

# Material Development for Language L/T

## Introduction

- Materials
  - Evaluation
  - Adaptation
  - Production
  - Exploitation
    - ◆ Coursebooks, videos, graded readers, flash cards, games, websites and mobile phone interactions.
- Materials can be...
  - **Informative:** Informing the learner about the target audience.
  - **Instructional:** Guiding the learner in practicing the language.
  - **Experiential:** Providing the learner with experience of the language in use.
  - **Eliciting:** Encouraging the learner to use the language. When the material makes you think and something comes out of it.
  - **Exploratory:** Helping the learner to make discoveries about the language  
Finding information about different things from life itself to small cultural objects.
- Instructional materials generally serve as the basis of much of the **language input** that learners **receive** and the language **practice** that occurs in the classroom.
  - To create anything in this world you need an input. The more you hear, the more you read, the more you speak, the more you will improvise.
- The emphasis in most coursebooks is on providing **explicit teaching and practice**.
  - They can also be used as a variety in the classroom.
  - The materials are the best way to control the class.

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- It was not until the mid-1990s that materials development began to be treated seriously by academics as a field in its own right.
- Before then it tended to be considered as something that practitioners did or as a sub-section of methodology, in which materials were usually presented as examples of methods in action rather than as examples of the principles and procedures of materials development.
- Material development was hugely boosted in 1990s with the emerge of Communicative Approach and Functional Notional Syllabus Design.
- Madsen & Bowen (1978) and Swales (1980) asserted that the **good teacher** is constantly **adapting materials**.

## Materials Evaluation

- Tomlinson (2003) differentiates between **universal** and **local criteria**, the **former** being those that can be used to evaluate materials for any learner anywhere.
- He defines **local criteria** as those specific to the context in which the materials are going to be used, arguing that they are best generated from a profile.
  - The materials that we usually acquire are universal materials but often they do not fit into to the local needs. You need to consider the target's cultural background, for what purpose do they learn English.
- McGrath (2002: 31) distinguishes between “**general criteria** (i.e. the essential features of any good teaching-learning material)” and “**specific (or context related) criteria**” and, in relation to choosing a coursebook, proposes a procedure which includes materials analysis, first-glance evaluation, user feedback, evaluation using situation specific checklists and, finally, selection.
  - As teacher we need to produce Glocal Materials (Global+Local). You need to observe if you can use in a global environment as well as in the target's local environment.

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## Materials Evaluation

- McDonough & Shaw (2003: 61) suggest that the evaluators first conduct and **external evaluation** “that offers a brief overview from the outside” and then carry out “a closer and more detailed **internal evaluation**”.
- They stress that the four main considerations when deciding on the suitability of materials are
  - **Usability,**
  - **Generalisability**
  - **Adaptability**
  - **Flexibility**
- Madsen & Bowen (1978) good teachers are always adapting the materials they are using to the context in which they are using them in order to achieve the optimal **congruence (to bring things together)** between materials, methodology, learners, objectives, the target language and the teacher’s personality and teaching style.
- In order to achieve this congruence Madsen & Bowen propose ways of
  - **Personalizing:** You create the narrative from your students rather than the coursebook.
  - **Individualizing:** Focusing on one student.
  - **Localizing:** Make localization of the materials such as adapting cooking. from Irish Stew to Menemen.
    - ◆ It is also called as Nativizing, Nativization. Keep the vocabulary, grammar and the materials same but change the localization such as using İsmet İnönü instead of George Bush.
  - **Modernizing:** What is modern today is parallel with the latest technology.

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## Materials Adaptation

- McDonough & Shaw (2003) focus on the principles and procedures of adaptation and give advice on
  - **Adding:**
  - **Deleting:**
  - **Modifying:**
  - **Simplifying:**
  - **Reordering:**
- McGrath (2002) proposes “four evaluative processes” (p.59) when basing a lesson on a coursebook.
- Teachers may **select** the material that will be used unchanged, **reject** either completely or partially sections of the material, **add** extensions or further exploitation of the existing materials and **replace** components of the materials.
- Islam & Mares (2003) include such objective as **adding real choice**, catering for all **learner styles**, providing for **learner autonomy**, developing **high-level cognitive skills**, and making the input both more **accessible** and more **engaging**.
- Saraceni (2003) in order to involve learners in the process, materials should actually be written with learner adaptation in mind, aiming to be **learner centred, flexible, open-ended, relevant, universal and authentic**, and **giving choices** to learners.
- She stresses that offering **provocative topics** (When you make your students feel to talk) and **aesthetic experience** (art, music, photography, literature, poetry...) can facilitate learner adaptation.
- She criticizes published materials for being, **trivial, stereotypical, and un-motivating**.