

## A REFLECTIVE INVESTIGATION OF ADAPTED AND TEACHER-DESIGNED LANGUAGE TEACHING MATERIALS

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### Abstract

Adapting and designing language teaching materials that align with students' needs, performance levels, areas of interest, and socio-cultural backgrounds is a primary responsibility of effective language teaching. This paper explores a series of adapted and teacher-developed instructional activities developed to boost holistic skill development, enhance language production, and develop critical thinking. The activities were designed to address learners' specific complications in writing, reading comprehension, grammatical accuracy, and speaking. In addition, the integration of digital tools and technology-enhanced tasks is analyzed to highlight their role in increasing learner engagement, authenticity, and autonomy. Rooted in established principles of materials development and communicative language teaching, this paper illustrates how meticulously selected and analyzed materials can lead to meaningful learning outcomes and pedagogically effective implementation.

### Key words

Materials development, learner-centered teaching, communicative language teaching, critical thinking, technology-enhanced learning

### Introduction

In modern education, language instructors are progressively expected to adapt or develop teaching materials that address the diverse learners' needs, socio-cultural backgrounds and interests. Language teaching coursebooks, while beneficial, rarely succeed to completely meet the linguistic, cognitive, and affective demands of target learner groups. Consequently, material adaptation and development have emerged critical skills for competent teachers. According to Tomlinson (2011), effective materials should be analyzed not only in terms of their design and practicality but also based on the learning outcomes they generate (p. 6). A learner-focused approach to materials development highlights the incorporation of all language skills, opportunities for communicative language output, and tasks that foster higher-order thinking. Moreover, activities should reflect authentic language use and align with learners' real-world goals, such as academic success or standardized language testing. Maley (2016) emphasizes that teaching materials must be selected and delivered with careful consideration of learners' needs and abilities (p. 15).

Additionally, the expanding presence of digital technology in education has modified the way materials are designed and applied. Technology-enhanced tasks can enhance communication, autonomy, and engagement when used purposefully and pedagogically. However, the effectiveness of digital tools depends on how potently they support learning objectives rather than serving purely motivational or entertainment functions.

### Adapting and Developing Teaching Materials Based on Learners' Needs



Adapting or developing new teaching materials and activities based on learners' needs, language proficiency level, interests, and socio-cultural backgrounds is a fundamental skill for a competent teacher. It is critical to evaluate materials based on their practicality and the results learners demonstrate after using them (Tomlinson, 2011, p. 6).

### **Summary Writing Activity Reflection**

The writing activity was included since the portion of the coursebook lacks the writing component. Ideally, all language skills should be incorporated in the language class to provide opportunities to practice the skills in balanced language learning. Enhancing writing competence is advised to be integrated in every language classroom, particularly for my learners who face difficulties with productive skills. Since, fundamentally, teachers use or design activities that support learning outcomes and address learners' needs, this writing activity was included to provide learners with an opportunity to produce language. If the materials address the target communicative outcome, the pedagogical realization can be effectively achieved (Jolly & Bolitho, 2011, p. 109).

### **True/False/Not Given Reading Comprehension Activity Reflection**

Even though my learners have strong reading skills, they struggle with the True/False/Not Given Activity type. Therefore, as a teacher who builds the lesson considering learners' needs and abilities and aims to improve their areas of difficulty, I supplemented the coursebook portion with this activity. Since my learners are planning to receive IELTS certificates and the test includes the activity in the reading section, practicing this task can improve learners' ability to complete such tasks correctly. Maley (2016) emphasized that selection and delivery of materials should be grounded in learners' needs (p. 15).

### **Online Post Response Activity Reflection**

The activity was developed since it is authentic, communicative, and triggers critical thinking. The task reflects a real-life situation where learners read posts, react, and respond, expressing the ideas. It strongly develops critical thinking, not only passive learning, as learners are asked to think about the post (text) and reflect on it based on guided questions, where they need to activate the world schemata and use transferable skills. The PBLT approach (Philosophy-based Language Teaching) is implemented in the activity. Baleghizadeh and Javidanmehr (2017) stated that this approach stimulates learners to delve into the input they receive by explaining and expanding on their perception. The task encourages learners to reflect and critically think on the topic presented and, consequently, pushes them to produce meaningful output.

### **Debates Activity Reflection**

In this activity, learners are divided into two groups and debate, presenting arguments for and against the given topic. This task reflects authentic and contextualized language use, stimulates learners to reflect on the topic, and express their ideas. Additionally, this task boosts learners' confidence and identity expression. Positive feelings, such as confidence, can be engaging and activate strong mental processing (Tomlinson, 2013, p. 12). Moreover, learners are encouraged to produce the language. Effective teaching should ensure that opportunity for language production is provided (Maley, 2016, p. 15).



### **Giving Advice Using Modals Activity Reflection (Gimkit and Canva.com)**

The task includes the implementation of two digital tools: Gimkit in the pre-task stage and Canva in the main task procedure. Creating slides in Canva allows learners to engage in collaboration, critical thinking development, and stimulate higher-order thinking skills (Bloom, 1956, as cited in Hanson-Smith, 2018). Learners are encouraged to think and create their linguistic output. Student-designed digital products upgrade learner autonomy, identity expression, and transferable competencies (Kiddle, 2013, p. 199). In a Gimkit quiz, learners actively react and respond to it, which indicates meaningful and authentic interaction where effective learning occurs. Interaction is viewed as a core element and a marker of authenticity in today's digital reality (Mishan, 2017, p. 17).

### **Being Creative Activity Reflection (Kahoot)**

The activity uses the CALL approach and engages learners in a Kahoot game. In today's world, learners feel motivated and interested when learning occurs through interactive use of digital tools. After learners receive authentic linguistic input, they are involved in a listening comprehension checking task via Kahoot. The learners are encouraged not only to passively receive the input from the media but also to actively contribute by interacting. Kiddle (2013) mentioned the participation principle, which stimulates learners to participate conceptually by interacting and responding (p. 194). In today's digital world, it is essential for educators to implement technology in developing materials. However, it should be mentioned that teachers are recommended to be attentive in selecting and using digital tools appropriate to learners' needs, abilities, and other resources. Moreover, the used technology should bring effective learning outcomes, not only serve for entertainment purposes.

### **Conclusion**

Adapting or designing instructional materials informed by learners' needs, linguistic proficiency levels, areas of interests, and socio-cultural backgrounds is a core aspect of efficient teaching. The considerations on the executed activities demonstrate that teachers are expected to design and augment materials to respond to learners' areas of difficulty and support learning outcomes. Integrating activities that foster balanced language skill augmentation, encourage linguistic production, and develop critical thinking allows for meaningful and authentic learning experiences. The incorporation of interactive, reflective, and technology-assisted tasks demonstrates that efficacious learning transpires when learners interact with the material rather than passively obtain input. However, in the contemporary digital world, it is fundamental for educators to be attentive when selecting and implementing digital tools. Technology is recommended to be appropriate to learners' needs, competencies, and provided resources, and it should bring effective learning outcomes rather than serve only entertainment purposes. Evaluating teaching materials based on their functionality and the results learners demonstrate after applying them remains a critical responsibility of competent teachers.

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