards were then updated and modernized. The result was a research-informed set of standards that is relevant for teaching English as an international language.

As with any other set of standards, the SEEM was then tested by evaluating Premier Skills English (PSE), an online enrichment resource that teaches English through football. A corpus analysis was also run. Evaluating this resource revealed both PSE's and the SEEM's strengths and areas for growth. PSE showed strengths in engagement, and has work to do in decolonizing the curriculum. The SEEM was shown to be a useful framework, especially for pointing out aspects of inclusion, representation, and decolonizing the curriculum. Further testing of the SEEM must be done to improve it as a framework. As the SEEM is used and developed, it can have positive washback effects on materials, and help educators more thoroughly understand their materials.

Contents

Figures

Chapter 1: Preface

Context: 2020

Although enrichment and self-study materials for learning English as a second or foreign language are not new, the demand and popularity of such materials are. The global COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 has been an age of remote learning, an atypical learning environment for much of the world's learners. At one point, almost 70 percent of the world's student population was not in classrooms (UNESCO, 2020). As of April 29, 2020, 1.2 billion children worldwide were out of their classrooms (Li and Lalani, 2020). This remote learning is not complete, and students have reported low enthusiasm for the continuation of online learning (Horn, 2020). Needless to say, high quality, engaging resources are in especially high demand.

Among other challenges of transitioning to remote learning has been the need for high quality, accessible materials for students learning English. In the wake of rapid transition, educators and stakeholders prioritized accessibility so students could continue their learning as seamlessly as possible (Robles and Belsha, 2020). For many students learning English as a second language, that meant putting their language lessons on hold to prioritize other core subjects (Robles and Belsha, 2020). As a consequence, along with limited access to English at home, TESL students missed out on progress in learning English (Richards, 2020). In the United States, the federal guideline to continue English language instruction was May 18, when many schools were nearly out for Summer vacation (Belsha, 2020). This left many students out of instruction, at risk of falling behind.

Evaluating Resources

The priority was first to make a plan to distribute resources. Now that plans are in place, now comes the question of the quality of those materials. Any well-meaning TESL or TEFL teacher wants to give their students high quality resources. However, circumstances like a global pandemic can make that more of a challenge. Teachers who have limited access to their students, and cannot teach remotely, may send out enrichment materials for their students to engage with. Alternatively, motivated students might seek out their own enrichment materials. No matter how the resources were obtained, the quality of enrichment materials is one that ought to be assessed and evaluated. Students are seeking online support for academic study, but such enrichment materials have not been systematically evaluated. Teachers want to be able to recommend resources that are beneficial and fun for the students, but they must be evaluated first to determine the quality. The solution would be to complete a materials evaluation. However, much of materials evaluation criteria are meant for a different context than self-study or enrichment. In this specific context, acknowledging the need for evaluating enrichment materials, this dissertation proposes standards of materials evaluation for enrichment materials.

Social Movements

The field of education, especially a global subject like English teaching, is heavily influenced by other contexts. Along with the global pandemic, social movements have influenced the making of this paper. Spring and Summer 2020, the time of writing this dissertation, have highlighted the need for justice and equality, calling attention to antiracist and other social movements. Black Lives Matter is a movement that calls for the equal treatment of Black people, citing that all lives do not matter until Black lives matter. People, corporations, and institutions all over the world have engaged with the movements and spoken up for the need for change. As

discussed later, for example, the English Premier League has made Black Lives Matter a part of their pregame ritual. These calls to action have picked up in momentum, as discussed in the following chapters. This current fight for social justice has now also reached the field of materials evaluation. The movement has made the case that evaluation standards should more clearly and consistently reflect what is important. The current paper, written in this 2020 context, follows that sentiment.

Personal Aims

I began writing this dissertation with the intention of evaluating how football, my favorite thing in the world, could be used to teach English. However, there was no framework that allowed me to fully evaluate those resources. Once the global pandemic hit, and social movements gained momentum, my aims shifted. A systematic, modern evaluation of materials was lacking, so it became my goal to make one. Teachers and educators need tools to evaluate their materials. They must understand what messages they are sending their students based on the materials they recommend. It became my goal to make a framework that features important principles in English teaching, and equally important ideas like inclusion and representation. This dissertation aims to complete those goals, with the current global context at the forefront.

Chapter 2: Introduction

This chapter focuses on the foundations behind the development of a framework for evaluating enrichment materials, the SEEM (Standards for Evaluating Enrichment Materials). The need for this framework was discussed in the previous chapter, and the history of materials development will be covered in the following chapter; the current chapter sets up readers to understand the theory behind second language acquisition (SLA) that will inform the criteria. SLA is the foundation for why materials are developed the way they are, so having background in these principles is crucial to understanding why evaluation criteria are chosen. Once SLA concepts are covered, the chapter shifts from discussing the SEEM framework to explaining why the source, Premier Skills English (PSE), was chosen to test the SEEM. Premier Skills English, a website that teaches English through football, is unique in its global audience and its use of football as a motivator. These qualities of PSE will be discussed in relation to English teaching. This introduction will end with a summary of the aims of the dissertation.

Purpose

The SEEM was proposed to assist teachers in choosing enrichment materials to share with students. This tool allows enrichment materials to be evaluated, so teachers can narrow down choices to recommend students. In other words, the SEEM can identify specific suitable resources for enrichment, instead of leaving teachers to recommend wider reading in general.

Background in SLA

As mentioned above, the previous frameworks for materials evaluation were grounded in second language acquisition (SLA). SLA is a field that focuses on theory and research on how a second, or other, language is acquired. SLA is the basis for choices of educators of all types, from

classroom teachers to coursebook publishers. In this case, it also lays the foundation for materials evaluation developers. The range of SLA covers principles such as interlanguage, input, output, affective factors, cognitive factors, individual differences, and many others. While a complete review of SLA is out of the scope of this paper, a few principles surrounding motivation and affective factors, integral for working with enrichment materials, are highlighted here. These are scarcely the only SLA principles to inform the research, both conducted and cited, in this dissertation. However, these are the most important concepts to understand before diving into materials evaluation of enrichment materials.

Motivation

Motivation is "the 'engine' of will, effort, and attitude" (Dornyei, 1998 p.22). It has been studied in SLA theory for decades, dating back to Gardner and Lambert's work in 1959. Gardner and Lambert (1972) later introduced the categories of instrumental and integrative motivation, concepts that are essential to understanding motivation in a foreign language context. In learning a second or additional language, instrumental and integrative motivation are different sources of motivation. Instrumental motivation is viewing the foreign language as an instrument to achieve another goal (Mishan, 2015). For example, learning English might be something a learner must do to pass a test or graduate from university. Integrative motivation, on the other hand, is wanting to integrate into the language and culture (Mishan, 2015). Research on instrumental and integrative motivation is mixed in terms of its relation to learning success.

Another distinction in types of motivation is intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is wanting to learn English for the sake of learning English (Brown, 2000). Extrinsic motivation is having an external driver that pushes a learner to learn, for example a parent

wanting their child to get good grades (Brown, 2000). The research here is more clear: intrinsic motivation is preferred, especially in long-term learning (Brown, 2000 p. 173).

Learners seeking enrichment materials might have integrative or instrumental motivation, or a mixture of both, but they likely have some intrinsic motivation if they are learning English on their own. That internal drive is good news for their long-term retention, but the materials still hold motivational power; high quality materials wield that power and build on learners' motivation.

Affective Components

Enjoyment and engagement are tied closely to motivation as well. These can be stimulated with tools like gamification. Gamification is "using game-based mechanics, aesthetics, and game thinking to engage people, motivate action, promote learning, and solve problems" (Kapp, 2012 p.10). In addition to being fun for learners, the aspects of gamification help in language acquisition. In fact, gamification has a medium effect size on language learning (Garland, 2015).

Enjoyment and engagement are byproducts and causes of motivation, and affective engagement is needed for long term learning (Mishan, 2015). According to Peacock (1997 p. 145-146), "enthusiasm, attention, action and enjoyment [are considered] referents for and components of motivation." Engagement and motivation are deeply intertwined and equally important in learning.

Also connected to engagement and motivation is the affective filter. Krashen, in his five hypotheses of SLA, discusses the affective filter hypothesis (Krashen, 1982). Krashen (1982) describes an affective filter that goes up, blocking language acquisition, when learners' anxiety or

stress is high. Anxiety prevents learning, while positive emotions take the filter away (Krashen, 1982). Materials that reduce the affective filter can promote learning and give learners a positive experience. For example, websites can give users the option of communicating under an anonymous username. This releases social pressure and allows students to participate with less stress (Pennington, 1996). Thus, reducing learners' affective filters both allows for engagement and a positive experience, and benefits their learning.

Autonomy

Autonomy is "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Pemberton et al., 1996). Learner autonomy is vital to motivation, and leads to improvement in language acquisition (Dornyei and Csizer, 1998; Dam and Legenhausen, 1996). In a study that examined how to motivate English learners, building learner autonomy and self-confidence were key in developing motivation (Dornyei and Csizer, 1998). Included in Dornyei and Csizer's (1998) description of autonomy were curiosity and responsibility for taking control of their learning, both factors that also contribute to intrinsic motivation (Dornyei and Csizer, 1998). Other aspects of learner autonomy include choice in activities, self-evaluation, and overall responsibility for learning (Pemberton et al., 1996).

These SLA principles provide the basis for many frameworks for materials evaluation. Motivation, engagement, interest, gamification, affective filter, and autonomy are all important aspects of SLA; they are also some of the reasons why Premier Skills English was chosen as the materials to test the SEEM.

Choosing Premier Skills English

In this dissertation, the SEEM is presented, then evaluated to see how suitable it is as a framework for materials evaluation. To test the framework, an online resource, Premier Skills English, was evaluated. Premier Skills English is part of the British Council, "The United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities" (British Council, 2020). They provide English language resources and opportunities, reaching over 80 million learners per year (British Council, 2020). Premier Skills English is a partner project by the British Council and England's top football league, the English Premier League (EPL). It is a website that provides English learning materials in the context of football and the EPL. This resource was chosen for several reasons, outlined below.

Football as a Motivator

The first step to motivation is finding one's passion (Gilakjani, Lai-Mei, and Sabouri, 2012). Being passionate about English is not a requirement for language acquisition; "Rather, the learner needs to find a way to connect English learning to his or her real passion in life" (Gilakjani, Lai-Mei, and Sabouri, 2012). Football, for many people around the world, is a passion, and can be used effectively as a motivator for teaching English.

The materials in PSE are engaging to football fans because they are interested in the material. Interest is important for learning because students will engage more with the material if interest is high (Harackiewicz, Smith, and Priniski, 2016). Premier Skills English appeals to learners' interest in English and football; they are likely reading about the newest EPL news anyway, so it benefits them to read those sources in English. Football, like other passions, ignites emotions in its fans. Besides interest, "laughter, joy, excitement, sorrow and anger can promote

learning" (Tomlinson, 2003 p. 18). Any football fan can attest to experiencing that entire range of emotions during a season. The emotions that come out of football, then, may promote learning.

Interest is further developed with aspects of gamification on Premier Skills English. On PSE, users can choose a team and country to support when they sign up for the free website. Then they can earn points for their team and country when they post comments and complete activities. The points accumulate into a leaderboard that posts standings for tops users, teams, and countries. While learners are simply supporting their favorite team, something they already do, they are helping their language acquisition.

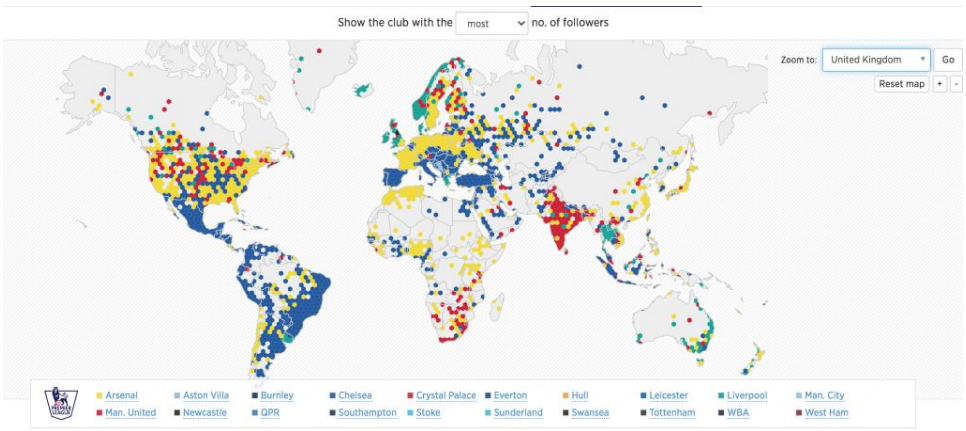

Figure 1. The World's Obsession with Football. Map of Twitter users following EPL clubs (Twitter, 2020). The World's Obsession with Football, explained by David Goldblatt in *The Ball is Round* (2006, p. xiv): "Is there any cultural practice more global than football? … Around half the planet watched the 2006 World Cup Final – three billion humans have never done anything simultaneously before."

Global Audience

The English Premier League (EPL) is the most watched football league in the world. In its 2018-2019 season, the cumulative global audience was 3.2 billion (Carp, 2019). Figure 1 shows a map of Twitter followers of the EPL; it covers nearly every corner of the world. Football's global obsession makes it a natural topic of interest for learners around the world. If materials can use football, as the Premier Skills English website has, they can hook billions of people who are already fans.

Football is not just popular; it can be a meaningful source of input. Learning about football is learning about society. It may be explaining what a slide tackle is, but it also reflects society: separation of the elite and impoverished, highlighting cases of racism and sexism, shedding some light on corruption, and dealing with foreign affairs (Goldblatt, 2018). The stories that come out of football contexts are not limited to the pitch itself. Such a widespread phenomenon does not exist within a vacuum; it inevitably creeps into different areas of society that are worth learning about.

And when fans might be hesitant to learn about these areas of society, the fact that they are football fans helps them empathize. Familiarity impacts empathy (Mishan, 2015 p. 13). Familiarity with players or teams may help fans empathize with the stories they present. For example, a case of racial discrimination against Manchester City striker Raheem Sterling might be easier to empathize with because fans may be familiar with Sterling. For content that learners might not be used to, having a familiar context helps their understanding: "We might 'translate' empathy in the language learning context as identifying with, or 'disposition' towards, the TL (target language) and its culture" (Mishan, 2015 p.13). In other words, football can be common ground for beginning to establish understanding of a different culture.

Premier Skills English's unique partnership between the EPL and British Council creates a resource for learners that is worth evaluating. It has the potential to be a quality resource and will be more systematically and thoroughly evaluated with the SEEM.

Summary: Aims and Scope

This paper makes the case for creating new standards of materials evaluation for enrichment materials, adapting and modernizing previous researchers' standards. It then uses the website Premier Skills English to a) show the standards in use and b) give an example of a resource that rates well, though not perfectly, in terms of the SEEM criteria. Offering a framework for evaluating enrichment materials can allow teachers to systematically make decisions for which resources are helpful to send their students. Using a new set of standards for materials evaluation, paired with corpus analysis data, this paper will conduct a complete materials evaluation of an enrichment resource. In sum, this paper will:

1. Present standards of materials evaluation for enrichment materials (SEEM);
2. Use the standards to complete a materials evaluation of an enrichment resource;
3. Evaluate the SEEM as an evaluative framework.

The scope of this research is limited to the development of enrichment materials evaluation standards. It does not suggest a gold standard for enrichment materials, nor does it rate Premier Skills English as ideal for enrichment.

Conclusion

Now that SLA theory and Premier Skills English have been discussed, the proceeding chapter details more background, in this case, the history of materials evaluation. It then sets up the need for a new evaluation framework that fits the needs of enrichment materials.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter will cover the literature of materials development and theory connected to materials evaluation criteria. The history of materials development, encompassing materials evaluation, will be covered from its beginnings in the 1970s to the present. Featured frameworks from Tomlinson, McGrath, and Grant will begin the foundation for materials evaluation standards. Then materials evaluation for enrichment materials, featuring Cooker's evaluation framework for self-access materials, will be examined. The next chapter features the development of this dissertation's framework using previous work in materials evaluation.

Materials Evaluation

Materials evaluation is part of materials development, which includes the creation and evaluation of materials. Materials development "studies the principles and procedures of the design, implementation and evaluation of language teaching materials" (Tomlinson, 2003 p.1). A materials evaluation, as Tomlinson (2003 p. 56) describes, is "a procedure that involves measuring the value (or potential value) of a set of learning materials." As materials are published and used, they must be evaluated to see if their goals are being met, how they affect students and stakeholders, and their overall success, among other reasons.

History of Materials Development

The history of materials development began just a few decades ago: "As recently as the 1970s and 1980s there were very few publications on materials development" (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017). Resources discussed writing materials, but no systematic or principled way to do it (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017). In the late 1970s and early 1980s, researchers started to discuss materials development, but not as we know it today. Madsen and Bowen (1978)

mentioned that good teachers adapt materials to fit their context, and Breen and Candlin (1980) came out with principles and procedures of evaluating and designing materials (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017). However, the first time materials development was talked about as important and systematic was in Cunningsworth's (1984) book *Evaluating and selecting EFL teaching material*. Other researchers and authors did not follow his lead immediately, and the next ten years saw mostly practical guides from publishing companies for how to develop materials (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017). One publication, though, was Grant's (1987) book *Making the most of your textbook,* which included guidelines for materials evaluation (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017; Mishan, 2015). The guidelines, referred to as CATALYST, stood for communicative, aims, teachability, available add-ons, level, your impressions, student interest, and tried and tested (Grant, 1987). The guidelines may act as a starting point for generating criteria for materials evaluation (Mishan, 2015).

Materials development still had not become established as a field in the 1990s. It was referred to in methodology books, but few other places (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017). Then, Tomlinson pushed the field forward in 1998 by publishing a coursebook for courses in materials development (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017). Soon after, McGrath published *Materials evaluation and design for language teaching* in 2002, which not only applied theory to materials development, but also made materials design systematic (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017). McGrath's (2002) criteria framework notes features such as design, language content, subject matter, and practical considerations. Tomlinson (2003) later established five categories of evaluation criteria: universal (driven by SLA theory), local (related to the context), media-specific

(e.g. the quality of audio materials), content-specific (e.g. do activities replicate the kinds of tasks learners will later do), and age-specific.

Since then, materials development has increased in popularity, with conferences on materials development spanning the globe (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017). Recently, in the last fifteen years, more work has been done to connect theory to practice in materials development (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2017).

Self-Access Materials

Materials evaluation have previously focused only on coursebooks and textbooks, but that is no longer the case. Among the various frameworks for materials evaluation, alternative materials have been featured. Not all materials are textbooks and coursebooks, and material development has begun to recognize this.

One distinct type of resource is learning with self-access materials. Self-access materials are materials designed without a teacher in mind (Cooker, 2008). These can include "a paper-based format or online, or they may be made available in audio-visual formats (cassette tapes, video-tapes, DVDs) or non-web computer-based formats (CD-Roms)" (Cooker, 2008 p.110). They also may even be produced by learners themselves, or by educators (Cooker, 2008). Cooker distinguished between different kinds of self-access materials:

- "Authentic materials such as magazines, television programmes, films and music;
- Graded readers (some with audio components);
- Language learning software/web-based resources (CALL materials);
- Drama-based language learning materials;
- Coursebooks;

- Texts for specific skills (e.g. listening, reading, speaking, writing, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation);
- Examination preparation texts" (Cooker, 2008 p. 111, referenced in Tomlinson, 2010).

Needless to say, the range of self-access materials is broad. Nevertheless, their goals are distinct from typical materials.

Goals of Self-Access Materials

The goals of self-access are different than coursebook evaluations firstly because coursebooks are primarily meant for teacher-led contexts. While coursebooks in teacher-led contexts rely on features like a syllabus, units, classmates, teacher interaction and often in-person interaction, the reality of self-access is different. While there is often an exam for teacher-led contexts, there is no obvious summative exam for students, such as IELTS. Another difference is the lack of a teacher, which thus makes intrinsic motivation more important. While motivation is important in all contexts, the lack of external forces (such as a teacher or exam) make internal motivation that much more important. Regardless of those factors, the resource still must help with language acquisition through appropriate input, output, feedback opportunities, activities, and interaction. Lastly, another goal of self-access is the development of self-evaluation skills. Learners who do not have a teacher or supervisor when interacting with materials must be able to evaluate their own progress. That way they can adapt their learning habits based on what is and what is not working for them.

These goals and nature of self-access materials contrast substantially to typical coursebook and classroom materials. Because of this, typical materials evaluation standards are unfit for self-access materials. Hurd and Lewis (2008) point out the need for evaluating materials

for independent learning contexts, both virtual and in-person. As materials "evolve and diversify," so do their goals (Hurd and Lewis, 2008). Good quality is determined by a rubric or set of standards, and those standards must be suitable for the materials they are evaluating. Typical materials evaluation standards are ill-suited for self-study materials, as they have different goals. This points to a need for suitable evaluation of self-study materials.

Development of Self-Access Materials

The definition put forth by Cooker (2008) defines self-access materials as virtually any resource that does not need a teacher. Principles of self-access materials for Tomlinson and Masuhara include exposure to language in use, opportunities to use language, experiences of making self-discoveries, and "texts and activities that stimulate affective and cognitive engagement" (2017 p.11). For Tomlinson and Masuhara, this definition also includes no one to interact with, nobody to monitor production of language, and no answer key (2017 p. 10). Their definition assumes self-access materials are inherently restrictive in this way, and they call for the need to humanize self-access materials. Without discounting the realities of some self-access resources, this dissertation argues against Tomlinson and Masuhara's (2017) restrictive view. Self-access materials are different than other materials, and have limitations like all sources do, but they are not inherently restrictive like Tomlinson and Masuhara (2017) describe. In fact, they can be effective and freeing to learners, as discussed later with learner autonomy.

Nevertheless, restrictive or not, self-access materials are different from typical materials, and thus need their own framework. Tomlinson (2010) and Cooker (2008) lay out frameworks for self-access materials.

Criteria: Tomlinson

Tomlinson (2010) created criteria for producing and evaluating self-access materials, detailing both universal and delivery specific principles. His universal principles included rich, meaningful, and comprehensible input; cognitive and affective engagement; positive affect; noticing salient features; and communicative. These were grounded in SLA theory, and apply to any kind of materials. The delivery specific principles included:

1. Being more than learners could find in taught or unstructured immersion environments
2. Become independent
3. "Access-self" (seeing learners as human beings)
4. Feedback
5. Realistic tasks
6. Students know what is available to them
7. Easy and reliable access (Tomlinson, 2010)

These delivery specific principles were specific to self-access materials and focus on creating and maintaining student opportunities. Tomlinson (2010) also considers learner characteristics and contexts such as age, gender, level, purposes for learning the language, amount of class learning time, estimated time available for self-access, learner style preferences. His criteria are centered around specific learners, ensuring they are valued and get as much out of the materials as possible.

Tomlinson's (2010) criteria establish a combination of universal and delivery-specific principles, but does not coherently put them together into an effective framework. It is more of a description than criteria. He does not explain why these universal criteria were chosen for self-

access materials, or what the interaction is with the delivery-specific principles. The delivery-specific principles are somewhat subjective (e.g. being more than learners could find in taught or unstructured immersion environments) and difficult to review objectively. He also prefaces his criteria saying criteria should be discussed among creators of the materials. If anyone can collaborate to make any list of principles, his list seems unsystematic and somewhat haphazard. Tomlinson's (2010) criteria are a helpful starting place for self-access materials development, but do not end in a systematic framework for evaluating resources. Tomlinson (2010) is important for starting to develop self-access materials, allowing other researchers, like Cooker, to add on to his initial thoughts.

Criteria: Cooker

Cooker's many kinds of self-access materials (described above) mean there are many different sets of criteria for different self-access resources. There are many subcategories of self-access materials, and similarly, subcategories of materials evaluation criteria. For example, the criteria for language learning software/web-based resources are:

1. Authentic English
2. Meaningful English
3. Interest
4. Achievable challenge
5. Affective engagement
6. Cognitive engagement
7. Opportunities for discovery about how English is used
8. Opportunities for meaningful use of English

9. Feedback on the effectiveness of the use of English
10. Positive impact
11. Navigability
12. Learner training
13. Attractiveness (Cooker, 2008)

These criteria differ from criteria for the other self-access materials (coursebooks, examination prep texts, etc.) so that there is no one set of criteria for self-access materials. Among other things, these criteria include the ability to interest and engage learners and to create meaningful and positive sustained impact (2008 p. 128-129). In her frameworks, Cooker's criteria generally focus on the positive experience for the learner.

Issues with Evaluating Self-Access Materials

Cooker's definition of self-access materials inherently makes it a challenge to evaluate those materials in one framework. The category is broad and includes so many different kinds of materials. A definition so broad cannot systematically and productively evaluate all different types of self-access materials, as seen in Tomlinson's (2010) criteria. Cooker solved the issue by creating different evaluative frameworks for each kind of self-access materials. This dissertation is taking her lead, inspired by her criteria for web-based self-access materials, and going a step further. The focus of this dissertation is on enrichment materials, which fall under self-access materials, but are distinct enough to require their own set of evaluative standards.

What are Enrichment Materials?

Enrichment materials are resources that learners engage with to gain extra practice. Enrichment materials are opportunities to supplement learning, not replace it. Enrichment

materials may fall under self-access materials, but the purpose of enrichment materials is more specific than self-access, so they are treated separately. Learners who use enrichment materials may be enrolled in a formal learning setting or just working to improve their language skills. Enrichment materials are not a primary means of teaching or learning English but have the potential to increase language skills. Enrichment materials are applicable to language learners who are seeking extra practice, activities, or interaction in English.

Although there are evaluation criteria for self-access materials, enrichment materials are a unique category that requires its own standards. This dissertation takes principles from materials development, along with Cooker's (2008) criteria for web-based self-access materials, and creates an updated, modern version of evaluation criteria.

The field of materials development, and in turn, materials evaluation, is a young one. Materials are also being created and adapted for new contexts and modern technology. The combination of a brief history with quickly changing materials makes materials evaluation a dynamic field. No matter how materials change and adapt, though, principles of SLA and of materials evaluation are important to keep in mind.

Chapter 4: Development of Standards

This chapter outlines the development of the proposed standards, the SEEM (Standards for Evaluating Enrichment Materials). It examines the aspects of materials evaluation criteria that work well for evaluating enrichment materials, what should be omitted from other works, and what should be added. This culminates in the presentation of the SEEM framework.

Theorists

Three of the most important sets of guidelines for creating materials evaluation standards, established by Grant (1987), Tomlinson (2003), and McGrath (2002), are the starting point for this dissertation's materials evaluation for enrichment. These authors were chosen based on their contribution to materials development and their impact on other researchers and theorists. Grant (1987) was one of the early leaders in making materials development its own field. McGrath (2002) introduced materials evaluation as a systematic process. Tomlinson (2003) linked theory and practice to create informed materials evaluation criteria. (See Figure 2 for a review of their principles.)

Lastly, Cooker (2008) rounds out the foundation for creating new materials. Cooker created the framework most applicable to enrichment materials. She presented the criteria for language learning software/web-based self-access resources, under which enrichment materials fall.

Figure 2. Foundational Materials Evaluation Criteria

Author (Year)	Materials Evaluation Criteria
Grant (1987)	Communicative Aims Teachability Available add-ons Level Your impressions Student interest Tried and tested
McGrath (2002)	Design Language content Subject matter Practical considerations
Tomlinson (2003)	Universal (driven by SLA theory) Local (related to the context) Media-specific (e.g. the quality of audio materials) Content-specific (e.g. do activities replicate the kinds of tasks learners will later do) Age-specific
Cooker (2008)	Authentic English Meaningful English Interest Achievable challenge Affective engagement Cognitive engagement Opportunities for discovery about how English is used Opportunities for meaningful use of English Feedback on the effectiveness of the use of English Positive impact Navigability Learner training Attractiveness

These frameworks contain foundational principles for designing an evaluation framework. Some of their criteria work for evaluating enrichment materials, some do not, and some criteria must be added to update and modernize the framework.

What works

Language Principles

Featured in these frameworks is the commitment to teaching the English language effectively. This includes Grant's "communicative" and "aims" criteria; Tomlinson's "universal" and "content-specific" criteria; McGrath's "language content" and "subject matter" criteria; and Cooker's "authentic English," "meaningful English," and "feedback on the effectiveness of the use of English" criteria. Each framework ensures that the evaluation considers the English instruction itself. These are, first and foremost, materials for learning English, and the criteria reflect that.

Motivation and Engagement

Especially important in enrichment materials are engagement and motivation. The frameworks highlight engagement as part of materials evaluation (Grant's "communicative" and "student interest"; and Tomlinson's "universal" (driven by SLA theory); Cooker's "interest" "affective engagement" "cognitive engagement" and "attractiveness"). Engagement and motivation are arguably two of the most important factors for high quality materials, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Motivation is the strongest predictor of learning success (Mishan, 2015). Dornyei, a prominent scholar of motivation research, calls to the power of motivation, saying if learners are motivated and given materials, they will learn (Mishan, 2015 p. 10). Although some motivation may be intrinsic, extrinsic motivation should not be discounted. Materials are still important in fostering motivation.

Motivation is made of different components important to understand for evaluating materials. The affective factors of motivation are intrinsic interest, (linguistic) self-confidence and self-esteem, anxiety (affective filter), and intrinsic value attributed to the activity

(worthiness) (Mishan, 2015 p. 10). Each of these components can be targeted in materials, making students more likely to engage with the materials. The content itself, the way it is presented, the scaffolding and challenge available, the activities, and the interactions between learners are all ways materials can actively seek out motivation. One of the most important of those affective factors is intrinsic interest. As Mishan, (2015 p. 11) notes, "While we cannot ultimately control motivation, as it is internal to the learner, we can seek to provide materials which are likely to stimulate intrinsic interest."

Engagement is another factor, closely tied to motivation, that is integral to successful materials. The power of motivation and its tie to engagement highlight how important they are in materials. Materials that do not prioritize motivation and engagement are leaving out key factors for second language acquisition.

Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy is tied closely to motivation, arguably the most important feature of language learning. Furthermore, one of the goals of enrichment is the ability to effectively carry out self-evaluation, and learner autonomy is a crucial part of that. Learners who can self-evaluate can study more efficiently, making greater strides toward language proficiency.

Learner autonomy has been under the umbrella of motivation, but it deserves further emphasis based on its significant role in learning. Learner autonomy is not often included in materials evaluation, but rather tied into motivation. It is not its own category in McGrath or Tomlinson, and only Grant's "available add-ons" connect to learner autonomy. It is, however, featured in "learner training" in Cooker's criteria. Cooker describes the importance of building autonomy through self-evaluation and feedback, saying, "such development in learners is crucial

if self-access learning environments themselves are to function successfully" (Cooker 2008, p. 128). The learner is the teacher, so it must take on some qualities of a teacher with learner autonomy.

Learner autonomy is important for any English learner, as they keep students motivated and on track; but it is even more crucial for self-studiers who must be entirely responsible for their own learning. Learner autonomy, therefore, is more than just an aspect of motivation; it is its own feature of enrichment materials.

What is Omitted from the Frameworks

A few of these criteria do not apply to materials evaluation in general. For one, Grant's "tried and tested" criterium is not helpful for evaluating materials, and might be more of a mental check for teachers than a systematic evaluation (Mishan, 2015). Similarly, his "your impression" criterium might be helpful in practical terms for seasoned teachers flipping through new coursebooks, but its subjectivity might not be fit for systematic evaluation.

Next, there are standards among these guidelines that do not apply to enrichment materials. Teachability, for example, does not fit because there is no teacher present. Furthermore, self-access materials are unique in that the materials are available to any learner (no matter their nationality, culture, age, or level). These considerations make "local," "age-specific," and "level" criteria less realistic.

The remaining features from Grant, Tomlinson, McGrath, and Cooker make up the core of this dissertation's standards, namely in the forms of engagement, learner autonomy, and curriculum.

Modernizing and Updating: What needs to be added

The factors presented in the materials evaluation frameworks are just the beginning of a suitable framework. Additional criteria are necessary for a fully thought out, modern evaluation of enrichment materials. Criteria pertaining to English teaching's origins are important for a full, thorough evaluation of English language materials.

English as an International Language

English is unique in how widespread it is. It is spoken by 2.2 million people, and nonnative speakers outweigh native speakers 3:1 (Mishan 2015; Lyons, 2017). About half of foreign language learners study English to participate in the globalized economy (Mishan, 2015). As a consequence of English's unique position, this paper follows the framework of English as an International Language (EIL).

A foundational part of EIL is its recognition of World Englishes, not limiting English to certain parts of the world. The language has been thought of in terms of Inner-Circle, Outer-Circle, and Expanding-Circle, where "legitimacy" has been historically limited to countries in the Inner-Circle (UK, USA, Australia, and Canada) where English is the primary language (Sharifian, 2009; Strevens 1992). EIL sees English as legitimate to every circle, through the Outer-Circle where English is a second language, and the Expanding-Circle where English is a foreign language (Sharifian, 2009). The EIL framework views English as truly an international language.

To say English is not limited to the United States and Britain is an understatement; however, the accents used in materials often are (Matsuda, 2003). Having accents and speakers from around the globe can give a sense of English as a global language. It can also give learners a sense of belonging and representation seeing someone like them sharing their accent or nationality.

Representation from more countries can also change the narrative of English as imperialism. English language teaching has been criticized as a form of modern-day colonialism, as some native English teachers may, consciously or unconsciously, extend their own Western values as they teach nonnative speakers (Howatt and Widdowson, 2004). The role of English has ranged "from marginalization and hegemony on the one side to empowerment and upward mobility on the other" (Sharifian, 2009 p.1). In the context of English language learning, lack of representation may send a message to students that they are outsiders or do not belong (Charles, 2019).

Representing more forms of international English and showcasing different people who speak English might begin to reverse the negative impact English teaching has historically had. Instead of viewing English as only precise Queen's English spoken by the Inner-Circle, learners can see the more realistic big picture of English as an international language.

Britain in particular has made an effort in the last couple years to decolonize the curriculum. In some universities, including Keele University, this push to decolonize the curriculum has meant "creating spaces and resources for a dialogue among all members of the university on how to imagine and envision all cultures and knowledge systems in the curriculum, and with respect to what is being taught and how it frames the world" (Keele University, 2018). It is the recognition that education typically features white, male, European perspectives, and leaves out other voices (Charles, 2019). Part of decolonizing curriculum is portraying English as accessible to anyone who chooses to learn it, but not forced upon any person or people. This movement is about "considering multiple perspectives and making space to think carefully about what we value" (Open University, 2019).

The British Council, the co-creator of Premier Skills English, has also adopted the idea of decolonizing the curriculum in its pledge for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). In their EDI strategy in 2017, the British Council stated, “We want everyone who comes into contact with us, both offline and online, to feel valued and respected and our programmes, services and general ways of working to demonstrate our stated commitment to EDI” (British Council, 2017).

Needless to say, the portrayal of English and its use has been recently reexamined. Using the EIL framework portrays English as available to anyone who wants to learn, and may stop the view of English as a tool for colonization.

Credibility

Similar to the ideas of decolonization and EDI is credibility. The source of the materials is important for how trustworthy and self-critical they are. Organizations, resources, and institutions that are unaware of their own biases and advantages are not credible. Resources choose which materials they release to the public; if those choices are rooted in bias, colonization, racism, sexism, etc., then they are not suitable resources for learners. High quality resources are those which are representative, do not put people or cultures down, and do not ignore relevant yet challenging topics.

The SEEM as a Process

The integration of these theories, principles, and criteria culminated in the SEEM. This framework highlights the most suitable criteria for enrichment materials.

The evaluation criteria are standards, not a rubric, to allow for engagement with the materials. Evaluation is more than checking boxes, especially for materials that can be vastly different. Users of the SEEM are evaluating materials, not merely checking boxes. Therefore,

these standards are criteria to think about. There may be grey area in each category, some aspects a resource does well, and some it does poorly. The SEEM is meant to serve as thought-provoking criteria for materials, acknowledging that most materials will not achieve top marks in every category. It is about the process of evaluation and improvement in materials.

The Materials Evaluation Criteria

Presented here is the newly developed and modernized set of standards, the Standards for Evaluating Enrichment Materials (SEEM). The SEEM started with the applicable aspects of McGrath's, Tomlinson's, Grant's, and Cooker's frameworks. It then modernized and tailored them to enrichment materials. The result is a set of five criteria: credibility, engagement, world English, learner autonomy, and curriculum. (See Figure 3 for a summary of SEEM and its origins.)

The SEEM

Credibility

Quality sources are ones that are transparent in their goals, own their history, and are trustworthy in their information. Materials choose which content, stories, movements, etc. is and is not featured. A credible source shares the important stories and does not ignore ones that are challenging. Credibility asks whether the source is sufficiently self-critical and aware of its own biases and advantages.

Engagement

Engagement, motivation, and interest are all important concepts, especially when there is no instructor or course to follow. Because of that, self-study materials are evaluated based on how fun, engaging, relevant, and motivating they are. Engagement also includes reducing learner's anxiety and stress (Krashen's affective filter).

Learner Autonomy

Tied to engagement, learner autonomy is giving learners responsibility for their learning. It is giving learners choice, offering both scaffolding and challenges when possible. Throughout the learning process, learners develop self-evaluation skills so they can monitor their progress and determine when they need to revisit a topic.

World English

English is an international language, and a quality source shows that. It offers more than the typical accents, especially since only a fraction of English speakers speak that way. For example, there are many other accents that are not male speakers with Southern English accents (the typical voice in audio). Representation is important for learners, and it is encouraging to hear accents like theirs.

Curriculum

Lastly, as it is an English learning resource, curriculum is supported. The learner knows what lesson they are learning, experiences interaction, and engages with feedback. In other words, the learner learns English in a systematic way that improves their language acquisition. Lessons are geared toward grammar and vocabulary skills, among others.

These criteria were evaluated using previous frameworks and theory-driven SLA principles. To assess how well the framework actually works in evaluating materials, a resource was evaluated using the SEEM. The following chapter outlines the methods for how the resource, Premier Skills English, was evaluated.

Chapter 5: Methodology and Methods

This chapter details the methodology and methods of using a new set of evaluation standards for enrichment materials. The methods of this dissertation involve two parts: the development of materials evaluation standards, and an evaluation using those standards. This chapter describes the methodology then goes in detail about each method used. Line-by-line coding and corpus analysis methods are explained, including materials used for the corpus analysis.

Methodology Used

Data often falls under the categories of qualitative or quantitative. Qualitative includes data such as interviews, observations, etc. while quantitative is mainly numerical data. Using both types of data creates a more meaningful picture and allows for a more well-rounded interpretation. More perspectives using more data allows for a more thorough look at the overall story.

This quantitative-qualitative dichotomy, however, has the potential to restrict data to fit those qualifications. The current analysis ignores the dichotomy, still cognizant that different types of data must be used in different ways. While still using multiple methods to increase validity by triangulation, it uses a synthesis of data analysis techniques suitable for the data themselves. This includes the creation of materials evaluation criteria (explained in chapter 4); testing the criteria by completing a materials evaluation; line-by-line coding to extract themes in the data; and corpus linguistics to analyze how academic the materials are. In sum, methods include criteria-building, line-by-line coding, and corpus analysis. These methods are explained in more detail below.

Evaluation of Premier Skills English

Premier Skills English was evaluated using ten lessons from the website. The lessons were chosen randomly, by searching common nouns like “shoe” and “tree” into the PSE search bar. One lesson was chosen from the search results. The lessons evaluated, then, were *This Week: Champions!, Similarities and Differences*, *Wales Podcast 58, Podcast 44 – The Cruyff Turn, Summer Tournaments: Eyes on Africa, Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous, Podcast 40 – Fair Play, Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment, Matchweek 23: In the bag,* and *Learning Vocabulary: Make.* Each lesson was evaluated based on the SEEM rubric. Multiple evaluations were completed to increase reliability. The data from Premier Skills English, including comments made by users, was publicly accessible.

Each lesson was evaluated based on the SEEM framework. Then, there was a space below the criteria for any distinctive elements of the resource that the criteria missed. Any extra comments were written in this space.

Experimenter Bias

Completing an evaluation of materials is subjective in that the evaluator is interpreting the resources and criteria to make an evaluation. Although the criteria are created to be objective, the reality is that a real person is conducting the evaluation. This can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, “a prediction that becomes true because of the influence our expectations have on seeing what we want to see” (Finn, 2006). When experimenters put their own bias on interpreting data, issues can arise.

Measures were taken to prevent bias from entering the evaluation, though bias admittedly might have squeezed through. Nevertheless, steps to ensure objectivity included

keeping the detailed framework next to the resource, to respond specifically to each aspect of each criterium. That way, the evaluator was responding to the objective criteria instead of exploring tangents. Analyzing the source in pieces prevented overall bias to permeate the individual parts. Then, describing the data using line-by-line coding allowed for a relatively unbiased report of the evaluation. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize evaluations are difficult to make completely objective.

Line-by-line Coding

Once the lessons were evaluated using the criteria, the evaluations were coded using line-by-line coding. Coding is "the data analysis process that breaks the text down into the smallest units and reorganizes these units into relatable stories" (Christians and Carey, 1989). This technique, line-by-line coding, allows the coder to describe each line of data in a single word or phrase. Once every line has a theme, or code, the themes are then organized to look for patterns. The themes are then further condensed. This iterative process eventually narrows down many lines of data into a few themes. This process was done for each criterion of the SEEM. The result was a few themes for each criterion. (See the Appendix for an example of line-by-line coding.)

After line-by-line coding was complete, Premier Skills English was then evaluated using corpus linguistics. The Academic Word List was used to see if the proportion of academic words in PSE was comparable to other academic texts. The corpus analysis was run to increase validity of the curriculum criteria, as a check to see how academic PSE was.

Corpus Linguistics

Any English language resource sets out to teach English grammar, vocabulary, and other aspects of grammar correctly. Premier Skills English is no different. In addition to analyzing quality of exercises and activities, attention was also be placed on the vocabulary. Specifically, this paper used corpus linguistics to determine the quality of input for learners.

Corpus linguistics begins with a corpus, a collection of natural language for a specific purpose (Bjorkenstam, 2014). Corpus linguistics, then, is the analysis of such language, usually with specialized software to determine frequency data (Nesselhauf, 2005). Corpus linguistics can show collocations of words, frequencies, distributions of vocabulary, and comparisons of vocabulary distribution among other uses (Bjorkenstam, 2014). A key benefit to corpus linguistics is the additional perspective using statistical tests. It allows words and language to be analyzed using frequency counts and other statistics, a method that differs substantially from other language analysis.

One of the most well-known examples of corpus linguistics is the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000). Range and frequency data were used to create this list of the most frequently used academic words (Coxhead, 2000). This list is used by many institutions as vocabulary to know by the completion of a program, and is used in courses and coursebooks around the world. Its validity is in its creation; because it was created from corpus data, there is systematic evidence of the usefulness of those words.

Other informative uses of corpus linguistics include the differences in spoken versus written language, or corpora from different types of texts (Hunston, 2002). It can also identify collocates, words often paired together, which can help learners use appropriate adverb-adjective pairs, for example (Granger, 1998). Corpus linguistics can also comment on society,

such as the gendered usage of “bossy” to disproportionately describe female behavior (Subtirelu, 2014). The range of insights brought by corpus linguistics is wide; in this case, corpus linguistics gave insight into the quality of input on enrichment materials.

Academic Word List

As mentioned earlier, the Academic Word list, presented by Coxhead in 2000, details the most commonly used words in academic text (Coxhead, 2000). It is made from a corpus of 3.5 million words, taken from texts in arts, commerce, law and science (Coxhead, 2000). The resulting list, created using corpus linguistics, has been featured in dictionaries, textbooks, and websites from popular publishers such as Houghton Mifflin and Oxford (Coxhead, 2011). It has also been used in programming for English course worldwide. The AWL was chosen for this analysis because of its widespread use, and popularity in English learning. It also can be used to give a measure of how academic the language of a resource is, as it is applied here.

The AWL is used, along with a corpus of PSE lessons, to see the frequency of AWL words in the PSE corpus. To do this, the corpus was created from PSE lessons, then it was cross referenced with the AWL using corpus analysis software.

Corpus Analysis Procedure

The corpus was created by taking text from the PSE website in 31 different lessons. In total, the PSE corpus had 72,222 words, averaging almost 2300 words per lesson. Text was chosen for the corpora if it was input for the learner to read; text that was omitted included photo captions, comments from users, and previews of other activities (e.g. embedded quizzes). The text was only from input that the source chose specifically to give to learners.

The procedure for this corpus linguistics analysis was adopted from methods used in Hyland and Tse's (2007) corpus linguistics study. Their study evaluated how much of the AWL was found in a scientific corpus (Hyland and Tse, 2007). Just as in Hyland and Tse (2007), the RANGE program, presented by Nation (2002) was used for this analysis. The program, preloaded with the Academic Word List, shows the frequency of AWL words used in the corpus. It also shows the range of words, and in which subsection(s) of the corpus a word is found.

Corpus Analysis Frequencies

Through similar methods, other studies have shown that AWL words make up 10-11% of the words for academic language corpora (Coxhead, 2011). Hyland and Tse (2007) reported 10.6% in a corpus with sciences, engineering and social sciences, Chen and Ge (2007) saw 10.1% in medical journals, and Konstantakis (2007) reported 11.5% in business works. For newspapers, the number has been reported around 4.5%, and for fiction, it has been around 1.4% (Coxhead, 2011). An analysis of English textbooks found the AWL to cover between 5-6% of words (Hernandez, 2017). Premier Skills English is expected to show percentages in the same range, 1-10% of the corpus. One percent will show PSE as having less academic text, while 10% will present PSE as very academic.

Premier Skills English has explicit English instruction, football news, and narrative roleplays. Taking these factors into account, for the source to be high quality, around 5% of the text is expected to be from the AWL. However, for two reasons this is not a cutoff point for high versus low quality input. First, it is important to acknowledge the size of this PSE corpus. It is much smaller than other studies (tens of thousands of words instead of a million or more) due to the author's limited resources. The results will be taken with the small sample size in mind.

Secondly, the analysis is meant to be supplemental data to evaluate the “curriculum” criterium, not to undertake an analysis of the entirety of PSE. The small-scale analysis will gauge how well the source incorporates academic vocabulary. It is not an alternate statistic on which to base the whole evaluation.

The methods of evaluating Premier Skills English are applicable to the data themselves, using both coding and corpus linguistics to evaluate the source. These methods create a more developed picture of the results, as seen in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: Results

The aim of this study is to evaluate the SEEM framework to see how effective it is for materials evaluation. To measure this, the SEEM was used to evaluate Premier Skills English, a website put together by the British Council and English Premier League. The five aspects of the SEEM, credibility, engagement, learner autonomy, world English and curriculum, were evaluated. In addition, a corpus linguistics measure supplemented the curriculum pillar of the framework.

Summary of Findings: SEEM for Premier Skills English

Data came from the author's evaluation of Premier Skills English using the SEEM. Line-by-line coding was used to uncover themes in each of the categories of the framework. (See the Appendix for the full results, and a full version of line-by-line coding.) These themes are outlined below.

Credibility Themes:

British-Centric

The most common theme in evaluating the credibility of PSE was that it was British-centric. It was centered around and promoted British and Western references and culture. In one instance, PSE describes how life was the last time Liverpool FC won the top league. It describes the year 1990 as "when John Barnes was Liverpool's top scorer, Germans were celebrating the reunification of East and West Germany and the first-ever page was published on the world wide web" (*This Week: Champions!).* The fall of the Berlin wall is used as a timestamp for the year 1990. For an audience familiar with Western education, specifically the Western front of World War II, this is a relevant reference. However, the audience unfamiliar with Germany's history may not understand this historical reference.

More than mere references, the website promotes British culture as part of the English language. A lesson about fair play shifts to a lesson on politeness. In the podcast, the podcast host says, “it's often important to be polite because you don't want to be rude or to hurt someone's feelings” *Podcast 40 – Fair Play.* This type of politeness is central to British culture but is not the same as fair play. The podcast goes further, saying “Vincent Kompany and Paulo Di Canio showed examples of politeness on the pitch and it’s also important to be polite off the pitch, too” (*Podcast 40 – Fair Play).* The equivocation of fair play and politeness forces cultural norms on the audience, as the website teaches fair play and politeness as one. Fair play, or sportsmanship, is recognized globally as a cornerstone of sports. Politeness, however, is cultural; it differs based on location and culture. This all-in-one definition of fair play inadvertently teaches the audience that British politeness is the right thing to do, just like fair play.

The promotion of British culture is not limited to customs; it follows British institutions as well. They highlight the Premier League, which follows the purpose of the website. However, they do so by putting down other leagues. In highlighting learners’ comments, PSE chooses a learner who said “he used to go to matches in Ghana’s Premier League but he stopped going because the quality of the football isn’t as good anymore.” *Podcast 40 – Fair Play.* This choice puts down Ghana’s league, telling learners not to follow other leagues other than the EPL.

Assumptions and Missed Opportunities

The website made assumptions about learner characteristic and backgrounds and missed opportunities for references relevant to learners. They assume learners know the terms Celtic, Angles and Saxons, naming these terms without defining them (*Wales Podcast 58*). Not only do they miss opportunities for definitions and giving learners more information about topics, they

also miss opportunities to use references that would be more relevant to their learners. Instead of referencing the unification of Germany in *This Week: Champions!*, they could have said only five of Liverpool's current squad were alive last time Liverpool won. Similarly, they could have referenced Celtic FC when talking about Welsh as a Celtic language *(Wales Podcast 58).* These references would be relevant to learners interested in football, but the opportunity is missed.

Social Issues Addressed

Premier Skills English addresses some issues overall, like racism and the environment, but sometimes misses key details. Two of the ten lessons mention the environment in the listening portion of the lesson, *Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment* and *Podcast 44 – The Cruyff Turn*. They mention the carbon footprint of different meats and the importance of recycling. They connect the vocabulary term "awareness" with environmental awareness "that it's important to know about what is good and bad for our planet" (*Podcast 44 - The Cruyff Turn).* They use their platform to address for environmental conservation.

Their acknowledgement of racism, on the other hand, is more complicated. They mention Black Lives Matter in one of the podcasts (*Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences*), but do not go in detail about it. They go more in-depth when a learner makes a comment about All Lives Matter. The podcast host replies to the comment, explaining the Black Lives Matter movement by saying, "What, unfortunately, isn't obvious, is the need to say that black lives are of equal importance to other lives which is what this movement represents. At first glance, the term 'all lives matter' seems harmless and logical. However, by using the term 'all lives matter' we are undermining the Black Lives Matter movement and the need to fight against racism." The learner responds in a tone of understanding, saying "Thank you for your

answer message. Now i know this movement" (*Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences)*. In this case, Premier Skills English uses the opportunity to have a productive discussion with a learner about antiracist efforts.

However, in more covert ways, Premier Skills English does not help the antiracist effort. In a lesson surrounding the Africa Cup of Nations, the word "blunder" is a key vocabulary word, used as a description of African football. The portrayal of African football is negative, highlighting mistakes from multiple teams and players: "Senegal missed a penalty and Liverpool's Sadio Mane missed an open goal before the Tunisia keeper dropped the ball onto a defenders head and into the net for an unfortunate own goal" (*Summer Tournaments: Eyes on Africa)*. While not racist in itself, if the website continuously portrays African football and African footballers as error-prone and less talented, viewers might internalize and generalize that message. The website could have, and did not, balance the portrayal with other positive moments from the tournament.

They also have issues with wording and spelling. They misspell Riyad Mahrez's name, and call Mouez Hassen "the Tunisia goalkeeper" multiple times, not using his name. If left uncorrected, these subtleties have the potential to turn into a pattern of dehumanization. PSE also defines transfer window as "the period of time when clubs can buy and sell players" not clarifying that they trade player contracts, not the players themselves (*Summer Tournaments: Eyes on Africa*). This definition, adding "contracts," would be more accurate, and less similar to how slavery is run. Although they recognize the power they have to take a stand on racism, they still have work to do if they want to continue their anti-racist efforts and decolonize the curriculum.

Engagement Themes:

Humor

The podcast hosts of Premier Skills English, Jack and Rich, often engaged learners by poking fun at each other. They tease each other about poor acting skills and getting detention, adding humor to the lesson. They also use puns to give more detail about a word, for example its pronunciation: "*Rich*: This week we're going to talk about Wales. *Jack*: We're talking about fish?" *(Wales Podcast 58)*.

User-Friendly Interface

The website is user-friendly, easily navigable, and includes high quality images and audio. The text is broken up into sections, not overwhelming learners' cognitive load. They also include sounds such as dogs barking to the audio, engaging learners so they listen to more than just words *(Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous).* High quality, colorful images are used to represent content. The images are also representative of many different races, relatable to learners of all races and nationalities.

Welcoming Environment

Through positive messages from Jack and Rich, the positive environment keeps learners' affective filters down. The podcast hosts reply to learners with comments such as "We hope to continue making content that makes you happy :)" (*Learning Vocabulary: Make*). They also admit to the difficulty of English, saying "I've had quite a few students making mistakes with collocations and phrases with the word 'make'." (*Learning Vocabulary: Make*). Admitting this normalizes making mistakes, ideally decreasing pressure for learners.

Motivation

Besides using football to teach English, Premier Skills English worked to motivate their learners. In all ten lessons evaluated, learners were shouted out for participating. This praise is used as a motivating technique, giving positive reinforcement to those who participated. Explanations of football skills are also used, giving learners a football drill to do as they learn. For example, in *Podcast 44 – The Cruyff Turn*, learners are taught instructions for how to do a move, the Cruyff turn. If they listen correctly, their reward is mastering a football skill, something very motivating for them.

They also use sneak peeks and teasers like in television to build anticipation. In *Wales Podcast 58* and *Podcast 44 – The Cruyff Turn,* the podcast hosts almost reveal the phrase of the week, then cut to another segment. This keeps learners motivated to continue listening for the reveal later in the podcast.

Learner Autonomy Themes:

Choice and Challenge

The most widespread feature of Learner Autonomy in Premier Skills English was the level of choice learners have. They could choose the level of difficulty they wanted to attempt and the amount of practice they wanted to try. Learners could choose to respond to any of the prompts, complete any of the activities, or click on links to additional resources. Additional resources were relevant and interesting to learners, including a link to an article about dog who found the 1966 World Cup trophy (*Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous).*

Challenges mixed into the lesson helped push advanced learners without confusing beginners. For example, the podcast for *Learning Vocabulary: Make* included a crossword that the podcast hosts began to complete aloud. Beginner learners could focus only on listening skills,

or advanced learners could choose to guess the answers. The challenge did not impede any listener's learning, but it was a challenge for those who wanted it. Similarly, the podcast hosts made puns that were understandable to beginners, but even funnier to advanced learners who understood the second meaning (*Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences).*

Feedback

Feedback, though mainly covered under "curriculum," also found its way to learner autonomy because of its role in empowering learners. Learners had the option to say "correct me" in their free response comments, taking learning into their own hands by requesting feedback. Hosts responded encouragingly, including replies such as "You've got it! Well done!" (*Podcast 44 – The Cruyff Turn).* This positive feedback gives learners confidence to continue building their autonomy.

Limited Opportunities for Self-Evaluation

Learners showed a few examples of self-evaluation, though there were few opportunities. One learner explained their learning moment saying, "I thought that the phrasal verb (pick up) has a meaning of to choosing or to select, but I was wrong, it means to collect" (*Wales Podcast 58).* This comment shows the potential for self-evaluation and growth, but there were very few moments like this. Self-evaluation overall was limited.

World English Themes:

Representation

Premier Skills English highlighted learners from all over the world, namely Algeria, Argentina, China, Ghana, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Montenegro, Pakistan,

Serbia, Spain, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, UAE, Ukraine, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe. They showed that English is spoken internationally in all corners of the world.

English as British/Western

The lessons showcased British culture and customs, specifically teaching politeness, as central to the English language. They do not clarify that it is a custom, but teach it like it is any other grammar point. For example, the podcast hosts teach refusals with the example that, when eating, "[t]he host will probably ask you to eat more so you need to be polite and say when you don't want any more" *(Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment).* Similarly, they teach that "In English, there are specific words we can use to be more polite, especially when we are asking for help or saying no to something" (*Podcast 40 - Fair Play).* This may be polite in the UK, but may not be elsewhere. Teaching British/Western politeness is teaching British/Western culture and imposing those norms on the English language. Clarifying that this is a cultural norm would be more informative and show that English is not just for certain people(s).

English as International Language

English was shown as a communal language that brings people together. Learners showed their knowledge of English as an adaptive language. One Argentinian learner brought up the word "batacazo," which means a bold prediction that comes true. Another learner responded, "I hope the word will find its way into English. I like it" (*Matchweek 23: In the Bag).* Learners know that English is international in that it can adopt words from other languages.

The podcast hosts also made an announcement to interview learners for future podcasts: "if you want to practise your English skills and answer a few questions just email us at premierskills@britishcouncil.org and we'll write back to you." (*Matchweek 23: In the Bag).* They

made the effort to include more voices from different places, portraying English as more representative and international.

Curriculum Themes:

Explicit Grammar Teaching and Practice

A wide variety of vocabulary and grammar was taught, including idioms, quantifiers, comparative words, similarities, small and large differences, transition words, the past continuous, and when to use "make." The teaching was mostly explicit and included grammar structures like comparing two things using "as + adj + as" and defining the imperative as the "infinitive without to" (*Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences, Podcast 44 - The Cruyff Turn*).

The activities also varied, featuring fill-in-the-blank activities, reviewing terms, matching quizzes, true/false activities, vocabulary flashcards, reading comprehension/listening quizzes, and a crossword. Learners practiced writing opinions, narratives, refusals, and instructions; summarizing; comparing similarities and differences; and using vocabulary terms. In these writing activities, they used the past continuous and past simple, present perfect, conditional, and future tenses.

Feedback

There was feedback in every lesson, both general and specific to different learners. General feedback included giving the answer to the "word of the week" in each podcast, and giving overall congratulations to the learners who got the correct answer. For learners who guessed correctly in the comments, hosts replied to them specifically with "good job." If they were incorrect, podcast hosts gave clues to keep them on track: "That's a good guess but it's not

quite right. I'll give you a clue: the first word is 'leave'. Can you try again?" (*Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment).* The hosts also responded to learners who began their comment with "correct me." One podcast host replied, "The first paragraph is very good. I like how you use 'title contenders' and 'crucial' is a very good word to use here. I wouldn't begin the next paragraph with 'For Arsenal', this should come later in the sentence"(*Podcast 40 – Fair Play).* The feedback is formative, giving learners advice to work with so they can improve their English. It is more than saying yes or no, correct or incorrect.

Interaction

The comments section holds opportunities for interaction among learners, but the potential is seldom achieved. In one instance, learners had a conversation about wool jumpers in the heat of the summer: "wooly jumper!! With this high temperature, in Tunisia these days, the word 'wool' makes me melting!" (*Wales Podcast 58).* There was also a discussion about fair play, with learners agreeing ("you're right", "good explanation") to a learner who said "Politeness off the pitch is highly recommended as it helps to communicate better and have mutual respect" (*Podcast 40 – Fair Play)* (see screenshot below). These instances were rare, though; there was otherwise limited learner interaction.

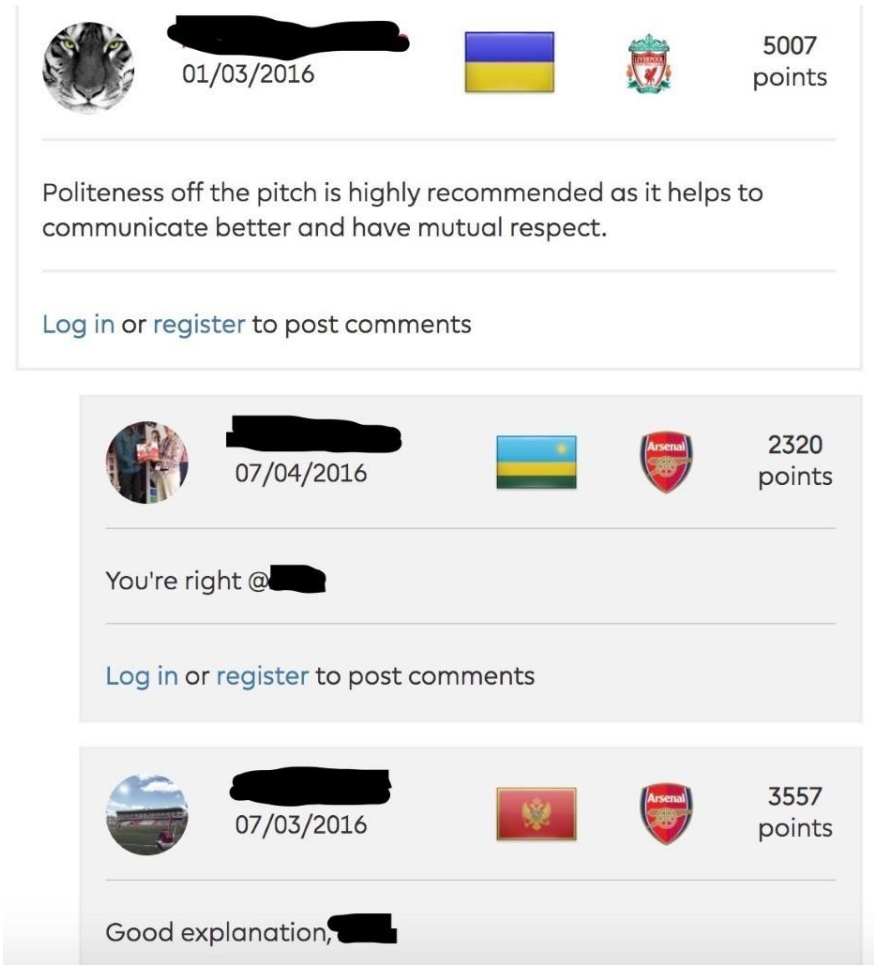

Figure 4. Learners interact and agree with each other. From Premier Skills English Podcast 40 – Fair Play.

Advice

The podcast hosts additionally gave tips on overall language learning and English testing. For example, they noted that idioms are challenging and "the best way to learn these words and phrases is in context" (*Learning Vocabulary: Make*). This goes beyond check for correctness, giving overall advice for how to learn English. The hosts even give tips for English exams. They advise learners that the similarities and differences vocabulary is helpful and that "You're often shown photos in English exams and have to compare and contrast. This podcast will help you

with some of the language to do this." (*Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences).* The podcast hosts recognize some of their learners' goals and help them prepare for those goals.

Missing from the SEEM

Despite what the SEEM covered in its evaluation of PSE, there were aspects missing. Most clearly missing was a sense of professionalism. There were errors in capitalization, spelling, and matching audio to its transcript. For example, the dog name "fluffy" was not capitalized, possibly confusing learners. In the role play, the podcast transcript said, "Be quiet fluffy, I'm talking to the police" (*Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous*). A learner might see the adjective, fluffy, and not understand why an adjective was placed there. The dog name, Fluffy, may be common to Western native speakers, but may not be to some learners. These errors may cause unnecessary confusion.

Corpus Check

AWL Frequency

The corpus analysis was run to test the validity of the SEEM to see how academic its language was. If the "curriculum" aspect was evaluated highly, it would make sense to see a high proportion of AWL words. A small Premier Skills English corpus (72,222 words) was run against the Academic Word List to test the frequency of the AWL. The analysis showed that 3.09% of the words in the Premier Skills English corpus were from the AWL. That is, 309 per 10,000 words of the corpus were words on the AWL. That falls in between fiction (1.4%) and newspapers (4.5%) (Coxhead, 2011). This shows that this resource has more academic words than fiction writing, but not more than newspaper writing.

The test also showed the frequency of each specific AWL word. There were 17 words that occurred in the corpus ten or more times: comment (41), couple (21), create (13), environment (30), final (60), focus (71), goal (78), link (30), paragraph (14), previous (14), section (118), similar (10), specific (14), team (149), topic (33), transfer (21). Figure 5 shows the list of words in order of frequency. (See Figure 6 in Appendix for all AWL word frequencies.)

Figure 5. Word Frequency of AWL in PSE Corpus.

Word (frequency)
Team (149)
Section (118)
Goal (78)
Focus (71)
Final (60)
Context (44)
Comment (41)
Topic (33)
Environment (30)
Link (30)
Transfer (21)
Couple (21)
Paragraph (14)
Previous (14)
Specific (14)
Create (13)
Similar (10)

Chapter 7: Discussion

The SEEM was used as a framework to evaluate Premier Skills English. The aim of the evaluation was to test the SEEM, see how it worked, and make recommendations accordingly. This chapter looks more thoroughly at the evaluation of Premier Skills English, then looks at how the themes from the evaluation connection to SLA research. The corpus linguistics data is also discussed. Then, the SEEM criteria is analyzed, detailing its strengths as well as what needs to be changed. Lastly, recommendations and limitations are discussed.

PSE Review

There is no quick evaluation of Premier Skills English; it did not "pass" or "fail" the evaluation. Rather, its details were revealed and interpreted as strengths and areas for improvement. The aim of an evaluation framework is not to have a pass or fail system; it is to thoroughly evaluate the source so that the user has a better understanding of it.

The SEEM revealed several themes in Premier Skills English from its evaluation. In terms of credibility, the source was British- and Western-centric, and made assumptions and missed opportunities that would help learners understand the content. They also addressed social issues like environmental protection, but fell short in addressing racism. Premier Skills English successfully engaged learners, using humor, a user-friendly interface, a welcoming environment, and utilized different forms of motivation successfully. The source had limited opportunities for self-evaluation, which made learner autonomy seem like a relatively low priority; however, they did offer choices and challenges to learners with some opportunities for feedback. PSE's portrayal of world English was mixed. They viewed English as an international language in representation and linguistic adaptation of words, but pushed British English on learners. Lastly,

the curriculum included a variety of explicit grammar teaching and practice, feedback, interaction, and advice for learners.

Premier Skills English may be recommended to learners, admittedly with its imperfections. In terms of the typically-used criteria (engagement and curriculum), the source has positive qualities that would make effective and interesting materials. It gives opportunities for learners to challenge themselves, and gives choices for how much learning they want to engage in. However, on the other hand, there are few opportunities for self-evaluation. In terms of curriculum, there is a wide variety of lessons and vocabulary with many opportunities to practice using language. Overall, in terms of the historically-used criteria, ones featured in Cooker's (2008) framework, this source is high quality, especially for football fans. Teachers may recommend this resource to their learners who are hesitant to engage with other sources, and who are football fanatics.

A teacher might recommend Premier Skills English to learners along with other sources that have different strengths. For example, PSE is British-centric and still has work to do in terms of antiracist efforts. It includes global learners on a surface level, but still needs work in real efforts for decolonizing the curriculum (Charles, 2019). It can be used in tandem with other materials. A source to supplement PSE might be one with a bigger emphasis on English as an international language and greater efforts to decolonize the curriculum. These are areas for change for PSE, but does not mean the source is altogether useless. Premier Skills English works well to incorporate various grammar points and vocabulary, is engaging to learners, and uses humor effectively. It also highlights the importance of environmental protection and educates learners about topics besides football. It might even be a fun extra credit activity or homework

idea for teachers to assign. For example, learners might have the option to earn 500 points for their club or country on Premier Skills English. As long as educators understand the source's strengths and areas for growth, they can use the materials appropriately.

Connection to SLA

Despite areas for growth, Premier Skills English has strengths in SLA theory-informed lessons. It uses principles of Second Language Acquisition in its attempt to set up a motivating, engaging, and welcoming environment. First, the website plays into intrinsic motivation by discussing football in each podcast. Learners are intrinsically motivated to understand the content because they are interested in football (Brown, 2000). They are also extrinsically motivated by podcast hosts and website admin. Learners are rewarded with praise when they are individually shouted out in the comments. This reward is effective because the praise is given for participating. Effort, and sometimes correctness, is rewarded so that learners are motivated to try their best. Learners also show integrative motivation as they expressed interest in visiting different parts of the United Kingdom (Gardner and Lambert, 1972). In the Wales podcast, learners discussed different places they wanted to visit to experience British culture. This desire to integrate into an English-speaking culture may add on to learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, making Premier Skills English ideal for motivating learners.

Learners were further engaged with the gamification aspects of the website. Learners were able to earn points for their club and country, supporting their favorite teams more than they already do. Football fans want to help their teams be the best, and this is another way they can support their teams and help them get to the top (even if it is on a language learning platform).

Premier Skills English, in addition to being fun and motivating, had a welcoming environment that kept affective filters down (Krashen, 1982). Details like using smiley faces and words of encouragement gave an impression of a judgment-free zone. Learners did not criticize each other, and podcast hosts only helped learners with positively worded, constructive feedback.

Corpus Analysis

The results of the corpus analysis showed that the PSE corpus had more academic words than fiction, and fewer academic words than newspaper writing. In other words, Premier Skills English was more academic than fiction and less academic than newspapers. For teachers, this means that reading content on Premier Skills English offers more academic vocabulary than fiction writing. Teachers may recommend this resource instead of telling learners to read novels or short stories. Alternatively, teachers may recommend Premier Skills English instead of reading news if learners are engaged on Premier Skills English. Although the input might not be as academic, if learners are exposed to more of it because they are interested in it, then they might encounter more academic language overall.

The frequency of words gives more information about the kinds of words used from the AWL. Most of the frequently used words had to do with structuring lessons, or with football. It might be helpful to have deeper meanings, or even multiple meanings, of words on the AWL. For example, the word “transfer” occurred 21 times. "Transfer” has a similar meaning in football and in academics, but the meanings are different enough that they would help learners build a deep, dynamic understanding of the word. Having multiple examples of more challenging words might help learners construct their own deeper meanings, helping their memory.

The results of the corpus analysis show promise for using this technique. Using the AWL frequency software can give a good estimate on where a resource falls in terms of academic language. For example, this resource fell between fiction and news writing; other sources may be compared to each other to see how challenging they are. It is not a perfect science, but an estimate to gauge the academic level of the text.

Success of SEEM

The SEEM framework was overall successful, giving a thorough evaluation of Premier Skills English. There was a relatively long evaluation for each standard; the alternative would be to break the standards up even more into sub criteria. This might allow for more user-friendly experience if it were more structured. However, the criteria were intentionally made to be broad so that users of the standards took time to think about the materials. It was not a checklist for the same reason; materials evaluations should be given appropriate time and consideration. Nevertheless, breaking the sections down even more might be easier and more accessible to users.

Because the categories were broad, there might have been negative bias against Premier Skills English because it is easier to see what is going poorly than what is going well. When making evaluations, mistakes stand out but things that are correct often go unnoticed. This was considered while completing the evaluation, but it might be a trend for the SEEM overall.

Despite the insight revealed by the framework, there is room for improvement. The framework most noticeably overlooked the professionalism of Premier Skills English. Although the website looked professional, there were clear mistakes in spelling and capitalization, and the audio sometimes did not match the transcript. This is especially important for learners who

might be analyzing every word in the lesson. They might get confused about capitalization standards, or not know the correct spelling of a simple word. For example, the dog name “fluffy” was not capitalized, which causes unnecessary confusion for learners to try to understand. They might think it is a new sentence structure they have not seen, or a different meaning of the adjective “fluffy.” This easily corrected error might cause stress for learners.

Furthermore, if learners are reading along to a transcript of a podcast, the words ought to match up. Otherwise, learners might be left not knowing how the written words are pronounced, and not understanding what the spoken words are. Furthermore, if learners can only access either the text or the audio (from a disability, for example), not having them match up may create confusion. These mechanics and conventions are simple, yet very noticeable when they are done lazily. The occasional mistake is expected, but there were too many in ten lessons for it to be acceptable.

Significance of SEEM

The framework allows evaluators to notice more biases and issues with discrimination than other frameworks might. Materials evaluation frameworks have historically focused more on engagement and content than any unjust or discriminatory patterns. Perhaps it is time that those aspects, credibility and world English, are common to evaluation frameworks. Learners are not taking in language materials in a vacuum; they are digesting information along with all the other input in their lives. The content of language materials affects them just as any other story or news piece might. It is time language materials own that privilege of making an effect on learners. Once that is recognized, materials might feel a responsibility to put out materials that create a positive impact, as Cooker (2008) notes as one of her criteria. Global English and

credibility are important parts of materials. The evaluator ought to at least be aware of those criteria, and then make judgments about how to use those materials. Materials do not have to be thrown out because they have flaws in those areas. However, teachers should be aware of the potential impact they make on their students. As the movement for decolonizing the curriculum has shown, it is important to examine the message a source is sending (Charles, 2019). This framework points out aspects of decolonizing the curriculum that others do not.

The standards are not only about credibility and world English; they identify engagement, learner autonomy, and curriculum as important aspects on which to evaluate criteria. No matter how much time a teacher might want to give to credibility and world English, the framework still works well to evaluate the typical aspects. In other words, a teacher who might not want to spend too much time on curriculum and world English will still have an effective framework in the SEEM.

There is also potential for washback effects of the SEEM. Washback is "the extent to which a test influences teachers and learners to do things they would not otherwise necessarily do" (Messick, 1996). Washback can be positive if the test (in this case, the evaluation) benefits learners in a new way. If teachers and educators are evaluating resources with the SEEM, then sources themselves might be more aware of things like EIL and credibility. Like "teaching to the test," but in this case, "making materials to the standards," there might be positive change toward EIL and diversity and inclusion. If materials developers want positive evaluations on their materials, and the SEEM is used, they might change their materials to get high marks in all areas, including credibility and world English. The notion is hopeful, but there is potential for it to happen.

Limitations and Recommendations

The SEEM is meant for teachers and educators with knowledge about these topics, and who care about or have interest in these criteria. They are not as relevant for those who do not know about or do not care about or agree with ideas like representation and decolonizing the curriculum. For example, a teacher whose main goal is grammar and making sure their students understand the mechanics of language, the SEEM might not be for them. Evaluators, like evaluation frameworks, have goals. Evaluators will choose criteria that fit their goals. Although it is the only known framework for enrichment materials, evaluators who do not understand or agree with the aims of the SEEM may not choose to use it.

Another limitation is that the SEEM is extra work for teachers and educators who are trying to find resources for their students. In an ideal world, they would have time and resources to do full evaluations of every possible resources. However, that is likely not the reality. They likely have to make a quicker decision about what to send their students. In the future, there might be a list of resources evaluated by the SEEM. Educators might read those evaluations and choose resources accordingly. Offering more thorough evaluations of resources might give educators peace of mind, allowing them to know more about materials before they recommend them.

As time goes on, the description for credibility should be updated consistently. If it stays the same, it might not reflect a changing society. The reasoning behind the credibility standard was to make consumers of materials think about the message they are sending. Their messages will change, and what qualifies as an acceptable message will also change. Thus, the definition for credibility ought to be updated to keep up with the change. The same can be said for the

standards overall; there should be room for improvement as priorities change. Some of these criteria were irrelevant just decades earlier, and the field of materials development only started decades before that. Standards should be updated as time goes on, otherwise they are not reflective of changing materials.

Overall, more testing should be done to get a better sense of how the framework works. One evaluation is not enough for a thorough report on the SEEM. Other sources might pick up on things that Premier Skills English missed. Similarly, different evaluators should test the framework to increase reliability and validity, making sure the framework reveals similar themes when reviewed by different evaluators, and making sure those findings match the quality of the materials. Two evaluators should not have different evaluations of the same materials, and the evaluation should reflect the quality of the materials (e.g. high quality materials should not get a poor evaluation from the SEEM). In other words, more testing will help make the SEEM a better materials evaluation framework.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to create and test a materials evaluation framework for evaluating enrichment materials. In the wake of COVID-19, and the increase in online schooling, came the pressing need to have high quality resources for students. However, although criteria existed for self-access materials, there was no modern framework for evaluating enrichment materials. This dissertation aimed to create that missing framework, the SEEM (Standards for Evaluating Enrichment Materials), and tested it to evaluate the framework's own strengths and areas for improvement. In testing the framework, the dissertation evaluated Premier Skills English, a project by the British Council and the English Premier League.

The evaluation found Premier Skills English to be an imperfect but useful resource for football fans learning English. Evaluating Premier Skills English helped unveil strengths, areas for improvement, and missing components. The framework overall was effective in evaluating Premier Skills English, focusing on a variety of important aspects of the materials. Additionally, to improve the framework, the evaluation showed that professionalism could be added. This would ensure the source has been checked for spelling, capitalization, transcription, etc. to reduce learner confusion. More evaluations using the SEEM are needed to establish it as a reliable and valid framework.

I set out on this dissertation to see how football could be used to teach English. Along the way, I noticed evaluative frameworks were lacking. There were programs and resources that used football to teach English, but there was no systematic way to evaluate those sources. Then, the global pandemic hit, and the need for extra resources was higher than ever. Teachers tried their best to send out quality resources, but there seemed to be no systematic way to evaluate

those materials. With all this, my goals shifted: to first make a framework that allowed teachers and educators to ensure they were sending out quality sources; then, to use the framework to evaluate a source that used football to teach English.

In the end, my goals were achieved. I created a modern framework that considered global and social needs that are important to teaching English (and important to me). I also found that football can be used to teach English, and has the power to reach English learners around the world. Premier Skills English has its flaws, but it also has potential to use English and football to create positive change. Furthermore, the SEEM framework has potential washback effects that might change materials for the better. Materials developers might look at the SEEM as the standard for materials evaluation and change their materials to fit the SEEM. It is exciting to think that a framework has the power to change what it is evaluating.

Now that the SEEM has been created, it might be used in other publications to evaluate materials and raise awareness of topics that seem to be overlooked, like English as an international language and decolonizing the curriculum. If anything, writing about these topics in the TESOL field might spark other researchers and authors to write about them, too. There is room for growth in English teaching, and the first step is awareness. The more that these issues of representation, discrimination, inclusion, etc. are discussed, the more widespread they can become. These are not new topics, but they may be new for the world of TESOL. I hope that they are discussed more frequently, addressed when they create harm and praised when they do good.

Reflection

Writing this dissertation has not gone without challenges. I changed topics a few times, trying to navigate the global pandemic and the changing needs of students. I kept my love for football, though, following Gilakjani, Lai-Mei, and Sabouri's (2012) advice about bringing one's passion into learning. I feel accomplished in my endeavors and proud in my contribution to materials development and TESOL.

If I tackled a dissertation again, I would have done some things differently. Firstly, I would have done more thorough research on materials development early on. That would avoid the stress in finding important contributors late in the process, and having to weave them into my argument. (It would have also made my argument easier to write in the first place.) I also would have used a coding scheme in coding, instead of having the messy process of line-by-line coding that ensued. If I had time and resources, I would have taken all the lessons I could find and made a bigger corpus. That would make the corpus analysis results more reliable. These are learning opportunities, though, and important ones for future research.

The process of writing a dissertation has been beneficial beyond learning more about the content. Writing this dissertation has helped me understand the importance of evaluation criteria and materials evaluations. Students are assessed and evaluated to determine whether learning has been achieved; in the same way, materials must be evaluated to determine what their goals are, and if those goals have been achieved. I can bring this respect and appreciation for evaluative criteria into my classroom and any future research projects. Just as a quality test is important for assessment, quality materials are important for learning. I hope to take what I have learned and bring credibility, engagement, learner autonomy, English as an international

language, and SLA-informed curriculum into my future materials and classrooms, no matter what those look like.

Bibliography

Belsha, K. (2020). *Schools must keep serving English learners during pandemic, federal ed officials say.* Chalkbeat. [online] Available at: https://www.chalkbeat.org/2020/5/19/21264344/english-learners-guidance-pandemic-federal-ed-department. [Accessed 20 May 2020].

Bjorkenstam, K. N. (2014). *What is a corpus and why are corpora important tools?*. [online] Available at: https://nordiskateckensprak.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/knb_whatisacorpus_cph-2013_outline.pdf [Accessed 14 July 2020].

British Council (2017). *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy* British Council. [online] Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/edi-strategy-2017.pdf [Accessed 14 July 2020].

British Council (2020). *Welcome to the British Council* British Council. [online] Available at britishcouncil.org [Accessed 14 July 2020].

Breen, M.P. and Candlin, C.N., (1980). The essentials of a communicative curriculum in language teaching. *Applied linguistics*, *1*(2), pp.89-112.

Brown, H.D., (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (Vol. 4). New York: Longman.

Carp, S., (2019). *Premier League global audience climbs to 3.2bn for 2018/19 season*. Sports Pro Media. [online] Available at: https://www.sportspromedia.com/news/premier-league-audience-figures-global-2018-19-season [Accessed 7 July 2020].

Charles, E., (2019). Decolonizing the curriculum. *Insights, 32*(1), p.24.

Chen, Q. and Ge, G.C., (2007). A corpus-based lexical study on frequency and distribution of Coxhead's AWL word families in medical research articles (RAs). *English for Specific Purposes*, *26*(4), pp.502-514.

Christians, C. G., & Carey, J. W. (1989). The logic and aims of qualitative research. Research methods in mass communication, 354–374.

Cooker, L., (2008). Self-access materials. *English language learning materials: A critical review*, pp.110-132.

Coxhead, A., (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL quarterly*, *34*(2), pp.213-238.

Coxhead, A., (2011). The academic word list 10 years on: Research and teaching implications. Tesol Quarterly, 45(2), pp.355-362.

Cunningsworth, A. (1984). Evaluating and selecting EFL teaching material. London: Heinemann.

Dam, L. and Legenhausen, L., (1996). The acquisition of vocabulary in an autonomous learning environment-the first months of beginning English. *Taking control: Autonomy in language learning*, *1*, p.265.

Dörnyei, Z., (1998). Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language teaching*, *31*(3), pp.117-135.

Dörnyei, Z. and Csizér, K., (1998). Ten commandments for motivating language learners: Results of an empirical study. *Language teaching research*, *2*(3), pp.203-229.

Finn, P., (2006). Primer on research: Bias and blinding: Self-fulfilling prophecies and intentional ignorance. *The ASHA Leader*, *11*(8), pp.16-22.

Gardner, D. and Miller, L., (1999). *Establishing self-access from theory to practice*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.

Gardner, R.C. and Lambert, W.E., (1959). Motivational variables in second-language acquisition. *Canadian Journal of Psychology/Revue canadienne de psychologie*, *13*(4), p.266.

Gardner, R.C. and Lambert, W.E., (1972). Attitudes and Motivation in Second-Language Learning.

Garland, C.M., (2015). Gamification and implications for second language education: a meta analysis.

Goldblatt, D., (2007). The ball is round: a global history of football. Penguin UK.

Goldblatt, D., (2018). *A glorious distraction no more, the beautiful game is turning ugly*. [online] Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/mar/18/football-politics-commerce-reflects-our-society [Accessed 18 July 2020].

Gilakjani, A.P., Lai-Mei, L. and Sabouri, N.B., (2012). A study on the role of motivation in foreign language learning and teaching. International Journal of Modern Education and Computer Science, 4(7), p.9.

Granger, S., (ed.) (1998). *Learner English on Computer*, London: Longman & Johansson S. in Hoey 1993 (ed.) *Data, description, discourse,* London: HarperCollins

Grant, N., (1987). *Making the most of your textbook* (Vol. 11, No. 8). London: Longman.

Harackiewicz, J.M., Smith, J.L. and Priniski, S.J., (2016). Interest matters: The importance of promoting interest in education. *Policy insights from the behavioral and brain sciences*, *3*(2), pp.220-227.

Hernandez, M.M., (2017). Comparing the AWL and AVL in Textbooks from an Intensive English Program.

Horn, M., (2020). *COVID-19's Ultimate Impact on Online Learning: The Good and the Bad.* Campus Technology. [online] Available at: https://campustechnology.com/articles/2020/04/30/covid19s-ultimate-impact-on-online-learning-the-good-and-the-bad.aspx. [Accessed 27 May 2020].

Howatt, A.P.R. and Widdowson, H.G., (2004). *A history of ELT*. Oxford University Press.

Hunston, S., (2002). *Corpora in applied linguistics*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.

Hurd, S. and Lewis, T. eds., (2008). *Language learning strategies in independent settings*. Multilingual matters.

Hyland, K. and Tse, P., (2007). Is there an "academic vocabulary"?. *TESOL quarterly*, *41*(2), pp.235-253.

Kapp, K.M., (2012). *The gamification of learning and instruction: game-based methods and strategies for training and education*. John Wiley & Sons.

Keele University, (2018). *Keele Decolonising the Curriculum Network.* [online] Available at: https://www.keele.ac.uk/equalitydiversity/equalityawards/raceequalitycharter/keeledecolonisingthecurriculumnetwork/. [Accessed 23 July 2020].

Konstantakis, N., (2007). Creating a business word list for teaching business English. *ELIA, 7, 79-102*.

Krashen, S., (1982). Principles and practice in second language acquisition.

Li, C. and Lalani, F., (2020). *The COVID-19 pandemic has changed education forever. This is how.* World Economic Forum [online] Available at: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/coronavirus-education-global-covid19-online-digital-learning/ [Accessed 20 May 2020].

Lyons, D. (2017). *How Many People Speak English, And Where Is It Spoken?*. [online] Available at: https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/how-many-people-speak-english-and-where-is-it-spoken [Accessed 16 July 2020].

Madsen, H.S. and Bowen, J.D., (1978). Adaptation in Language Teaching.

Matsuda, A., (2003). Incorporating world Englishes in teaching English as an international language. *Tesol Quarterly*, *37*(4), pp.719-729.

McGrath, I., (2002). *Materials evaluation and design for language teaching*. Edinburgh University Press.

Messick, S., (1996). Validity and washback in language testing. *Language testing*, *13*(3), pp.241-256.

Mishan, F., (2015). *Materials development for TESOL*. Edinburgh University Press.

Nation, I. S. P. (2002). RANGE [computer software]. Available from http:// www.vuw.ac.nz/lals/publications/software.aspx

Nesselhauf, N., (2005). *Collocations in a learner corpus* (Vol. 14). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Open University, (2019). *"The Innovating Pedagogy 2019 Exploring new forms of teaching, learning and assessment, to guide educators and policy makers," report, January 2019*, https://iet.open.ac.uk/file/innovating-pedagogy-2019.pdf (accessed 23 July 2020).

Peacock, M., (1997). The effect of authentic materials on the motivation of EFL learners. *ELT journal*, *51*(2), pp.144-156.

Pemberton, R., Li, E.S., Or, W.W. and Pierson, H.D., (1996). *Taking control: Autonomy in language learning* (Vol. 1). Hong Kong University press.

Pennington, M.C. ed., (1996). *The power of CALL*. Athelstan.

Premier League, British Council (2020) *Premier Skills English* Available at: https://premierskillsenglish.britishcouncil.org/. [Accessed 28 April 2020].

Richards, E., (2020). *Coronavirus' online school is hard enough. What if you're still learning to speak English?* USA Today. [online] Available at https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/education/2020/05/14/coronavirus-online-classes-school-closures-esl-students-learn-english/5178145002/. [Accessed 20 May 2020].

Robles, Y. and Belsha, K., (2020). *Less learning and late guidance: School districts struggle to help English language learners during COVID-19 crisis.* Chalkbeat. [online] Available at: https://www.chalkbeat.org/2020/5/21/21265475/less-learning-late-guidance-school-districts-struggle-english-language-learners-during-covid-19. [Accessed 20 May 2020].

Sharifian, F. ed., (2009). *English as an international language: Perspectives and pedagogical issues* (Vol. 11). Multilingual Matters.

Strevens, P., 1992. English as an international language. *The other tongue: English across cultures*, pp.27-47.

Subtirelu, N. (2014). Some data to support the gendered nature of "bossy". [Blog] *Linguistic Pulse*. Available at https://linguisticpulse.com/2014/03/10/some-data-to-support-the-gendered-nature-of-bossy/ [Accessed 20 July 2020].

Tomlinson, B. (Ed.). (1998). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tomlinson, B. ed., (2003). *Developing materials for language teaching*. A&C Black.

Tomlinson, B. (2010). Principles and procedures for self-access materials**.** *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal*, *1*(2), 72-86.

Tomlinson, B. and Masuhara, H., (2017). *The complete guide to the theory and practice of materials development for language learning*. John Wiley & Sons.

Twitter, (2020). *Premier League: Where are your club's followers?* Available at https://interactive.twitter.com/premierleague/#?mode=team&teamId=all [Accessed 20 July 2020].

UNESCO, (2020). *Education: From disruption to recovery* UNESCO. [online] Available at: https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse. [Accessed 20 May 2020].

Appendix

Figure 3. The SEEM in summary (with origins from other frameworks).

Credibility	Source is sufficiently self-critical, aware of own biases and advantages; trusted *(aims – Grant; positive impact - Cooker)*
Engagement	Material is fun, engaging, relevant, motivating, maximally reduces learner's affective filter *(communicative, student interest – Grant; universal – Tomlinson; interest, achievable challenge, affective engagement, cognitive engagement, opportunities for discovery about how English is used, opportunities for meaningful use of English, positive impact, navigability, attractiveness – Cooker)*
Learner Autonomy	Gives learner choice, offers both challenges and scaffolding; develops learner's self-evaluation skills *(available add-ons – Grant; learner training – Cooker)*
World English	Perspectives include more than typically used accents; learners see English as an international global language *(universal - Tomlinson)*
Curriculum	Supports curriculum learning so learner knows their progress, experiences interaction, and engages with feedback *(communicative, aims – Grant; universal, content-specific – Tomlinson; language content, subject matter – McGrath; authentic English, meaningful English, feedback on the effectiveness of use of English – Cooker)*

RESULTS

Full SEEM Evaluation of PSE

Credibility: Source is sufficiently self-critical, aware of own biases and advantages, trusted	*This Week: Champions* This page has a Western bias, naming events in history central to British and Western history. It does not acknowledge this bias. In the discussion of Liverpool's winning the Premier League after 30 years, the PSE makes references to how life was 30 years earlier. The two references were the Berlin wall and the Internet. PSE assumes a Western audience as it references East and West Germany and the start of the world wide web. It assumes the audience has had a Western account of education on the Berlin wall and World War II. Much of the audience could have focused their education on the Eastern front, Asia, Africa, the Mediterranean and Middle East, etc. instead of the Western front. It also assumes the audience is made of older learners who might have lived through those events for them to be relevant timestamps in history. It could be argued that PSE is part of the British council, and it may be sharing part of history that is important to Britain, and part of the culture connected to the English language. However, the reference could have been more neutral. For example, they could note which footballer was a star back then, or how old a current footballer was (e.g. only 5 of the current squad were even born the last time Liverpool won the top league). *Wales Podcast 58* The lesson on Wales discusses its history and culture, saying Welsh is a Celtic language. The source assumes learners know what Celts/Celtic culture is. Celtic culture is generally unique to Britain and Europe, and excludes learners who do not have that knowledge. It is also a missed opportunity to relate the term to Celtic FC, a professional football team in the Scottish Premier League. Although they are not part of the EPL, it would be an appropriate reference to begin with for football fans. The history lesson talks further about Angles and Saxons, assuming learners have knowledge of those peoples. The context does not greatly help to deduce the meaning of the words, and learners might be unnecessarily confused. *Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences*

	They refer to Zoom fans on the big screen, expecting learners to know what Zoom (the video chat platform) is. In talking about differences in football since the restart, they note the Black Lives Matter jerseys and a minute of silence for victims of COVID-19. They do not go into detail about Black Lives Matter in the podcast, but they do engage with the topic in the comments. There is a dialogue between the podcast host and a learner about the problematic nature of All Lives Matter and how that silences the discussion of racism. It is a productive discussion that ends with the learner saying they now understand the movement. The podcast host's comment is as follows: "News and images around the Black Lives Matter movement and protests is something we have included in recent podcasts as the Premier League, its clubs and individual players have shown their support for the movement and its fight against the unequal treatment of Black people. The Black Lives Matter movement in no way suggests that black lives matter more than any other life. It's not necessary to say that all lives matter. That is obvious. What, unfortunately, isn't obvious, is the need to say that black lives are of equal importance to other lives which is what this movement represents. At first glance, the term 'all lives matter' seems harmless and logical. However, by using the term 'all lives matter' we are undermining the Black Lives Matter movement and the need to fight against racism. The term 'all lives matter' while not racist in itself is being used by racists and with racist intent to prevent people from talking about equality and justice. This is what the Black Lives Matter movement is fighting for and which is sadly lacking in so many places in today's world." "Thank you for your answer message. Now i know this movement." *The Cruyff Turn* The podcast hosts describe awareness as knowing what is around you on the pitch, and go on to explain other uses of awareness. Their example is environmental awareness, "things like recycling and reducing the amount of things we use" which they describe as important. The podcast hosts do their research on the words they are describing. One word, run-in, the host says does not occur in dictionaries but is popular in newspaper articles. "You often hear the 'title run-in' or just the 'run-in'. It's informal because I couldn't find it in a dictionary but if

	you google it it's used by a lot of newspapers." He uses "google" as a verb, something that might be natural for British speakers but not for speakers around the world. Although it is a verb (as of 2006) Web search might be a more neutral phrase. Using "google" shows preference for that specific search engine. *Summer Tournaments: Eyes on Africa* The name of an African footballer, Riyad Mahrez, is misspelled in the transcript of the podcast (Makrez). It is important to get names right, especially ones that are less common to the source group. Jack, one of the podcast hosts, described a transfer window as "the period of time when clubs can buy and sell players." The description is perhaps too simplified, and sounds similar to slavery. The transfer window is talking about player contracts, not players themselves, and that difference should be noted. Writers may not see how this type of language can be offensive. The topic of the lesson, the Africa Cup of Nations, was mainly focused on mistakes from African players (Sadio Mane and Mouez Hassen, just called Tunisia goalkeeper in the lesson). African players, then, are portrayed as low quality players who make mistakes. The negative focus of that game was not balanced with positive highlights, either. This is a historically problematic view of African footballers, Africa, and Black people and players more generally. *Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous* Mentions Black Panther, a superhero film about Black culture featuring many Black movie stars. *Podcast 40 – Fair Play* The lesson focuses on being polite, an important part of pragmatics in English - really, and important part of *British* pragmatics. Being polite is culturally central to Britain in particular. Other places that speak English, or people who speak English, do not use as much passive language as the Brits do. It doesn't acknowledge that this custom is cultural; it just takes it as fact for how to speak English. They acknowledge that "it's often important to be polite because you don't want to be rude or to hurt someone's feelings." However, that is not universal; that is a cultural norm. It is also problematic to link fair play and politeness so closely together (e.g. "Vincent Kompany and Paulo Di Canio showed

	examples of politeness on the pitch and it's also important to be polite off the pitch, too"). Fair play and good sportsmanship are integral to the game of football and shows integrity and good character. They are valued all over the world, not specific to a culture. Politeness, on the other hand, is cultural. Being polite in British English, the way it is taught in the lesson, may not be how to be polite in other places. Just like there are different respectful greetings around the world, there are different ways to decline offers or make requests. The way fair play is tied to politeness makes politeness, how it is defined in this lesson (using "could you," etc.) look like the right way to act. It is making politeness a global, moral issue rather than a custom to British English. It is important to know these customs when in the UK, but not necessarily other places. In fact, being too polite might make them easily coerced if they can't say no. For example, one of the learners wrote "'I'm sorry, don't be offended but I'm really not the right person for that sort of job. Still, I am at your disposal, if I may be of any help for other things.'" A more persistent person might get them to do something they don't want to do because they're being *too* polite. *They call it "British politeness" just once, after they explain how to be polite.* One of the comments featured in the podcast was that a learner doesn't watch Ghana's Premier League anymore because the quality decreased. Featuring this comment pushes the EPL forward, telling learners that other leagues are low quality (and they should watch the EPL only). *Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment* When talking about food, the podcast goes into a conversation about carbon footprints. It describes mussels as having a small carbon footprint, while beef and lamb have a big one. It is environmentally conscious and educational. It talks about being vegetarian or vegan without defining those terms, which are likely important to some people and would want to know the difference. For example, a vegan does not eat cheese while a vegetarian does. That difference could be crucial for someone communicating in English. *Matchweek 23: In the bag*

	The source sticks to news headlines and match recaps, giving a relatively unbiased recap of each game. *Learning Vocabulary: Make* Assumes learners know what collocations are (words that often occur together), maybe not realizing learners don't know metalanguage.
Engagement: Material is fun, engaging, relevant, motivating, maximally reduces learner's affective filter; aesthetically pleasing and inclusive imagery with effective multimedia	*OVERALL: Website easy to navigate, plenty of pictures relevant to content, audio is high quality, links work* *This Week: Champions* Content is engaging and motivating for football fanatics; the material itself has basic writing with some humor and is relevant in football news and vocabulary. It also includes jokes and relevant references. (This is true for all lessons.) This podcast includes a joke about one of the people not being a very good actor ("Rich: I really want to be a Hollywood actor you see. Jack: But Rich isn't quite as good at acting as he thinks he is"). It also uses an example about Covid-19 to define the idiom "to put something on ice," saying our holiday plans are put on ice at the moment. The example is relevant to its audience who are listening in a global pandemic. For football fanatics, there was also a joke about a Liverpool supporter cheering for Chelsea, whose win helped Liverpool. Liverpool fans would rarely support Chelsea, so it was an especially interesting topic to bring up to EPL fans. Portraits: 4 POC, 4 white *Wales Podcast 58* The lesson engages with learners directly, starting off with questions that will be answered later in the lesson. The sneak peek acts as a teaser and works well to engage the audience. The podcast also gives shoutouts to learners who shared their opinions about the best goals of the tournament thus far ("Elghoul from Algeria has gone for West Ham's Dimitri Payet and his free-kick for France against Romania"). They also shout out learners who got the "football phrase" of the week correct from last podcast.

	The podcast is also well-timed, giving a history of Wales when the Welsh team is in the football news. Puns about whales add to the engagement as well. Portraits: 1 POC, 2 white *Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences* The podcast shouts out learner's opinions from their comments on last week's podcast. There is also a response from one of the podcast hosts saying "welcome to Premier Skills English! We are happy to know that you have been listening to us for a long time :)" to a new learner who commented. In the podcast itself, there is a joke about getting detention, which is likely relatable for many users. They also talk about the return of the EPL, and how teams have been performing. The opinions on teams' performances depend on who they support. This kind of banter mirrors that among friends, which is engaging for learners who might be stuck at home, away from their friends. Portraits: 1 POC, 1 white *The Cruyff Turn* The podcast hosts discuss the answers for football phrases of last week, then give the audience a cliffhanger for this week. One of them asks if they should introduce this week's challenge, and the other responds saying "I think that's enough football vocabulary for now." This leads to anticipation in viewers, just as a TV show cuts to a commercial break before a big reveal. Learners who guessed the right football phrase are shouted out, increasing motivation and reward (praise). Learners get an active lesson, getting verbal/written instructions and a video for how to do a Cruyff turn. The lesson is like TPR (Total Physical Response), where learners can show their understanding through following directions. More engaging is the fact that they get a mini football lesson! Learners also add to the football fun as they practice writing instructions in the imperative with linking verbs. Some write directions for Beckham's famous free kick and the "Seal dribble" while others teach their peers how to make couscous or plant a tree. There are pictures, well-defined sections of the website (using colors, spacing, and shapes), links to more content. Audio includes crowd cheering, whistles, and other football crowd sounds. When instructing learners how to do a Cruyff turn, podcast hosts speak slowly so learners can visualize, understand, and perform the action.

	As always, a difficulty level of 1-5 is shown on the side, underneath the leaderboard for points by user/country/team. Portraits: 2 POC, 2 white *Summer Tournaments: Eyes on Africa* The content is focused on blunders: a striker missing an open net and a goalkeeper dropping the ball for an own goal. Those mistakes are rare in high level football and all the more interesting when they do happen. Portraits: 1 white (no focus on individuals of color; multiple photographs of groups of people of color celebrating, but no specific focus on one or a couple people) *Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous* The content is both football-related and a crime mystery, doubly engaging. It also talks about dogs, and has audio of a dog barking, and realistic other sounds (doorbell, etc.). The story itself is interesting and exciting. There is a joke in which Jack says "good boy" and he has to clarify that he's talking to the dog, not the police officer. There is another rivalry joke: "Well, Pickles started pulling at the ribbons. He's a City fan you see, probably didn't like the Chelsea ribbons on the trophy." Learners are given praise for getting the football phrase of the week correct. Includes pictures of dogs and a trophy case with a trophy missing to set the scene for the podcast. It also has well defined sections using colors and spacing so that lessons are broken up piece by piece and don't overwhelm learners with too much input. Portraits: 3 dogs, no people (no complaints) *Podcast 40 – Fair Play* Space is divided into sections and separated based on activities; chart for more polite and less polite phrases; learners do not experience high cognitive load because of the breaking up of space. The podcast hosts tell the results of an opinion poll, which could be motivating for learners because they might feel like their voice is heard. In this case, the podcast describes specifically what 5 learners said, likely to make them feel important. The stories about sportsmanship are feel-good, interesting and engaging.

	Questions evoke opinions and conversations from learners, for example a story about unfair play. Portraits: 0 POC, 3 white (one of the captions was about Kompany's (a POC) sportsmanship, but the picture was of Jurgen Klopp (white) and Kompany's back) *Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment* The material is mouth-watering since it talks about food and ways to describe food. It does not talk about football, but food is still engaging. It also has a funny picture at the top of the screen of a boy making a sour face when eating something. It is interesting to hear about crickets' tastiness and sustainability. Taking a break from football likely helps keep learners engaged. The pictures of of food are also aesthetically appealing. Portraits: 0 POC, 5 white, lots of food *Matchweek 23: In the bag* Podcast hosts announce that they are looking for learners to interview for future lessons. Sections are split between intro, headlines, vocabulary, activities. The content is like that of a newspaper, with headlines full of information about the games. They describe score lines, brief summaries of the game, and how that affected standings. They also name the awards for the week: team, player, and goal. This lesson is chock full of EPL content. For the goal of the week award, the hosts give 3 options and the learners get to decide which is best by voting in the comments. This motivates learners to participate and gives them a voice so they feel heard. Portraits: 7 POC, 4 white *Learning Vocabulary: Make* Podcast starts off with a funny role play about Jack sending Rich spam email. Podcast host gives examples of his students struggling, maybe giving examples to help students feel better/reducing affective filter. Learners requested more jokes, and Jack tells a pretty bad one. Jack and Rich make a crossword and solve it out loud as they go. Their conversation is funny and not at all stressful. There is a secret football word in the crossword, so learners have to complete the activity to guess the secret word (motivating for learners).

	Podcast hosts reduce affective filter: "Thanks for your comment. We're really happy that you enjoy the website. We hope to continue making content that makes you happy :)" Portraits: 0 POC, 1 white (only 2 different images on this lesson, not much visual stimulation)
Learner Autonomy: Gives learner choice, offers both challenges and scaffolding; develops self-evaluation skills	*This Week: Champions* Learners can choose whether to listen to the podcast with or without reading the transcript and vice versa; choose whether to write in the comment function. (This is true for all lessons.) *Wales Podcast 58* Challenge: A link to UK culture section of website offers a challenge, giving more information that learners can choose to explore. A learner comments that Wales has been like whales, calm, gracious and strong. This offers advanced input to other learners, and shows that learners can challenge themselves. Scaffolding: They make jokes about how whales and Wales are homophones, pronounced the same. "Rich: This week we're going to talk about Wales. Jack: We're talking about fish?" A learner asks about difference between prize and award in the comments, and one of the podcasters, Rich, responds. They engage in a discussion thread about the differences, and the learner clarifies what it means and what he has learned. This interaction acts as a model for other learners if they ever need clarification. It also gives an example of self-evaluation. Rich also comments with more wordplay about Wales/whales. *Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences* The podcast throws in a more advanced pun: using "not at all" as "you're welcome" after they talk about "not at all" as a comparative phrase to talk about differences. The pun doesn't impede beginner learners' understanding, but challenges more experienced learners. The transcript is as follows: "Rich: Jack's nothing like his brother. He's much better looking. Jack: Thanks, Rich. Rich: Not at all." Scaffolding: The podcast hosts ask questions before they perform role plays, then answer those questions after. This allows a challenge for users who want to answer the questions on their own, but does not

	impede understanding for beginners because the podcasters also answer the question. *The Cruyff Turn* Learners can choose whether to guess the football phrase and/or answer any or all the prompts. Learners can also choose to do any of the supplemental activities, and even vote on the best European football player of all time. There is also additional challenge: a link to a video and short article about Johann Cruyff and the Cruyff turn. *Summer Tournaments: Eyes on Africa* They offer the Premier League website as a resource that has examples of "done deals," a vocabulary phrase for the week. Learners can choose to search the website for trade deals, which might reinforce their idea of a "done deal" and receive benefits of incidental learning. *Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous* Challenge: The lesson links to a FIFA story about a dog who found the stolen World Cup trophy in 1966. They also link to the learn English website for more practice with the past continuous. Challenge: As always, learners can choose to do the additional activities. Scaffolding: There are multiple examples and uses of the past continuous. Scaffolding: A learner guesses the football phrase "group state" when the answer is "group stage." The podcast host comments saying the learner is close and it might be a spelling mistake. *Podcast 40 – Fair Play* They offer a link to British politeness content and activities. The podcast hosts remind learners that they can comment and write "correct me" at the beginning so they get more help and practice with their English; one learner does this and it leads to a productive feedback conversation There is also a link to an English learning page with more activities. *Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment* The podcast starts with a "quiz," a mini guessing game where the podcast host describes a food and learners can guess what it is. The clues are given at the beginning of the podcast and revealed next

	lesson. Learners who want a challenge can guess the foods, but learners who need more scaffolding can simply wait for the answers. Scaffolding: The roleplay is preceded by a quick summary so students can activate their schemata before diving in. Scaffolding: the podcast host give a clue for the phrase of the week after learners guess a couple times, acknowledging its difficulty and helping learners out *Matchweek 23: In the bag* Challenge: Podcast hosts remind listeners that they have a weekly podcast that teaches more football phrases. Learners can look at this resource to get more practice. Scaffolding: use vocabulary, explicitly define vocabulary and give examples, then summarize new words and phrases again. The repetition gets the words and phrases into the heads of learners. Scaffolding/self-eval: The podcast hosts also offer the PSE email for questions, concerns, comments about the podcast or English. Challenge: One of the podcast hosts commented on a learner who described two goals as "a gracious brace." The host responded with more high-level language to challenge the learner: "I love the phrase - a gracious brace. It's beautifully sibilant and very apt." *Learning Vocabulary: Make* As Jack and Rich make their crossword, learners can guess the answers along with them. They say the clue and the number of letters, allowing learners to guess without seeing the crossword visually. The crossword is also available as a file to download off the website. Scaffolding: summarizing lesson by repeating what was just explained helps with memory.
World English: Perspectives include more than typically used (southern English) accents; learners see English as a global language	*This Week: Champions* Learners see comments from people all over the world, but learners only hear input that is a typically southern English accent. (This is true for all lessons.) Podcast speakers are male and female voices. (This is the only podcast that includes a female voice.) *Wales Podcast 58*

	In this case, there are only men talking, and they talk extensively about Britain. (Although, they are part of the British Council, and it is no secret they want people to know about Britain.) They make English seem international, calling out learners from Tunisia, Ghana, Pakistan, Ukraine and Montenegro. They also show an image of a Belgian fan with a "save the w(h)ales" sign, showing English being used by a Belgian. They talk about multilingualism, specifically that 20% of people in Wales are bilingual in Welsh and English. *Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences* The podcast hosts shoutout learners from Turkey, Japan, Sudan, Mexico, Kazakhstan, Zimbabwe, Vietnam, Italy, Hungary, Algeria, China, Argentina, and Ukraine. *The Cruyff Turn* Learners shouted out in the podcast were from Algeria, UAE, Ukraine, and Pakistan. However, voices are only male English accents. One of the prompts is asking who the best players are from each continent and from each learner's country. The comments section is full of answers, giving attention to footballers around the world. Although those footballers may or may not speak English, PSE is using their platform to give attention to players all over the world. The scope is outside Britain itself. The main image for the lesson on the Cruyff turn is a photograph of Harry Kane scoring a goal for England. Although that piece of news is in the lesson, most of the lesson was about the Dutch Johann Cruyff. Instead of using a photo of England's victorious goal, they could have chosen a more representative photo of Cruyff or the turn. *Summer Tournaments: Eyes on Africa* Discuss Africa Cup of Nations, African players and their connection to the EPL. The British Council is using their platform to give space to people from Africa, not limiting their focus to just the UK. *Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous* The podcast shouts out learners from Spain, Sudan, China, Ukraine, Serbia, and Ghana. *Podcast 40 – Fair Play*

	The politeness is specific to Britain and may not be as relevant to people speaking English in other areas. It would be relevant to non-native, non-British speakers of English only because they were taught to use English in this way. The lesson does not point out that this is a custom important to Brits, and that the culture might be different in other places where English is spoken. It explains British culture as the way English is spoken, not taking into account English as an international language. Mentions responses by learners from UAE, Montenegro, Ghana, Turkey, and Algeria. One of the comments was "Aragorn1986 from Montenegro says that the most important event is the World Cup because it brings people from different nationalities together." It is expressing the theme of togetherness, belonging, and inclusion. Learners from around the world agree that fair play is more important than winning which is a nice thought. *Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment* In the guessing game, the podcast host gives examples of food from Hungary, Mexico, Spain, Austria and Denmark. Shouts out learner from Ukraine who got the football phrase right last week. When talking about being polite, the content is central to British manners; the podcast does not clarify this. It describes the manners as if they are central to English as a language, not the UK. *Matchweek 23: In the bag* Podcast hosts are looking for learners to interview for the website, which would offer more voices from more places, increasing representation and showing English as an international language. After one of the podcast hosts predicts a very unlikely scoreline, a learner says in Argentina they call it a "batacazo." There is then a discussion with the podcast host and other learners about what that could translate to in English, or whether that word could be adopted in English. It shows that words can be adopted from other languages, and that language is changing. It also shows that learners recognize this and might view English as more of an international language. *Learning Vocabulary: Make* Shout out learners from Ukraine, China, Japan, Ghana, Algeria, Serbia, Vietnam, and Sudan.

Curriculum: Supports curriculum learning so learner knows their progress, experiences interaction, and engages with feedback	*This Week: Champions* Participants can try example fill-in-the-blank questions and receive feedback in the next podcast a week later; participants can discuss their opinions in the chat provided. The makers of the podcast occasionally comment on learners' posts. Users' guesses are replaced with asterisks when their answer is correct so they cannot spoil the fun for others. Learners have explicit teaching of idioms and vocabulary words in the podcast, with an additional review of those terms at the end. There is a big emphasis on idioms with the word "ice" in them, which might not be the most important of language/vocabulary lessons. Nonetheless, participants can guess the fill-in-the-blank questions for the idioms in the comments section. Besides occasional grammar correction, there is little interaction among users. *Wales Podcast 58* Participants have the option of writing "correct me" at the end of their comment, and feedback is given. The admin also comments on users' posts, both when asked a question and just for fun. His posts elaborate on jokes, discussing the homophones of "Wales" and "whales" which are helpful for learners' pronunciation. The lesson is supplemented with a vocabulary matching activity and a reading comprehension check in form of true/false questions about Wales. The prompts for discussion in the comments are a mix of opinion and summarizing facts. In the comments, one learner responds to another learner's comment about wool jumpers, expressing how hot those would be to wear right now in summer. An admin also offers more info on Wales towns and an EPL player who has been spotted there. *Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences* The podcast addresses that knowing language for similarities and differences would be useful for an exam. They use the example that similarities and differences might be used to compare and contrast photos during an English exam. "You're often shown photos in English exams and have to compare and contrast. This podcast will help you with some of the language to do this." The language focus in this lesson is more intense than others. The lesson includes a vocabulary flashcard activity, a gap fill activity using vocabulary from the role play, and a quiz. It also explicitly talks about

	quantifiers and comparative words and phrases: “as + adj + as” structure and “really/totally/completely/very + different from” structure. The language for similarities, small differences, and big differences is explicitly bolded. The prompts for discussion in the comments include similarities and differences, opinion, and narrative writing. *The Cruyff Turn* Podcast hosts point out the language they used specifically for instructions, talk about what an imperative verb is (“infinitive without ‘to’”). They also talk about connecting phrases like “‘next,’ ‘then,’ ‘after this’” that are used to link instructions together. The lesson overall teaches two different grammar points, but does so naturally. Learners not only learn two separate pieces of grammar, they know how to use them and have heard them in a context that is familiar to them (learning football moves). Prompts include opinion, facts, and writing a set of instructions for learning to do a task. Other activities include a quiz, a gap-fill task, and a matching activity. *Summer Tournaments: Eyes on Africa* There is explicit vocabulary teaching in the words and phrases “to have the final say, a blunder, an open goal, transfer window, hotting up and done deal.” Besides vocabulary, there is no other explicit lesson taught. Prompts are limited to opinion questions and there are no supplementary activities. *Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous* Names of dogs are not capitalized which could be confusing since they are common words (“fluffy” and “pickles”). The grammar focuses on the past continuous, which is explicitly stated in the beginning of the lesson. It clarifies when to use the continuous using examples and explanations, and by referencing when it was just used in the podcast. The podcast hosts anticipate questions that learners might have by asking them themselves (“What do you mean when you say long?”). They also explicitly state the form of the past continuous: “the verb to be (was/were) + verb in -ing form.” Activities include matching, past continuous vs past simple identification, and a quiz.

	The prompts for the discussion include using the past continuous and past simple to describe the other examples of interruption mentioned in the podcast. Learners post comments, offering more examples to other learners. *Podcast 40 – Fair Play* Additional practice includes matching, an activity for selecting the polite phrase, and a quiz. Discussion prompts include expressing opinions and writing an example of rejection. Vocabulary is explicitly defined, and examples are given. They first use the phrases in context of EPL news, then explicitly define them and give more examples. A learner asks the podcast host to correct him, and he receives feedback and an exemplar paragraph. The learner thanks the podcast host, showing an example for other learners for how to interact with the hosts/receive feedback. *Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment* Many adjectives about food are defined, with examples. Content about food is extended to environmental terms like carbon footprint; learners are learning more than just English content. There is a matching activity and a quiz, and prompts include opinions using the present perfect, conditional, and future tenses. Descriptions for taste, consistency, and evaluation of food are described explicitly in a separate section. *Matchweek 23: In the bag* The vocabulary explicitly taught was "to be in the bag, to pour cold water on something, to be on loan, to turn a game on its head, to be coasting and fightback." These words and phrases were bolded in the headlines section. In addition to clarifying their meaning in the podcast, they also wrote out explanations for each word/phrase. The prompts are football heavy, asking learners if they agree with the choices for player, team, and goal of the week. They also ask if learners can use the vocabulary phrases/words in a sentence. The content is directly football-related or explicitly English vocabulary practice. In the podcast, they clarify the pronunciation of Shrewsbury. *Learning Vocabulary: Make* Explains that other languages have "make" and "do" as the same word so it can be difficult for people to use them in English.

	After giving examples of “make ____” in the first section of the podcast, the hosts describe different ways “make” can be used. While they describe how it’s used, they give many examples. Explain that using make isn’t always straightforward. They summarize the uses of make after they explain them for repetition. Give tips for learning idioms (in use in a conversation). Other activities include 2 matching games, a quiz, and a crossword. Prompts for discussion include talking about oneself and using phrases with “make.” Podcast hosts reply to learners who got the right answer saying “well done.”
Other Observations	Gender representation: Female voices were mostly missing from the lessons. There were a couple female learners who commented, and one lesson with a female podcast host, but mostly they were missing. Professionalism: There were spelling and capitalization mistakes throughout the podcasts (some names not capitalized, listed above) which makes the lesson more confusing and less professional. There were also issues with matching the transcript text with the audio. Although the meaning stayed the same, there were a couple instances where the audio was different from the transcript. This also makes learning more difficult for no reason other than the resource being careless.

Figure 6. Frequency Count of Academic Word List Words in English Premier Skills Corpus

AWL Word	Frequency Count
Affect	1
Aggregate	1
Analyse	2
Appropriate	1
Area	6
Assist	2
Available	1
Aware	2
Capacity	1
Challenge	6
Chapter	2
Clause	2

Colleague	1
Comment	41
Communicate	8
Community	2
Concentrate	3
Contact	4
Context	44
Contract	1
Contrast	2
Couple	21
Create	13
Despite	1
Display	1
Domestic	1
Energy	4
Environment	30
Error	1
Expand	1
Expert	1
Fee	1
Final	60
Finance	1
Flexible	1
Focus	71
Function	1
Gender	3
Globe	1
Goal	78
Highlight	1
Impact	2
Indicate	2
Individual	4
Instance	9
Involve	2
Item	1
Job	6
Link	30
Major	2

Mature	1
Media	1
Medical	2
Minimum	1
Neutral	6
Normal	4
Objective	1
Obvious	3
Option	2
Paragraph	14
Parallel	1
Passive	3
Period	1
Physical	1
Plus	5
Positive	2
Potential	3
Predict	4
Previous	14
Professional	7
Project	2
Promote	2
Publish	1
React	1
Region	2
Relevant	1
Rely	1
Respond	7
Reverse	1
Revise	3
Section	118
Series	2
Similar	10
Site	1
Specific	14
Strategy	1
Stress	1
Structure	7

Style	2
Substitute	2
Sum	1
Summary	1
Target	3
Task	1
Team	149
Technique	4
Technology	1
Text	1
Topic	33
Tradition	4
Transfer	21
Transport	6
Vehicle	2
Version	3
Whereas	1

Example of Text from PSE Corpus

Group Nouns - 16/17 ep.23

In this week's Premier Skills English podcast, Rich and Jack talk about the latest news from the Premier League and a fantastic performance from Harry Kane. The language focus this week is on collective nouns and a tricky little question we often receive from listeners: when we are writing or speaking about football teams, do we use singular or plural verbs? We also have a new football phrase for you to guess and a Premier League prediction for you to make. Enjoy!

Welcome

Rich: Hello my name’s Rich

Jack: and I’m Jack

Rich: and welcome to this week’s Premier Skills English podcast

Jack: Where we talk about football and help you with your English.

Jack: What’s happening this week Rich?

Rich: In this week’s show, we’re going to talk about all the latest news from the Premier League and talk about a problem that our listeners often have when talking about football teams: do we

say Arsenal is or Arsenal are? Is it correct to use the singular or the plural form when talking about football clubs?

Jack: Ah yes, the Premier League was back after a short break last weekend. You've been on a short break, too, Rich. How were your holidays in New Zealand?

Rich: Fantastic Jack. Lots of firsts for me. My first volcano, first rainforest, first glacier and first swim in the Pacific Ocean.

Jack: Sounds wonderful. I'm a bit jealous. We've had lots of wind, rain and snow in the UK in the last week or so. And it's been freezing.

Rich: Yes, I've been very happy with sunshine and 25 degrees every day. Do you want to see the photos?

Jack: No, you can stop now - it's too much. What else is happening in this week's podcast.

Rich: As always, we have a new football phrase for you to guess and a Premier League prediction for you to make - we will have all of that later, but let's start with this week's headlines.

Headlines

Rich: Chelsea thump Champions 3-0

Jack: Chelsea dropped Diego Costa but still easily beat the Premier League Champions. Two goals from Marcos Alonso and another from Pedro kept the Blues flying high at the top of the Premier League table.

Rich: A happy week for Harry Kane!

Jack: Harry Kane celebrated the birth of his first child in style. A hat-trick against West Brom lifted Spurs into second place in the Premier League table.

Rich: The Toffees stun Manchester City!

Jack: Everton beat Manchester City 4-0 in the surprise result of the weekend. Pep Guardiola now says that City are out of the title race.

Rich: An exciting week in the Premier LEague title race. Guardiola says City are out of the race but I'm not so sure.

Jack: There is still a long way to go. I think there will be lots of twists and turns yet.

Rich: We looked at cliches in last week's podcast, Jack!

Player of the Week

Jack: Another weekend full of excellent performances in the Premier League.

Rich: Chelsea's Marcos Alonso had a great game for Chelsea. Two goals for a defender is brilliant. Everton's Tom Davies in just his second Premier League start was involved in three goals as

Everton beat Man City 4-0, and West Ham's Andy Carroll scored a sensational goal against Crystal Palace.

Jack: But our player of the week, this week is Tottenham's Harry Kane - his hat-trick against West Brom was fantastic.

Rich: He could have had more. Kane had a total of 11 shots in the match and it is looking like Spurs might be the biggest challengers to Chelsea at the top of the Premier League this season.

Language/Topic Focus:

Jack: In this week's podcast, we're going to take a look at a question we are often asked on Premier Skills English.

Rich: When we write about football teams do we use singular or plural verbs? Well, it's not always clear. Let's take a look at two sentences.

Jack: The first sentence is 'Liverpool are now in third place in the Premier League table.'

Rich: The second sentence is 'Manchester Utd has found it difficult to match the level of success it had when Alex Ferguson was manager.'

Jack: The first sentence is taken from the BBC sport website and the second sentence is taken from the FInancial Times a newspaper about business and finance.

Rich: In the first sentence, a plural is used - the BBC website says 'Liverpool are' and in the second sentence the singular is used - 'Manchester Utd has' not 'Manchester Utd have'

Jack: But they are both talking about football teams. How can both be correct?

Rich: Well, Jack, I think the second example is talking more about the club as a whole. The writer is thinking about one club or one team, 'Manchester United has found it difficult.' The writer discussing Liverpool is thinking more about the players who make up the team, and they, of course, are more than one. 'Liverpool are now in third place.' 'The players are now in third place. He or she could also be including the coach and the manager and maybe even the fans.That's a lot of individuals.

Jack: So, can I, if I want, change the examples and say "Liverpool is" and "Manchester Utd have"?

Rich: Yes, it's a question of whether you as a speaker or writer want to emphasize the individuals in the team or club, or talk about the team as a unit. A team of players, use plural; one team or club, use singular.

Jack Okay, I like having a choice. But is it the same in American English?

Rich: Well, it depends and this is a very general piece of advice, but in Britain, we tend to prefer the plural; 'Liverpool are' and the States tend to prefer the singular; 'Manchester United has'.

Jack: In the podcast and across the Premier Skills English website, you will usually see the plural 'Liverpool are' as both Jack and I are British.

Rich: It's a difficult one, but it is more common to hear and see singular team names like Arsenal and Chelsea being used with plural verbs. Try typing "Chelsea have won" and then "Chelsea has won" into Google and look at the number of search results. There is a very big difference.

Jack: And, it's not only football teams. You may also see companies, music groups and political parties being used with plural verbs.

Rich: On the podcast page, we have more information about collective nouns and some activities for you to practise using these types of words.

Can you work out this week's football phrase?

Rich: Have you got a football phrase for us this week?

Jack: Yes, I have, but first, last week's football phrase. The phrase was replay. If there is a draw in some cup competitions like the FA Cup the match is played again - at the away team's stadium. In the past, there were lots of replays but these days if the teams are drawing at the end of the replay there is a penalty shootout.

Rich: Did you know that Burnley and Chelsea once had to play a match 5 times before Chelsea finally won!

Jack: Burnley must have been gutted!

Rich: Nice word. I hear football players using that a lot in interviews. It means very, very disappointed.

Jack: Well done to Kwesimanifest from Ghana, Ghigo from Italy, Elghoul from Algeria, Aragorn1986 from Montenegro, Emir from Bosnia, Liubomyr and Alex from Ukraine, Aleksandr from Uzbekistan and Shobonenok from Russia. Well done to all of you?

Jack: Actually Rich can you have a go at Shobonenok's nickname. Last week, he said that you didn't get it quite right.

Rich: Well done to Shobonenok from Russia. Let me know if I'm closer to the correct pronunciation, this week! What's this week's phrase, Jack?

Jack: It's a word again this time. The word is *********. It's a word you might hear in the next few week's because the weather is bad. If it snows too much or a pitch is frozen a match can be ********* and played on a later date.

Rich: Sometimes a match is also ********* because of fixture clashes like a league match with a cup final on the same day.

Premier League Prediction

Rich: Last week's prediction was Manchester Utd and Liverpool and I have mixed feelings. I'm very happy that I got the correct score and result but I was gutted when Ibrahimovic equalised with just 6 minutes left.

Jack: Still, not a bad result at Old Trafford. I thought United would win and so did our listeners. So, 3 points for you Rich - that takes you back to the top of the prediction league on 12 points.

Rich: A small consolation, Jack.

Jack: Which match are you talking about this week?

Rich: This weekend, Manchester City are at home to Spurs. Last week, Pep Guardiola said that City's title chances are over. Well, they might be if they lose this one, too. Spurs are in great form and are up to second place. I think City will bounce back from their 4-0 defeat at Everton and surprise Spurs. Final score: Manchester City 2-1 Tottenham Hotspur

Jack: Spurs are just too good right now. I think it will finish 3-1 to Tottenham.

RIch: Right, that's all we have time for this week.

Jack: Don't forget to write your answers to our questions and make a guess at our football phrase in the comments below. And remember to make your Premier League prediction in the vote.

Rich: Bye for now and enjoy your football!

Vocabulary

In the podcast, Rich and Jack used some words and phrases that might be new for you. You can see two examples here:

Chelsea dropped Diego Costa from their team.

I was gutted when Ibrahimovic equalised with just six minutes left.

There were a few more tricky words in the podcast. Can you remember all of them? Try the activity below, then, listen to the podcast again to hear how we used the words in context. This can really help with understanding.

Chelsea defender, Marcos Alonso, scored twice for Chelsea against Leicester.

Language - Collective Nouns

In this week's podcast, Jack and Rich spoke about whether football team names use a plural or singular verb. They said that a football team name can be used as either a singular or plural noun depending on the context. A football team is a group noun or collective noun and there are lots of other examples of these types of nouns. Take a look at the examples below:

- army
- family
- group
- team
- class

These types of nouns can be used in either the singular or plural form. Take a look at these examples:

The government is very unpopular.

The government are always chamging their minds about things.

My family are at home waiting for me.

My family is very important to me.

If you want to learn more about these types of nouns, take a look at our grammar pages on the LearnEnglish website.

Language - Collective Nouns

In the Premier League, all football teams are singular in form (Arsenal, Manchester Utd, Chelsea) but, in British English, we use a plural form when we are referring to the football team and their actions. For example:

Arsenal are on the attack.

Chelsea have won again.

When we are talking about a Premier League club as an institution or a business, we may sometimes see the singular form used and, in American English, the singular form is also used to refer to the team on the pitch.

What do you think?

In this week’s podcast, Jack and Rich spoke about which verb forms we use to speak and write about football teams.

1. Do you say 'Arsenal is.....' or 'Arsenal are.....'? After listening to this podcast, have you changed what you say?

2. Pep Guardiola says that Manchester City are out of the Premier League title race. Do you agree with him?

3. Rich says that Tottenham are the main challengers to Chelsea. What do you think?

Remember to write your guess at this week's football phrase and the questions above in the comments section below.

If you want us to correct your English, just write 'correct me' at the beginning of your comment.

Line-by-line Coding Example: Credibility

This Week: Champions	
This page has a Western bias, naming events in history central to British and Western history. It does not acknowledge this bias.	Western, British Unchecked bias
In the discussion of Liverpool's winning the Premier League after 30 years, the PSE makes references to how life was 30 years earlier. The two references were the Berlin wall and the Internet. PSE assumes a Western audience as it references East and West Germany and the start of the world wide web. It assumes the audience has had a Western account of education on the Berlin wall and World War II. Much of the audience could have focused their education on the Eastern front, Asia, Africa, the Mediterranean and Middle East, etc. instead of the Western front. It also assumes the audience is made of older learners who might have lived through those events for them to be relevant timestamps in history. It could be argued that PSE is part of the British council, and it may be sharing part of history that is important to Britain, and part of the culture connected to the English language. However, the reference could have been more neutral. For example, they could note which footballer was a star back then, or how old a current footballer was (e.g. only 3 of the current squad were even born the last time Liverpool won the top league).	History reference Assumes Western audience Western Education Berlin wall Only discuss west Assumes older Relevance PSE and Brit Council Brit culture missed opp neutral ref Alternate netural ref
Wales Podcast 58	
The lesson on Wales discusses its history and culture, saying Welsh is a Celtic language. The source assumes learners know what Celts/Celtic	Welsh culture Assume celtic common

culture is. Celtic culture is generally unique to Britain and Europe, and excludes learners who do not have that knowledge. It is also a missed opportunity to relate the term to Celtic FC, a professional football team in the Scottish Premier League. Although they are not part of the EPL, it would be an appropriate reference to begin with for football fans. The history lesson talks further about Angles and Saxons, assuming learners have knowledge of those peoples. The context does not greatly help to deduce the meaning of the words, and learners might be unnecessarily confused.	Limited to europe Missed opp Relate to what learners know Missed appropriate ref Assume knowledge Context no help
Learning Vocabulary: Similarities and Differences They refer to Zoom fans on the big screen, expecting learners to know what Zoom (the video chat platform) is. In talking about differences in football since the restart, they note the Black Lives Matter jerseys and a minute of silence for victims of COVID-19.	Assume knowledge Note BLM Note COVID
They do not go into detail about Black Lives Matter in the podcast, but they do engage with the topic in the comments. There is a dialogue between the podcast host and a learner about the problematic nature of All Lives Matter and how that silences the discussion of racism. It is a productive discussion that ends with the learner saying they now understand the movement. The podcast host's comment is as follows:	No BLM detail BLM in comments Discourse about BLM Acknowledges silencing Ends with understanding Stand with BLM

“News and images around the Black Lives Matter movement and protests is something we have included in recent podcasts as the Premier League, its clubs and individual players have shown their support for the movement and its fight against the unequal treatment of Black people. The Black Lives Matter movement in no way suggests that black lives matter more than any other life. It's not necessary to say that all lives matter. That is obvious. What, unfortunately, isn't obvious, is the need to say that black lives are of equal importance to other lives which is what this movement represents. At first glance, the term 'all lives matter' seems harmless and logical. However, by using the term 'all lives matter' we are undermining the Black Lives Matter movement and the need to fight against racism. The term 'all lives matter' while not racist in itself is being used by racists and with racist intent to prevent people from talking about equality and justice. This is what the Black Lives Matter movement is fighting for and which is sadly lacking in so many places in today's world.” “Thank you for your answer message. Now i know this movement.”	Support movement Acknowledge unequal treatment Black lives matter =/ more Obvious: all matter Black lives need spotlight ALM okay at first glance ALM undermines B fight Fight against racism ALM racist intent Prevent discussion Equality is lacking Learner understanding
The Cruyff Turn The podcast hosts describe awareness as knowing what is around you on the pitch, and go on to explain other uses of awareness. Their example is environmental awareness, “things like recycling and reducing the amount of things we use” which they describe as important.	Define awareness Multiple definitions Environmental awareness Environment = important Hosts do their hw Common word not in dict

The podcast hosts do their research on the words they are describing. One word, run-in, the host says does not occur in dictionaries but is popular in newspaper articles. “You often hear the ‘title run-in’ or just the ‘run-in’. It’s informal because I couldn’t find it in a dictionary but if you google it it’s used by a lot of newspapers.” He uses “google” as a verb, something that might be natural for British speakers but not for speakers around the world. Although it is a verb (as of 2006) Web search might be a more neutral phrase. Using “google” shows preference for that specific search engine.	Hosts know common wrds Host did hw Google as verb Unnatural for NNS Missed opp neutral term Show pref for google
Summer Tournaments: Eyes on Africa The name of an African footballer, Riyad Mahrez, is misspelled in the transcript of the podcast (Makrez). It is important to get names right, especially ones that are less common to the source group. Jack, one of the podcast hosts, described a transfer window as “the period of time when clubs can buy and sell players.” The description is perhaps too simplified, and sounds similar to slavery. The transfer window is talking about player contracts, not players themselves, and that difference should be noted. Writers may not see how this type of language can be offensive. The topic of the lesson, the Africa Cup of Nations, was mainly focused on mistakes from African players (Sadio Mane and Mouez Hassen, just called Tunisia goalkeeper in the lesson). African players, then, are portrayed as	Misspelled African name Important names spelled Rare names Transfer window def Buying/selling people Sounds like slavery Don’t clarify meaning Source overlook offense Africa Cup of Nations Mistakes by African plyrs Af player = unnamed Negative portrayal No balance with positive Negative portrayal

low quality players who make mistakes. The negative focus of that game was not balanced with positive highlights, either. This is a historically problematic view of African footballers, Africa, and Black people and players more generally.	Mentions Black made film
	Black movie stars
Understanding Grammar: The Past Continuous	
Mentions Black Panther, a superhero film about Black culture featuring many Black movie stars.	Politeness
	British pragmatics
Podcast 40 – Fair Play	Central to Britain
The lesson focuses on being polite, an important part of pragmatics in English - really, and important part of *British* pragmatics. Being polite is culturally central to Britain in particular. Other places that speak English, or people who speak English, do not use as much passive language as the Brits do. It doesn't acknowledge that this custom is cultural; it just takes it as fact for how to speak English. They acknowledge that "it's often important to be polite because you don't want to be rude or to hurt someone's feelings." However, that is not universal; that is a cultural norm.	Others not as polite
	Doesn't clarify cultural
	Not central to all English
	Avoid rudeness
	Brit culture as universal
	Link fair play and polite
	Players were polite
	Polite on and off pitch
	Sportsmanship important
It is also problematic to link fair play and politeness so closely together (e.g. "Vincent Kompany and Paulo Di Canio showed examples of politeness on the pitch and it's also important to be polite off the pitch, too"). Fair play and good sportsmanship are integral to the game of football and	Valued everywhere
	Politeness cultural
	Politeness differs
	Politeness and greetings

shows integrity and good character. They are valued all over the world, not specific to a culture. Politeness, on the other hand, is cultural. Being polite in British English, the way it is taught in the lesson, may not be how to be polite in other places. Just like there are different respectful greetings around the world, there are different ways to decline offers or make requests. The way fair play is tied to politeness makes politeness, how it is defined in this lesson (using "could you," etc.) look like the right way to act. It is making politeness a global, moral issue rather than a custom to British English. It is important to know these customs when in the UK, but not necessarily other places. In fact, being too polite might make them easily coerced if they can't say no. For example, one of the learners wrote "'I'm sorry, don't be offended but I'm really not the right person for that sort of job. Still, I am at your disposal, if I may be of any help for other things.'" A more persistent person might get them to do something they don't want to do because they're being *too* polite. *They call it "British politeness" just once, after they explain how to be polite.* One of the comments featured in the podcast was that a learner doesn't watch Ghana's Premier League anymore because the quality decreased. Featuring this comment pushes the EPL forward, telling learners that other leagues are low quality (and they should watch the EPL only). *Learning Vocabulary: Food and the Environment*	Dif ways to interact Fair play tied to polite Lesson = only right way Politeness is a custom Important to source (UK) Risk of coercion Learner example Not right person Help another way Risk of too polite Once call custom British Featured comment Ghana EPL low qual Promotes EPL Promotes EPL Talk about food Carbon footprint Environmental conscious

When talking about food, the podcast goes into a conversation about carbon footprints. It describes mussels as having a small carbon footprint, while beef and lamb have a big one. It is environmentally conscious and educational. It talks about being vegetarian or vegan without defining those terms, which are likely important to some people and would want to know the difference. For example, a vegan does not eat cheese while a vegetarian does. That difference could be crucial for someone communicating in English. *Matchweek 23: In the bag* The source sticks to news headlines and match recaps, giving a relatively unbiased recap of each game. *Learning Vocabulary: Make* Assumes learners know what collocations are (words that often occur together), maybe not realizing learners don't know metalanguage.	Doesn't define terms Dif important Dif btw vegan/vegetarian Crucial dif News headlines Unbiased recap of games Assume metalanguage

Themes: British and Western-centric/promoting British things, missed opportunities for references relevant to learners or defining relevant terms; assumptions about learners' backgrounds and background knowledge; Black Lives Matter and environment addressed; social justice overlooked/glanced upon but not really addressed; promotes EPL at the expense of struggling league

British-centric/promotes brit things, Missed opportunity for reference; Assumptions about learner background, knowledge; social justice positive; social justice negative

Western, British

Unchecked bias

History reference

Assumes Western audience

Western Education

Berlin wall

Only discuss west

Assumes older

Relevance

PSE and Brit Council

Brit culture

missed opp neutral ref

Alternate netural ref

Welsh culture

Assume celtic common

Limited to europe

Missed opp

Relate to what learners know

Missed appropriate ref

Assume knowledge

Context no help

Assume knowledge

Note BLM

Note COVID

No BLM detail

BLM in comments

Discourse about BLM

Acknowledges silencing

Ends with understanding

Stand with BLM

Support movement

Acknowledge unequal treatment

Black lives matter =/ more

Obvious: all matter

Black lives need spotlight

ALM okay at first glance

ALM undermines B fight

Fight against racism

ALM racist intent

Prevent discussion

Equality is lacking

Learner understanding

Define awareness

Multiple definitions

Environmental awareness

Environment = important

Hosts do their hw

Common word not in dict

Hosts know common wrds

Host did hw

Google as verb

Unnatural for NNS

Missed opp neutral term

Show pref for google

Misspelled African name

Important names spelled

Rare names

Transfer window def

Buying/selling people

Sounds like slavery

Don't clarify meaning

Source overlook offense

Africa Cup of Nations

Mistakes by African plyrs

Af player = unnamed

Negative portrayal

No balance with positive

Negative portrayal

Mentions Black made film

Black movie stars

Politeness

British pragmatics

Central to Britain

Others not as polite

Doesn't clarify cultural

Not central to all English

Avoid rudeness

Brit culture as universal

Link fair play and polite

Players were polite

Polite on and off pitch

Sportsmanship important

Valued everywhere

Politeness cultural

Politeness differs

Politeness and greetings

Dif ways to interact

Fair play tied to polite

Lesson = only right way

Politeness is a custom

Important to source (UK)

Risk of coercion

Learner example

Not right person

Help another way

Risk of too polite

Once call custom British

Featured comment

Ghana EPL low qual

Promotes EPL

Promotes EPL

Talk about food

Carbon footprint

Environmental conscious

Doesn't define terms

Dif important

Dif btw vegan/vegetarian

Crucial dif

News headlines

Unbiased recap of games

Assume metalanguage