

MODULE 4 ESP Materials Design and Evaluation

Introduction

In Module 4, you will learn about getting materials and resources for teaching ESP. These materials should be authentic. The ESP teacher has the choice of producing fresh materials, or adapting the existing ones to suit his/her purpose. Materials and methodology are significant in the ESP context where they are used as a source of language, motivation and stimulation and reference (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). Materials evaluation and development are complementary. We can get ideas and techniques for our writing from evaluating existing materials. Similarly, writing materials makes us aware of what to look for in the published materials (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The principles underlying EAP methodology are the same as those underlying sound ELT methodology (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Therefore, functional syllabus, communicative and learning-centred approaches, and authenticity in language and materials are all relevant to EAP (Jordan, 1997).

Unit 1	Material Design and Selection
Unit 2	Using Authentic Materials
Unit 3	Material Evaluation

UNIT 1 MATERIAL DESIGN AND SELECTION

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Material Design/Writing
3.2	Criteria for Material Production
3.3	Elements of ESP Materials
3.4	Principles of Good Materials
3.5	Design of Text Activities/Exercises
3.6	Selecting ESP Material
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor- Marked Assignment
7.0	References/further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The role of instructional material in language learning cannot be over-emphasised. These materials include cassettes, videos, CD-ROMs, dictionaries, grammar books, readers, workbooks or photocopied exercises. The ESP practitioner is faced with the problem of whether to use an already designed material in his/her area, to design a new one or to adapt the existing material to suit his purpose. These are what we shall be looking at in this unit. This unit will examine the criteria for producing ESP materials, selecting materials and types of text activities, elements of material design and principles of materials. A detailed discussion of the main characteristics of effective materials is taken up in this unit. The discussion focuses on attracting and sustaining your motivation as learners so as to make you use language for a real purpose confidently and without much anxiety.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- discuss what materials are;
- list the criteria to be considered in the activities of material production;
- list the criteria for material selection;
- state the criteria for selecting appropriate text; and
- give some principles of material production.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

As you go through this unit, you should look at the materials you are reading presently and see areas of similarity and difference between what the unit is saying and the material you are reading. Is this material developed the way this unit suggests?

3.1 Material Design/Writing

Materials refer to anything that is used to facilitate the learning of a language and increase the learners' knowledge and experience of the language. "Materials could obviously be cassettes, videos, CD-ROMs, dictionaries, grammar books, readers, workbooks or photocopied exercises. They could also be newspapers, food packages, photographs, and live talks by invited native speakers, instructions given by a teacher, tasks written on cards or discussions between learners. In other words, they can be anything which is deliberately used to increase the learners' knowledge and/or experience of the language." (Brian Tomlinson, 1998). One of the most important characteristics of ESP is material writing. Material should be intrinsically interesting, should contain enjoyable activities, opportunities to learn, content which both the learner and the teacher can cope with and therefore motivating. Ideally a good textbook should reflect life, not just language. A course should, one would hope, be interesting in its own right — its content stimulating and informative.

The main purpose of a materials syllabus is to breakdown the mass of knowledge to be learnt specified in an evaluation syllabus into manageable units. There are eight criteria for a materials syllabus design, namely, topic syllabus, structural/situational syllabus, functional/notional syllabus, skills syllabus, situational syllabus, functional/task-based syllabus, discourse/skills syllabus and skills and strategies syllabus (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 85). In some syllabuses such as topic syllabus and skills syllabus, a single criterion is at work, while other syllabuses blend two criteria together, such as structural/situational syllabus. This blending of criteria is extended into a multi-layered syllabus concept by McDonough (McDonough, 1998, p.48).

It then seems that the multi-layered syllabus extended from the national skills-oriented syllabus could be the optimal solution to many ways of language and specialty knowledge a ESP course has to handle. So, in addition to those conventional principles for language materials design, special attention should be paid to the following points in selecting texts and designing exercises.

1. Materials should be both content-based and skill-focused.
2. Materials should have their exercises similar to activities at target situations.
3. Materials should provide a stimulus to learning, containing interesting contexts and enjoyable activities.
4. Materials should provide a clear and coherent unit structure which will guide teachers and learners through various activities in such a way as to maximize the chances of learning.

5. Materials should try to create a balanced outlook which reflects the complexity of the task, yet makes it appear manageable.
6. Materials should provide models of correct and appropriate language use.

Materials grading is a seemingly easy yet controversial issue. McDonough (1984, p. 81) classifies the sequencing criteria into two main groups: sequencing according to linguistic criteria subdivided into 'difficulty' or 'complexity', 'frequency', 'length' and 'degree of control'; and ordering according to learning criteria, including 'receptive-productive', 'recognition-organization'.

For most materials, usually an integration of several criteria instead of a single criterion is at work. Possibly, any of the two or more criteria would be combined in a textbook. A frequently occurring feature of ESP materials is that many of them claim every unit can stand alone, so teachers have great freedom to choose those interesting and motivating topics. The progression between units often does not exist to retain a certain degree of flexibility of the material. However, the picture of materials here is somewhat monotonous as exercise types remain the same throughout the book and no criteria have been stated overtly about the selection of the reading passages.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- i. What are materials?
- ii. List about five criteria for material selection.

3.2 Criteria/Principles for Material Production

There are several reasons why you as an author should choose to write a material instead of making do with the existing ones. It is either because it was not available commercially because such a textbook is very specific in a particular area or that the existing materials could not satisfy the learners' special needs, nor could they offer either language or content in depth. An existing textbook should only be selected if it satisfies the learner's needs. In doing the selection, you should consider qualities of a good material:

- Good materials should be designed to help towards the achievement of set objectives characteristic of ESP. Effective materials should make the learners to put in the maximum effort but at the same time make them feel comfortable and confident that they can learn. The following characteristics are discovered to help in making the learners feel more at ease and develop confidence in themselves as language learners.
- Materials with lots of white space are better than crammed pages with a number of activities.

- Materials, both texts and illustrations, related to the learners' culture is better.
- Materials which appear to teach them in a relaxed and supportive tone are better than those which only test them.
- Materials which stimulate and challenge the learner and at the same time make the goal achievable are likely to improve learner confidence.
- Materials which engage the learners in learner-centred discovery activities and require their self-investment make them feel confident and firmly in control.
- Materials which offer feedback about the progress and help the learners check their own understanding make the learners take up the responsibility for their own learning with confidence and personal involvement.
- Materials that also make the learners feel at ease by not compelling them to produce in the target language before they are ready to do so. It should be possible to devise activities where the learners listen to a chunk of language and respond to it, either physically by doing some actions or by drawing sketches. Materials which involve both right and left brain activities and which gets the learners involved emotionally, intellectually and aesthetically would be more effective than the ones which rely too much on controlled practice.
- Materials which take into account that learning process, like the growth of a limb, is gradual and not sudden. So instead of expecting the learners to get it right the first time, materials should provide opportunities for gradual understanding of specific aspects of the target language by recycling items introduced.

To these criteria, Willis (1998b) also adds three principles for materials designers, which are:

Principle 1: Learning is a meaning system:

Halliday (1975) emphasizes that learning a second language involves the acquisition of a new system for realizing familiar meanings. Language does not exist in a vacuum, and it does not develop in a vacuum. It follows that materials we offer learners should allow them to focus on meanings in contexts and then go on to look at the wordings that realize the meanings. This is a major principle behind a task-based approach to course design. In setting tasks for the learners to achieve, your emphasis is first on learners' exchanging meanings to complete the task, using whatever language they can recall. Then they examine the language that fluent speakers or writers used to do the same task and focus on typical words, phrases and patterns (i.e., wordings) that occurred (Willis, 1998a).

Principle 2: Exposure to the target language in use is vital.

To acquire a new language system, learners need exposure to the kinds of language that they will need (Krashen, 1985). It follows then that whatever learners hear and read as part of their course needs to reflect, as far as possible, the typical features of the language of the learners' target discourse communities. The implication for a material designer is that if learners do not know why they are learning English, they need exposure to a broad and varied selection of materials that will encourage them to go on using English. The choice of language data, both recording of spoken language and written texts, is of vital pedagogical importance. Course designers should aim to choose a representative set of target types from accessible real life sources—samples that reflect the typical language features of the genre from the learners' present or future discourse communities. This is a major principle behind corpus-based approaches to language syllabus design and data-driven learning.

Principle 3: Some focus on language form is desirable

Although many people acquire a new language with no formal tuition (through exposure to the target language and opportunities to use it to express their own meanings), there is now some evidence that learners do better if, at some point, their attention is drawn to typical features of the language form (Skehan, 1994). This could be done through consciousness-raising exercises highlighting frequently used items to help learners perceive patterns and by challenging learners to communicate in circumstances where accuracy matters such as in making public presentation.

The question is, why design a material for teaching language? What are materials supposed to do? This brings us to some of the important contents of a good material or the principles which will guide us in the actual writing of materials. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 107), a good material should contain the following:

- (a) Materials provide a stimulus to learning. As said before, good materials should be interesting and should contain enjoyable activities. This will engage the learners' thinking capacities and help them to use their existing knowledge.
- (b) The function of a material is to organize the teaching-learning process, by providing a path through the complex mass of the language to the learner. It should provide a clear and coherent structure, guiding the teacher and the learner through various learning activities.
- (c) The structures should not be monotonous. The units should differ, with varying illustrations, texts, and exercises to arouse the interest of the learners. It should be clear and systematic, but also flexible to allow for creativity and variety.

- (d) Your material should contain your view about the nature of language and learning. A good material should reflect what you think and feel about the learning process. What you think is the learning style of a particular learner will reflect what material you will give him or her. Don't develop or provide texts that are of no interest to anybody.
- (e) Materials should reflect the nature of learning task. If language learning is a complex process, materials should try to create a balance outlook which should reflect this complexity of the task, yet makes it appear manageable.
- (f) Good materials should broaden the teacher's training and introduce him/her to new techniques.
- (g) Materials should provide correct and appropriate language use.

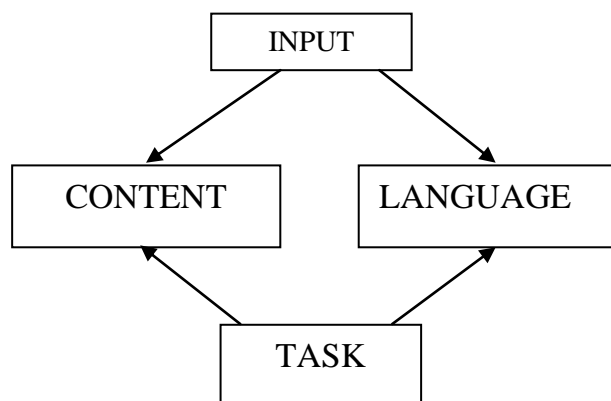
SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- i. What are the principles that should guide you while writing a material for teaching?
- ii. How can they facilitate language learning?
- iii. What are the main characteristics of effective materials?
- iv. How can materials be made suitable for different types of learners?
- v. What are some of the factors of language acquisition that materials producers should keep in mind while producing materials?

3.3 Elements of ESP Materials

In writing ESP material, there is need to provide a model for the integration of the various aspects of learning and at the same time make room for creativity and variety. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 108), the model consists of four elements: input, content focus, language focus and task.

Fig. 8: A Material Design Model



3.3.1 Input

The text, dialogue, video-recording, diagram or any piece of communication forms the input. The input is necessary because it acts as a stimulus for material activities. It provides a new language item, correct models of language use and a topic for communication. Input also provides opportunities for learners to use their information processing skills and their existing knowledge, both of the language and the subject matter. As Brian Tomlinson (1998) asserts, “the input should vary in style, mode, medium and purpose and should be rich in features which are characteristic of authentic discourse in the target language. And if the learners want to be able to use the language for general communication, it is important that they are exposed to planned, semi-planned and unplanned discourse (e.g. a formal lecture, an informal radio interview, and a spontaneous conversation).”

3.3.2 Content Focus

Since language is not an end in itself, the linguistic and non-linguistic content should be exploited for meaningful communication orally or in written form in genuine work settings. Teachers could learn some content knowledge, while learners are expected to learn both skills and language. Therefore, teachers and learners could help each other and learn from each other through the implementation of the course-book.

3.3.3 Language Focus

Materials that you should provide your learners should be that which they have enough knowledge of. Good materials are those that provide the learners with opportunities for analysis and synthesis, that is, learners should be able to take the language to pieces, study how it works and practice putting it back together again.

3.3.4 Task

The concept of 'task' has become an important element in syllabus design, classroom teaching and learner assessment (Nunan, 2006). Nunan defines a task as a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language, while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form. He also emphasizes that the task-based language teaching has strengthened the introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation. Ellis (2006) designs the task-based lesson into three phases: pre-task, during-task and post-task.

Materials can be made suitable to learners with different learning styles and affective attitudes by providing variety through different types of texts and activities to suit different learners, providing extra activities for highly motivated learners and providing activities to sensitize the learners to their own attitudes, feelings and learning styles.

Materials should also provide opportunities for interaction through a variety of tasks like information gap activities and creative writing or speaking activities. Good materials should lead to communicative tasks. It should offer learners the opportunity to use the content and language knowledge they have acquired. The ultimate purpose of language learning is language use.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

- i. Of the four elements in material writing, which is more important? Give reasons for your answer.
- ii. Write briefly on a material design model.

3.4 Design of Text Activities/Exercises

Text is a stretch of language that is organized in some way to form a coherent whole (Morrow, 1977). An authentic text is “a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort.” In other words, it is not a made up text produced by an imaginary speaker or writer for an imaginary audience and designed to practice specific language points rather than to convey real information. In ESP materials, for instance, it is possible to find authentic texts which have originally been produced for some purpose other than language teaching. For example, they may be extracts from ‘real’ articles or books or stretches of spontaneous and unprepared conversation.

Text as a learning material can be used for learning and practising wide range of skills. In ESP course, it can be source for new vocabulary, communicative or reading skills. To work with a text as much effectively as possible, it is necessary to involve all students’ skills. It is preferred to combine working with printed text with listening to audio-cassette or video-cassette, that means, receptive with productive activities.

According to Huang and Xu (2005), to enable students to simulate the real world of work, the following features must be paid enough attention so as to develop skills in creative design.

- 1) Each activity is made up of two or more similar items, arranged to present a more demanding challenge as the activity progresses.

- 2) Activities are combined in a program focusing on the more basic skills, then, on the higher level ones.
- 3) Within a given activity, any particular type of experience is quickly repeated, so that familiarization can be followed by learning and consolidation.
- 4) Reflection on process is encouraged, as a means of improving performance and ability.
- 5) The carrier content must be specialty knowledge, for the progress is regarded as a means to an end, and the product in every activity must be immediately relevant and obviously useful.
- 6) The teaching method is “inter-disciplinary” or content-skill compatibility being concerned with both skills training and the mastery of specialty knowledge.
- 7) Authentic input should be adopted. Content-technical knowledge serves as a context which learners find appealing while the content should not override the teaching of communicative skills in that the ultimate goal is the skills rather than the content, which should mainly be dealt with in subject courses.

Concerning the ESP activities, it is necessary to keep in mind the context that should be consistent with studying subject matter. They include:

- **Warming-up activities** – pre-teaching and activation of new vocabulary or grammar structures, discussing questions concerning the topic. We can use various types of plays, puzzles, collocation grids, questionnaires etc. to increase students’ interests in given topic and lead them into further problems. It is a kind of preparing step. For example, Wallace (1982) considers pre-reading activity very important for students motivation; topic or genre of the text is introduced e.g. with collective discussion or some pictures to be fully motivated (Wallace, 1982, p. 62). I see warming-up activities as a very important and necessary phase on which the next working process depends.
- **Receptive activities** – work with a text itself, reading, listening. We can realize various reading strategies e.g. aloud, quietly, skimming, scanning, with or without translation, informative. They should lead to encouragement of students. We can distinguish language-based approaches (e.g. jigsaw reading, gap-filling) or approaches relating to content of the text. Both of them should aim students to be as much active and reflexive as possible.
- **Productive activities** – practising of acquired knowledge. Work in pairs, in groups or individual with the help of the teacher, who takes notice of using target language. Summarization of lesson that should be done by students; it shows how students understand given topic.

- **Follow-up activities** – next is improving, developing, appropriate using of what has been learnt. We can practise it in a form of creative homework, exercises. Harmer (2001) states that large scale of skills and activities can be developed e.g. drawing characters, making discussion, creating some pictures, dramatic activities etc.

Thus, the principle of skills integration can be explained as the teaching of the language skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking and writing in conjunction with each other instead of separately. For example, a lesson may involve activities that relate listening and speaking to reading, writing and translating. Therefore, five skills all covered do not necessarily guarantee skills integration whose essential lies in the combination of several skills at a time as demanded in real-life. Moreover, other principles of exercises design also apply to material design; referring to exercises, design of vocabulary and design of translation exercises.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

- i. What is the importance of text as a learning material in ESP?
- ii. Describe the four ways of deploying ESP text activities.
- iii. Name about five features that must be paid enough attention so as to develop skills in creative design.

3.5 Selecting Material

Choosing ESP materials determines the running of the course and underlines content of the lesson. Good material helps you as a teacher in organizing the course. It can function as an introduction into the new learning techniques and support for teachers and learners in the process of learning. Materials are also a kind of teacher reflection, “they should truly reflect what you think and feel about the learning process (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 107). They went on to state that the criteria for selecting ESP material should be based on “...How well and how far it develops the competence of the learner, rather than on the basis of the extent to which it mirrors the performance data of the target situation.”

Good material should be based on various interesting texts and activities providing a wide range of skills. Teachers determine which aspects of ESP learning will be focused on but one piece of material can serve for developing more than one skill, e.g. reading, listening, vocabulary etc. “Teaching materials are tools that can be figuratively cut up into component pieces and then rearranged to suit the needs, abilities, and interests of the students in the course” (Graves, 1996: 27).

Since learner involvement is the key to language acquisition, materials should attract the attention of the learners by novelty and attractive presentation. They can arouse the curiosity and interest of the learners by an appealing content and variety. To understand what type of materials would be suitable for a particular group of learners, it is necessary to understand the learners' background and the culture of the country they belong to, their level, interest, and learning style.

Concerning the selection of 'General English' material and 'ESP' material some criteria must be matched as well. The language teacher is responsible for selecting an appropriate text that contributes to students' effectiveness, which means that he or she should pay attention to suitable criteria for its choice. Wallace (1982, p. 91) suggests those main criteria:

- Adequacy - should be at the appropriate language, age level.
- Motivation - should present content which is interesting and motivating for students work. It good for students' effectiveness, interest, and pleasure of work.
- Sequence - it is important to have some relation to previous texts, activities, topics not to miss the sense of a lesson.
- Diversity - should lead to a range of classroom activities, be a vehicle for teaching specific language structure and vocabulary and promote reading strategies.
- Acceptability - it should accept different cultural customs or taboos.

Selecting an appropriate material is an essential phase in organizing each course. Learners' needs and expectations may not be met due to wrong a choice of material. "Materials provide a stimulus to learning. Good materials do not teach: they encourage learners to learn" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p.107). Materials can be made suitable to learners with different learning styles and affective attitudes by providing variety through different types of texts and activities to suit different learners, providing extra activities for highly motivated learners and providing activities to sensitize the learners to their own attitudes, feelings and learning styles.

Learners' motivation can also be sustained by making the materials serve some real life purpose. Materials of this type, by being personally significant to the learners, add value to the whole learning process. According to Huang and Xu (2005), in addition to those conventional principles for language materials design, special attention should be paid to selecting texts and designing exercises discussed earlier on in this manual (see module 4, unit 1).

Thus, the principle of skills integration can be explained as the teaching of the language skills of reading.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

What are the criteria for selecting suitable ESP material?

4.0 CONCLUSION

Writing materials for ESP is a complex activity. It requires a great deal of time, effort and money. Whatever be the case, materials should be as relevant as possible to the learners' needs, ascertained through needs analysis. It should be interesting and thought provoking and should lead to a communicative task. As Tomlinson (1998) aptly points out, "..... in order to facilitate the gradual process of acquisition, it is important for materials to recycle instruction and to provide frequent and ample exposure to the instructed language features in communicative use." ESP material writing, like any EFL material writing involves inputs of content, languages and tasks designing as described by Hutchinson & Waters (1987).

5.0 SUMMARY

A well written material has been discussed to have input, content focus, language focus and task. While the language and content are drawn from the input and are selected according to what the learners will need to do with the task, the task is the primary focus. The entire model or elements act as a vehicle which leads the learners to the point where they are able to carry out the task. The unit has also discussed the principles of a good material and what a teacher should bear in mind in selecting a material to be used in the classroom. Materials that do not meet the set objectives is a useless one We have also said that to acquire the target language effectively, learners need to engage actively in processing the meaning of whatever they hear and read. A variety of communication tasks can be designed, which will motivate and give learners a purpose for doing this. These tasks should also give learners practice in skills they will need. Thus materials designers have three distinct responsibilities: (a) providing language data for the course, (b) designing meaning-focused communication tasks arising out of those data that engage learners in meaning and that encourage genuine use of language, (c) designing form-focused language study exercises that raise learners' awareness of typical and useful formal features of language.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the qualities of a good material in ESP course design.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Dudley-Evans, T., & St. John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for specific purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Dulay, Burt & Krashen (1982). *Language two*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Ellis, R. (2006). The Methodology of task-based teaching. In *Asian EFL Journal, Volume 8, Issue 3*. Retrieved on April 06, 2006 from http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Sept_06_re.php
- Graves, K. (1996). *Teachers as course developers*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Halliday, M. (1975). *Learning how to mean*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching* (3rd edition). Essex, England: Longman.
- Huang Qin & Zhihua Xu (2005). A skills-oriented model of subject-based English materials design. *US-China Foreign Language, Volume 3, No.5* (Serial No.20) May 2005. Huazhong University of Science and Technology.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes: A learning-centred approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jordan, R. R. (1997). *English for academic purposes: A guide and resource book for teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (1985). *Principles and practice in Second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- McDonough, J. (1984). *ESP in perspective: A practical guide*. London: Collins ELT.
- Morrison, K. (1977). Authentic texts and ESP. In Holden, S. (Ed.) *English for specific purposes*. London: Modern English Publications.
- Nunan, D. (2006). Task-based language teaching in the Asia context: Defining 'task'. *Asian EFL Journal Volume 8, Issue 3*. Retrieved April 06, 2006 from http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Sept_06_dn.php

- Skehan, P. (1994). Interlanguage development and task-based learning. In Bygate, M., Tonkyn, A. & Williams, E. (Eds.), *Grammar and the language Teacher* (pp. 175-199). Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall.
- Tomlinson, Brian (Ed.) (1998). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Wallace, M. J. (1982). *Teaching vocabulary*. London: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Willis, J. (1998a) Task-based learning – What kind of adventure? *The Language teacher* 22, 7 (17-18).
- Willis, J. (1998b). Concordance in the classroom without a computer. In Tomlinson, B. (Ed.) *Materials Development in second language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

UNIT 2 USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 What is an Authentic Material?
 - 3.2 Advantages of Authentic Materials
 - 3.3 Disadvantages of Authentic Materials
 - 3.4 Sources of Authentic Materials
 - 3.5 Authentic Tasks
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor- Marked Test
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The use of authentic materials in an EFL classroom is what many teachers involved in foreign language teaching have discussed in recent years. We have heard persuasive voices insisting that the English presented in the classroom should be authentic, not produced for general undefined purposes. Generally, what this means is materials which involve language naturally occurring as communication in native-speaker contexts of use, or rather those selected contexts where standard English is the norm: real newspaper reports, for example, real magazine articles, real advertisements, cooking recipes, horoscopes, etc. Most of the teachers throughout the world agree that authentic texts or materials are beneficial to the language learning process, but what is less agreed is when authentic materials should be introduced and how they should be used in an EFL classroom. Caution should also be applied in the use of authentic materials

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define authentic text/material;
- give some advantages of using authentic materials;
- give some disadvantages of using authentic materials; and
- explain what a teacher should consider before using an authentic material.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT**3.1 What is Authentic Text/Material?**

One of the important principles of communicative language teaching is that authentic language should be used in instruction whenever possible (Omaggio-Hadley, 1993). But some of the problems are determining what authentic materials are, why it is important to use authentic material in the classroom, and what are the sources for authentic materials?

The definitions of authentic materials are slightly different in literature. What is common in these definitions is 'exposure to real language and its use in its own community'. Harmer (1991) defines authentic texts as materials which are designed for native speakers; they are real text; designed, not for language students, but for the speakers of the language. Jordan (1997:113) refers to authentic texts as texts that are not written for language teaching purposes. Nunan and Miller (1995) define authentic materials as those which were not created or edited expressly for language learners. This means that most everyday objects in the target language qualify as authentic materials.

According to Robinson (1991:56-58), in-house produced materials are more specific for unique learning situation, "have greater face validity in terms of the language dealt with and the contexts it is presented in". Authentic materials differ from teacher-written textbooks in organization of vocabulary choices and grammatical structures. They appear to have no difficulty sequence, but they are used in the way of real profession situation. They are superior in relevance to learners' lives and jobs as well as in display of easy but realistic, ready-to-use language (Hwang, 2005).

Authentic materials are significant since they increase students' motivation for learning and make the learner to be exposed to the 'real' language as discussed by Guariento & Morley (2001:347). For example, a radio news report brought into the class so that students discuss the report on pollution in the city where learners live. They are materials

used in the target culture for actual communicative needs. They should enable the learner to hear, read, and produce language as it is used in the target culture. They are closely related to learners' needs and provide exposure to real language.

Many Second Language Acquisition researches have proved that when the learners felt a need to learn a language, were exposed to natural language in real life contexts and had enough opportunities for interaction with native speakers, they acquired the language easily. Even in formal learning situations it should be possible to help learners acquire the language by using effective materials. Other characteristics are:

Materials should engage the learners in meaningful interactions and provide a real purpose for the language learning activity.

Materials should provide exposure to authentic texts and expect the learners to respond to them mentally or physically.

Authentic texts are, however, hard to come by but what is important in ESP is that texts selected should satisfactorily answer the following questions:

- What is my material about?
- Why was it produced? and
- How was the material produced?

3.2 Advantages of Authentic Materials

Using authentic material in the classroom, even when not done in an authentic situation, and provided it is appropriately exploited, is significant for many reasons. Martinez (2002) summarized several benefits of using authentic materials.

- The first one is that by using authentic material, students are exposed to real discourse, as in videos of interview with famous people.
- Secondly, authentic materials keep students informed about what is happening in the world, so they have an intrinsic educational value.
- Thirdly, language change is reflected in the materials so that students and teachers can keep abreast of such changes.
- Fourthly, reading texts are ideal to teach/practise mini-skills such as scanning, e.g. students are given a news article and asked to look for specific information. Also, teachers can have students practice some of the micro-skills of listening, e.g. basically,

students listen to news reports and they are asked to identify the names of countries, famous people, etc.

- Fifthly, different authentic materials such as books, articles, newspapers, and so on contain a wide variety of text types, and language styles not easily found in conventional teaching materials. Thus, it can help student extend their vocabulary and help them memorize such words in a number of meaningful recycling.
- Lastly, authentic materials can encourage reading for pleasure because they are likely to contain topics of interest to learners, especially if students are given the chance to have a say on the kinds of authentic materials and topics to be used in class. As a result, learners will keep high motivation and interest in language teaching through meaningful interactions with the materials. Nunan (1999:212) also asserts that the use of authentic sources leads to greater interest and variety in the materials that learners deal with in the classroom. This authentic material helps bring the contact to life, and ultimately makes learning and using language more meaningful and, easy for students.

3.3 Disadvantages of Authentic Materials

However, there are drawbacks to using authentic materials in their raw form without adaptation or support. Gardener and Miller (1999) mention several disadvantages.

- The first disadvantage is the complexity of the language. Authentic materials may be too culturally biased or too difficult to understand outside the language community thereby making them inaccessible to beginners or elementary learners.
- The second disadvantage is the learning burden. Authentic materials may contain items, particularly vocabulary, which are of low frequency and of peripheral use to the learner and may never be encountered again.
- The third disadvantage is that in learning contexts, where authentic target-language materials are not readily available, obtaining them can be time consuming and frustrating.

Martinez (2002) also mentions two other weaknesses of using authentic materials:

- One is that some authentic listening materials have so many different accents that it is very hard for the learner to understand.
- The other is that the materials can become outdated easily, such as news in newspapers or magazines. Due to these reasons, some teachers may be frustrated by selecting and preparing these authentic materials for their learners.

Regardless of the drawbacks above of using authentic materials, if used properly and in sufficient quantities, it can motivate our learners (Gardner & Miller, 1999). There are many sources of authentic materials (Gardner & Miller, 1999), such as newspapers, magazines, user manuals, leaflets and brochures, TV and radio programmes, videos, literature, songs, etc.

3.4 Sources of Authentic Materials

In today's globalized world, examples authentic materials abound, but the most commonly used perhaps are: newspapers, TV programs, menus, magazines, the internet, movies, songs, brochures, comics, literature (novels, poems and short stories), and so forth. I would like to look at some authentic materials in a bit more detail and then move on to a variety of sample tasks.

Literature

In using literature, the focus should be on teaching language, not literature. In other words, the idea should be using literary texts as one kind among other texts. With that in mind, the tasks should aim at meaning and not form, especially literary form or stylistics.

Computer Software

Software specially designed for English instruction has received some criticisms particularly from teachers who back up a humanistic approach to language teaching. They state that they see no reason why exercises that can be done with a textbook should be carried out with a computer. This idea stems from software such as *Gapkit*, *Grammar mastery II* and others that are really computer-guided drills. This position is quite understandable. However, together with *Tense Buster*, and others are not all computers have to offer to EFL teaching.

There are other examples of adventure games where learners need to discover clues and unravel mysteries. These games usually involve a good amount of reading and with the use of multimedia; they involve a good range of sounds, speakers of different ages and accents, and excellent images. Students can play in pairs or threes and discuss what to do next, so that the interaction that takes place is also a part of the learning process. Another advantage these games have is that they promote computer literacy, a badly needed skill in the modern world.

The Internet

With the advent of the World Wide Web, teachers have at their disposal large amounts of texts, visual stimuli, newspapers, magazines, live radio and T.V., video clips and much more. There are endless lists of useful

materials for the language classroom. I should like to focus mainly on newspapers and radio stations. There is no point in asking students to just go to the web and read some text or other. There needs to be a task, preferably one in which meaning is central and has some connection to the real world. Treasure hunts and other information searching activities are probably the most useful. More and more sites have interactive sections. For example: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/communicate/> which contains message boards and where students can chat with native speakers.

3.5 Authentic Tasks

The task, or what students are supposed to do with the given material, often makes all the difference. There is material that can be used for beginners, intermediate or advanced students, provided the task that comes with it is suitable. This task should relate to the student's own life as much as possible, as proposed by Clarke (1990). According to Martinez (2002), some of the tasks include:

(a) Want Adverts

A series of 4-5 want adverts can be used with adults in the following way: beginners are asked to say which of the jobs they qualify for, intermediate students can write an application letter or write a Curriculum Vitae, and advanced students may discuss who in the class could qualify for the job and why, re-write the adverts or role-play job interviews.

(b) Treasure Hunt

Students get a news or magazine article and a sheet of paper with a series of questions that ask them to look for certain items: dates, events, people involved, etc.

(c) Menus

Students willingly get involved in a role-play where one is a waiter/tress and 2-3 students are the customers, provided they have been supplied with the necessary functions and structures to carry out such task, i.e. sentences such as:

"What would you like?", "I'll have...", "Anything else?", and so on
The menus have great potential as authentic material.

(d) Adverts in Magazines

Guessing the Product: In this task, the teacher cuts out advertisements from magazines, hides the products being advertised and shows them to learners one by one to see if they can guess what product is being

advertised. To practice specific vocabulary, the teacher gives learners three or four options per advert.

A second example involving magazine advertisements is the following: Students are set in groups of 3-4 and get some 4 adverts. They are to imagine they are working for an advertising agency and compare the adverts taking into account the texts and the photographs. Students are to decide the best and the worst advert. Then they re-design the worst ad, including the text. Ads with short texts are used with basic students, whereas those containing more complex texts are for intermediate or advanced students.

(e) **The Agony Column**

Four or five letters to the agony column are cut in half and pasted onto cards. Students work in pairs or groups of three and match the beginnings with the corresponding endings of the letters, and they match the corresponding answer to each letter.

Travel Brochures

An example of how to use travel brochures is the following:

Students sit in groups of 4-5. They are given travel brochures of interesting places. They are to design a "phoney" brochure of an invented place. In it they include a mixture of characteristics of that place. E.g. rice is the typical food; you can visit a theme park, drink coca cola, etc.

On the level of day to day teaching, authentic materials can make individual lessons more interesting or salient. Teaching commands is a common part of language instruction and can be done straight from a grammar text. However, a more motivating, rich source of commands is also found in advertisements and instruction manuals. Using these authentic materials to teach the same point may help students remember the grammatical construction better and give them a sense of how the construct can be used in various contexts. Similarly, language classes often begin with greetings, but it may be difficult for students to grasp or remember how to greet who as the social norms dictate. A video clip may be a helpful means of presenting these concepts and forms.

On a broader level, consistent use of authentic materials in the classroom keeps students grounded in the reality of the language, helping them to recognize that there is a community of users who live out their lives in this other language. Exposing students to authentic materials can also help them better understand the target culture and envision how they might participate in this community. For example, instead of introducing food vocabulary in the target language by

providing equivalent translations in the students' native language, the teacher can introduce students to food vocabulary via an authentic menu. This can be done by asking students to deduce the meanings of unfamiliar food items from context. Once meaning has been established, the vocabulary words can become part of a communicative exercise where students describe what is in a dish or role play a restaurant scene, requesting certain items. In this way, not only do students acquire new vocabulary but they are also exposed to typical ethnic foods found on menus.

Word of Caution

Morrow (1992) however warns that before you rush off to use authentic materials collected by you, you must check if they are appropriate for the learning experience you want to achieve. You could use the four questions checklist which include:

- (a) What is the material about? - Will my students want to deal with language on this subject?
- (b) Why was my material designed? – will my students want to deal with language intended to do the same thing? (E.g. to entertain; to advise; to give instruction.)
- (c) Who was my material produced for? – are my students in this category?
- (d) How was my material produced? – was it written or spoken? Will my students have to deal with language like this in this mode?

If we can provide satisfactory answers to these questions, then I think we can safely incorporate the material into our teaching.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. What do you understand by authentic materials?
- ii. List five advantages of using authentic materials.
- iii. What are the disadvantages of using authentic materials?
- iv. The use of authentic texts must be done with caution. Explain.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Authentic text is that which is normally used in then students' specialist area, written by specialists for specialists. For materials in ESP, authenticity should be the watchword. It demands that the learners should have positive perceptions about the materials they are using. They should be originally produced for some purposes rather than for language teaching. The learners should find them relevant to their target situation in terms of topic, function, channel and audience.

5.0 SUMMARY

It has been discussed that ESP texts and materials should be authentic. In the first part, the definition of authentic materials was given. Then advantages and disadvantages of the use of authentic materials were discussed. The unit has examined the sources of authentic materials in language learning. The overall aim is to use materials that are real and that should motivate the learners in getting to the target situation.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- (a) Mention at least four sources of authentic materials and describe how they can be used.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Clarke, D. (1990). Communicative theory and its influence on materials production. *Language Teaching*, 25/1, pp73-86
- Gardner, D., & Miller, L. (1999). *Establishing self-access: From theory to practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 101-105.
- Guariento, W. & Morley, J. (2001). Text and task authenticity in the EFL classroom. *ELT Journal* 55(4), 347-353.
- Harmer, Jeremy (1991). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. London: Longman.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching* (3rd edition). Essex, England: Longman
- Hwang, C. C. (2005). Effective EFL education through popular authentic materials. *Asian EFL Journal*, Volume 7, Issue 1. Retrieved on June 30, 2010 from http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/march_05_ch.php
- Jordan, R. R (1997). *English for academic purposes: a guide and resource for teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Martinez, A. (2002). Authentic materials: An overview. *Karen's linguistic issues*. Assessed on August 25, 2010 from <http://www3.telus.net/linguisticsissues/authenticmaterials.html>
- Morrow, K. (1977). Authentic texts and ESP. In Holden, S. (Ed.), *English for specific purposes* (pp. 13-16). London: Modern English Publications.

- Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching and learning*. Boston, Massachusetts: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Omaggio-Hadley, A. (1993). *Teaching language in context*. (2nd edition.). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Richard, J.C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). Communicative language teaching. Richards, J. C. (ed) *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd edition.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [Robinson, P.C. \(1991\)](#). *ESP today: a practitioner's guide*. New York: Prentice Hall International.
- Sanderson, P. (1999). *Using newspapers in the classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

UNIT 3 MATERIAL EVALUATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Definition and Importance
 - 3.2 Criteria for Material Evaluation
 - 3.3 Types of Material Evaluation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Test
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Having completed your needs analysis, the next thing is to turn the course design into actual teaching material. This involves material evaluation, material selection and material adaptation. You will examine these three terms in this unit with particular reference to material evaluation. The criteria for evaluating material will be examined and the different types of material evaluation discussed.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

You are expected, at the end of this unit, to be able to:

- state the difference between material evaluation, material development and material adaptation;
- give reasons why we evaluate material;
- suggest criteria for evaluating material; and
- describe the different types of material evaluation.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers to Self-Assessment exercises, go to the relevant sections of the unit to derive the answers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition and Importance

There are three possible ways of material application: existing materials, materials writing and materials adaptation (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 96).

Materials development/Design means writing or designing ones' own materials. Writing from scratch requires considerable experience, and time, and is usually inferior to what is already published. It involves the process of providing input to the learners in various forms and providing opportunities to exploit the materials for language acquisition and learning. Nearly all teachers of ESP find themselves involved in materials writing sooner or later, because textbooks are seldom written with a particular group in mind. ESP materials focus on aspects of English specific to the subject area. While producing your own materials, you should check that ESP materials meet target needs and that the language taught matches the language that the students will use. Besides, you should put emphasis on the development of specific skills and strategies for operating in the ESP context.

Project work approach fits comfortably within Teaching ESP since it responds to the learners' specific purposes. The students operate in the target language, it is activity research based, and multi-skilled (develops linguistic & research skills). It involves learners in both individual and group work, uses authentic material and it is set up in collaboration with subject teachers. It provides an opportunity for real world and classroom experience to overlap, gives learners a feeling of achievement. Besides project can also encourage positive classroom behaviours such as co-operation, enjoyment, motivation and interest. It can be an elegant culmination of the ESP course.

Material Adaptation is the process of modifying the existing materials to suit ones purpose. New materials are probably added, new exercises, new units and new topics.

Material Evaluation involves a look at existing materials and selecting what you need from them. A material writer judges the fitness of an existing material for the particular purpose he has in mind. It is common enough in ESP that teachers will have to choose their own textbook. All teachers can benefit - even the more experienced ones - by taking explicit steps to compare and evaluate the textbooks objectively, so that the textbook and the use of the textbook is the best match to the needs of the students. Subjective feelings should only be a guide - by establishing a list of criteria these feelings can be confirmed or shown to be wrong. In addition, I am assuming that normally the decision to use a textbook

will involve discussion with other colleagues. It is far easier to discuss materials selection when objective criteria are established and agreed.

You evaluate materials in order to:

- identify how successful the materials used in the classroom are. Firstly, we examine whether the materials are interesting and motivating for students. Secondly, whether students have enough input and practice and finally, whether there were enough different types of tasks in the material.
- examine whether the materials fulfil the prescribed course objectives: We examine at the end of the lesson whether students are able to perform the required tasks successfully and whether teachers' perceptions of material and course objectives are clear.
- examine the extent to which materials permit students to achieve the learning objectives: We look at whether the difficulty of the tasks is of the required level and observe how well students performed.
- identify whether the designs of the materials are suitable for a task-based syllabus: Writing material makes you aware of what to look for in other people's written materials. You make a systematic check of the materials before taking a decision to purchase an already published work, to develop entirely new one or to adapt an existing one.

3.2 Importance of Material Evaluation

- Evaluating existing materials provides one with a good theoretical base for writing another material, which is an improvement on the former.
- It makes for the avoidance of reduplication of material.
- Good material is a stimulus to learning so it should be identified for effective teaching and learning.
- It provides a clear and coherent unit structures that guide the teacher and teacher and the learner.
- It makes for an improved and appropriate methodology.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. What is material evaluation?
- ii. How can you distinguish material evaluation, material development and material adaptation?
- iii. Why do we evaluate materials for language teaching?

3.3 Evaluation Process

Hutchinson and Waters gave the following as the processes of evaluation:

- (a) Defining Criteria
- (b) Subjective analysis
- (c) Objective analysis
- (d) Matching

3.3.1 Defining Criteria

The first in evaluation is to define criteria that you should use for judging the material. It is a checklist of criteria for objective and subjective analysis. This should be considered and stated properly. Criteria are defined by asking oneself the following questions: ‘On what bases will I judge materials? Which criteria will be more important?’ The subsequent analysis is two-fold – both subjective and objective and focuses on several main criteria: audience, aims, content, and methodology.

3.3.2 Subjective Analysis

Subjective analysis takes into consideration what criteria teachers want in their course. It deals with your feelings about the material – what attracts us first to a published work such as an attractive cover, the persuasive publisher’s blurb, a list of content that seems to cover everything, a clearly set out text. You may also like a text because a friend recommended it, the size or price is convenient. Subjective analysis also includes what the aims should be, the language description, learning theories, methodology, price range, etc.

3.3.3 Objective Analysis

The objective analysis tackles the question ‘How does the material being evaluated realize the criteria?’ It deals with everything actual about the material. The evaluator seeks to find out what was actually done in the text or material in terms of language description, work on language skill, micro skills needed, text type, number of chapters and pages. There is no room for assumption in objective analysis.

3.3.4 Matching

The final matching stage is the one in which we try to assess the extent to which the material meets our needs. The question now is ‘Will the materials I have chosen help me in actualizing the identified target and learning needs?’ If the answer is no, there is need to develop an entirely new material or make some adaptations to suit your purpose.

- i) Evaluation is basically a matching process: matching needs to available solutions. Ultimately the decision is subjective.
- ii) It helps to know what you are looking for, and your priorities.
- iii) It helps to have a checklist: it lists the features and gives priority ratings to the features.
- iv) It helps if two or more people do the work.
- v) Actively compare how two or more books deal with a language point/skill/topic.
- vi) Distinguish between:
 - (a) global appraisal, overall approach and content.
 - (b) detailed evaluation, of one unit of a book.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- i. Write short notes on each of the processes of material evaluation.
- ii. Which of the processes is more important in ESP and why?

3.4 Types of Material Evaluation

There are three main types of material evaluation. They are preliminary evaluation, performance or summative evaluation, and revision or formative evaluation.

3.4.1 Preliminary Evaluation

This takes place before the commencement of an ESP course. It involves selecting the most appropriate from the publications that are available. It presupposes the existence of a checklist of features which one wants the textbook to have, written down in order of priority.

3.4.2 Performance or Summative Evaluation

Referred to as ultimate evaluation, this kind of evaluation takes place at the end of a course and it is aimed at finding out whether the material was effective. According to Alderson (1979), “it makes use of tests administered before and after the programme”. It also ascertains the effectiveness of the ESP course in preparing students for the subsequent work or study experience. Other instruments to be used apart from test are checklist and questionnaire.

3.4.3 Revision or Formative Evaluation

Alderson (Ibid) went further to state that revision evaluation is conducted while the course is ongoing so as to make modifications to the materials. The main techniques used are tests, questionnaires and interviews. The purpose of the test is to examine the material not the students. The test should be administered frequently, may be, after every unit. 60% error shows that the material is difficult or that there is something wrong with the instructor’s procedure. Because it is carried out in the life of a course, the result is often used to modify what is being done. Alderson suggested the inclusion of “discussion and observation” as methods of revision evaluation.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- i. Mention and explain the three types of material evaluation
- ii. Material evaluation includes the following:
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____

- (c) _____
 (d) _____

- iii. What is the difference between preliminary evaluation and summative material evaluation?

3.5 Course-book Evaluation

An already existing course-book can be evaluated using the following criteria:

Name of Book : _____
 Author(s) : _____
 Publisher : _____
 Year of Publication : _____

3.5.1 Logistical Factors

1. *Is the cost of the book within the institute's budget?*
2. *What additional investment is required?*
 Think about cassettes, video, CALL, etc.
3. *How easily can the book be bought both now and later?*
 Will the delay in receiving the book be acceptable?
 Is it likely to remain in print?
4. *Does the book fit local schedule requirements?*

3.5.2 Pedagogical Factors

5. How is the rationale of the book realized?
 Does the material reflect the stated rationale of the authors and publishers?
 If not, why not?
6. *Does the rationale of the book fit that of the local curriculum?*
7. *How do the different components tie together?*
 Think about exercises, units, and books.
8. *What language is covered?*
 Does the book give the students adequate practice in the language they are required to master?
9. *Does the book recycle language frequently enough?*
10. *What skills are covered?*

Does the book give the students adequate practice in the skills they are required to master?

11. *What tasks are covered?*

Does the book give the students adequate practice in the tasks demanded by the curriculum?

12. *What topics are covered?*

Does the book cover topics included in the curriculum?

Does the book avoid topics which are culturally unacceptable?

13. *How authentic is the material?*

Does the material give students realistic exposure to the language?

14. *What is the book's approach to testing?*

Does the book meet local testing requirements?

Is the rationale of the tests in keeping with that of the book?

15. *What is missing from the book?*

Draw up a list of the book's shortcomings based on the above analyses.

Do its advantages outweigh its disadvantages?

3.5.3 Human Factors

16. *What teachers are expected to use the book?*

Is the book aimed at teachers similar to those employed?

17. *What is the teachers' role?*

Does the book require teachers to adopt unfamiliar roles?

18. *What guidance does the book give to teachers?*

Does the teachers' book *help* teachers?

19. *How easily can the book be adapted?*

Look at the list of the book's shortcomings.

Take a unit at random.

How many exercises would you omit, adapt or supplement?

Is an inordinate amount of work involved in supplementing and adapting the book?

20. *How frequently do teachers need to prepare tests?*

Is an inordinate amount of work involved in supplementing and adapting the book's tests?

21. *Will the book appeal to and motivate our students?*
22. *How easily can students find their way around the book?*
Is the book "user-friendly?"
23. *Will our teachers use the book in the way envisaged?*

4.0 CONCLUSION

The process of elaborating and adapting the materials used in the ESP classroom is a very complex one. It entails close co-operation between all stakeholders, teachers and students alike. At the same time it is an imperatively dynamic one, requiring permanent reviewing and supervision. As it has been previously asserted, the processes of curriculum development include needs analysis, setting objectives, development of syllabus, selection, adaptation, production of materials (resources), methodology and evaluation. Once the needs analysis and course design processes are completed, we must focus on the next stage, i.e. the implementation part. The possibilities at hand are the following: either to resort to existing materials, such as different textbooks by different authors or to modify existent materials and to adapt them to the specific learning situations, or to compile one's own teaching materials. Most of the times, nevertheless, the solution is a middle way, that is achieving some sort of complementarities between selection and production, adaptation in itself being a combination of the previous two. In effect, writing materials may prove a very rewarding experience, if disheartening. Materials writers can understand better the shortcomings of other materials by looking at them critically and at the same time sympathetically. It is essential for teachers to be able to evaluate correctly the materials they use and thus devise the best methods to improve them and to put them to their best use.

5.0 SUMMARY

A material is not just used for using sake. It should be evaluated at the beginning, as the course is going on and at the end of the course. The unit has looked into the process of material evaluation, why we evaluate materials and the different types of material evaluation. The overall aim of evaluation is to enable the course designer to know what to select, when to develop a new material and when to adapt the existing material to meet the learner's specific needs identified in the needs analysis.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSESSMENT

Why and how are ESP Materials evaluated?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Alderson, J. C. (1979). "Material evaluation," In Harper, D. P. L. (ed.) *English for specific purposes*. Cocoyoc Mexico: The British Council.
- Anthony, L. (1997a). *Defining English for specific purposes and the role of the ESP practitioner*. Retrieved August 15, 2010 from <http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/abstracts/Aizukiyo97.pdf>
- Anthony, L. (1997b). ESP: What does it mean? Why is it different? *On Cue*. Retrieved August 15, 2010 from <http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/abstracts/ESParticle.htmlb>
- Brunton, M. (2009). Evaluation of highly recommended: A textbook for the hotel and catering industry. *ESP World*. 1(22), Vol. 8. Retrieved March 2, 2009 from <http://www.espworld.info/Articles22/esp%20essay%20for%20publication.htm>Gatehouse
- Gatehouse, K. (2001). Key issues in English for specific purposes (ESP) curriculum development. *Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. VII, No. 10. Retrieved April 17, 2010 from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Gatehouse-ESP.html>
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes: A learning-centred approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Spack, R. (1988). Initiating ESL students into the academic discourse community: How far should we go? *TESOL Quarterly*, 22 (1), 48-62.
- Skehan, P. (1989). *Individual differences in second language learning*. London, Edward Arnold.
- Toms, C. (2004). General English course books and their place in an ESAP programme. *Asian EFL Journal*. 6 (1). Retrieved March 5th, 2009 from http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/04_ct.php
- Wright, C. (1992). The benefits of ESP. *Cambridge language consultants*. Retrieved May 31, 2009 from <http://www.camlang.com/art001.htm>
- Zhang, Y. (2007). Literature review of material evaluation. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 4(6), 28-31. Retrieved December 8, 2008 from <http://www.linguist.org.cn/doc/su200706/su20070605.pdf>