



PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH in DESIGNING MATERIALS USING COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract - Teachers need to provide the learning resources to the students to enhance their knowledge and to show their performance depending on the quality of the learning content in the classroom. In this electronic era, teaching modules are designed by the teachers on their own for motivating students' interactive learning. The innovative ways of designing materials pave the way for teacher development to a remarkable extent. The authors would explicate in this article on the language training materials designed by the target language teachers of her Institution, with the integration of 'web resources', their impact on students' language performance' reflections on designing materials.

Keywords: - Interactive learning; Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL); modules; internet resources; business English

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers need to update themselves with the recent trends within the field of pedagogy. In fact, designing appropriate materials offer innovative ideas for teachers of English to explore and learn new data that take form within the type of tasks. When focusing on training the students for the corporate work life, material design not only exposes students to numerous business situations, but also helps language teachers to develop their professional skills. In this paper, the authors discuss the continued practices of designing course materials in language syllabus in her Institution, affiliated to Anna University, Chennai, India, and state the impact of these materials of students. Effective learning materials arise from getting ready the requirements of the students once they are exposed to career based training. David Nunun observed the facts about the teacher developer as a curriculum developer.

—It seems fairly obvious that if teachers are to be the ones responsible for developing the curriculum, they need the time, the skills and support to do so. Support may conclude curriculum models and guidelines and may include support from individuals acting in a curriculum advisory position. The provision of such support cannot be removed and must not be seen in isolation, from the curriculum, as in [9]

With reference to target language acquisition, students have got to master the language skills in that

language and language teachers must design relevant materials and give adequate coaching. Learning the language promotes students' performance in real life situations and teachers should offer exposure to such things through learning materials. With the growing demand for the use of English in technical and business domains, it's more challenging to make students perceive the job—related skills and workplace communication that they need to develop effectively.

Computers are becoming more appealing to teachers because of their huge capabilities and extensive effectiveness. Dhaif H (2004 pp. 467-469) as in [4] —The unique property of the computer as a medium for education is its ability to interact with the student. Books and tape recordings can tell a student what the rules are and what the right solutions are, but they cannot analyze the specific mistake the student has made and react in a manner, but also to understand the principles behind the correct solution, as in [8], Teachers must facilitate, coach and train the students. To try and do this, Professors can either use 'Open instructional resources' or use 'Open content.' This 'free content' may well be used to design learning materials suiting the curricular needs. Professors ought to update their information of technical and business English and ensure to use them effectively. Through these materials, Professors will offer corporate scenarios for enhancing students' use of language skills. As in [1], Open Educational Resources (OER) as



—digitized materials offered freely and openly. The open instructional resources might include a mixture of existing resources and teacher designed materials.

How does material design become part of professional development? Arechaga (2001) considers professional development as —a variety of activities within which trainers' are concerned to be able to improve their practice. An instructor who aims at developing his skilled talent must perpetually update his information in his field of specialization, mirror on his teaching and share his ideas with others whereas operating alone on a project or program. Considering these points, it may well be the same that Professors would be able to share their information by designing materials. Howard J states, as in [5] that Modern teaching methodology increasingly emphasis on the importance of identifying and teaching to the individual needs of learners. Podromou (2002), as in [11], recommends that there is also greater choice, freedom and scope for spontaneity when teachers develop their own materials.

The hypermedia of World Wide Web, has greatly expanded the power of computer assisted language learning (CALL) by allowing learners to explore and discover their learning paths themselves and offering them easy access to an online database of resources. With a variety of hyperlinks multimedia documents and computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools, the web can support language teachers to integrate web resources into the classroom (Son, 2007; Warschauer, 2001), as in [13].

The materials should be contextualized to the curriculum they intended to address, as in [11]. Learning to use the language skills requires information of the content and practice. It's essential for college students to achieve a conceptual knowledge of the subject and present the ideas effectively. According to the constructivist theory, the information that is provided to learners helps them to create mentally a brand new plan which successively helps them to perform expeditiously. A constructivist teacher is aware of assisting her students to construct information by actively involving them in activities. She should offer importance to the cognitive process of students whereas getting ready for an acceptable approach of instruction, (Kristinsdóttir, 2001) as in [6].

According to Bruner, as in [3], —The task of the instructor is to translate information to be learned into a format appropriate to the learner's current state of understanding. So it's appropriate to use constructivist theory to teach business English through relevant learning materials to make students to imitate the corporate scenario. Many universities are expeditiously using learning materials like Open instructional Resources for teaching various subjects. Professors have worked on facilitating language acquisition by providing virtual learning surroundings supported by an ESL / EFL platform with free instructional materials and information media tools for promoting learning.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the 21st century, there is a light of Information revolution and challenges in Science. It is proposed to use computers in all aspects of life and no exception in Education. In this knowledgeable economic world, a lot of money is invested in computer Assisted Language Learning programs. Therefore, it is necessary investigating the impact and effectiveness of such CALL programs the learners.

2.1 ANALYSES STUDY

Most of the institutions in India encourage the faculty members to design their course materials to suit the curricular needs. The language syllabus offered to engineering students promotes language skills for 3 semesters. Whereas they're exposed to technical English within the 1st semester, business English is obtainable in second and third semesters. The business English and communication skills are offered by the Institution by designing a separate program that necessitates students to be conversant with the corporate scenario. This successively helps Professors to coach students for job placements. As mentioned earlier, the target language Professors designs the course materials to a larger extent to promote the professional skills of the students.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

The learning materials are designed for the students with the following objectives:

- To encourage business vocabulary.
- To use the language skills in various situations.
- To produce further learning material by desegregation of social media.
- To motivate students to act with their peers and discuss the topics with their Professors.
- To encourage students to involve themselves in productive tasks.

The methodology focuses primarily on explaining business contexts, giving basic data, preparing topic connected content, presenting a supporting file either by the audio or by the video form so as to show language skills to students. During this context, the language syllabus offers freedom for Professors to use various business English books and 'Free content' accessible within the internet to design appropriate learning materials for college students. The training material will be ready with a list of objectives, learning content supported 'internet content' and an extra task for college students to perform after researching the content. A sample is given below:

While teaching business English to students, it's essential to provide exposure to soft skills coaching. Group Discussion is a vital component that needs skills like effective communication, making an argument, problem—solving, finding solutions etc. By showing several GDs from 'YouTube', group discussions CDs and training the students to satisfy the company's bottom—line within which the individual's talent is better utilized in a group. The objectives include:



- appreciating the nuances of the group decision—making method.
- understanding the skills tested and participating effectively in the Group Discussion.
- learning the fundamentals of how making a good presentation and have various practice presentations in small groups and larger audiences.
- attending any type of interview with the confidence borne out of knowledge gained and observe sessions.

Students Activity – the highest 10 Time Wasters

Materials needed: Nil

Time required : twenty minutes.

Guidelines: Instructions to the facilitator are given in the first person. Read out the instructions but the participants should not go through the activity beforehand.

Procedure : (Brief the participants in this manner)

I would like you to first think individually for about 5 minutes, and list out what you feel are the top ten time wasters for any manager in any company.

After five minutes, ask them to get into groups with the persons nearest to them, and then Brainstorm over the subject for another five minutes. After 5 minutes, ask them for their responses, and type them down on the computer. Reject any of those which do not qualify properly, after discussion. Present the slide of list through OHP which is as follows:

1. Crises
2. Telephone calls
3. Poor planning.
4. Attempting to do too much.
5. drop-in visitors.
6. Poor delegation.
7. Personal disorganization
8. Lack of self—discipline.
9. Inability to say 'no'.
10. Procrastination

Point out that the group has got quite a lot of them right.

2.3 RESULT:

The success of a program depends on the satisfaction of end—users. In this context, the users are engineering students. At the end of the semester, a feedback form was given to thirty students out of which twenty six responded. The form centered on finding out normally the effectiveness of the training content offered to them and its adequacy for developing their proficiency.

Focusing on specific skills, students were asked to reply to queries like, whether or not they have learnt to write for BEC Exams, the extent to which they're assured to handle listening skills and therefore the effectiveness of the BEC reading material and soft skills coaching modules provided to them. Besides these queries, they were asked to recommend the kind of inputs that would be provided. They got choices like, providing a lot of range of tasks, a lot of input on reading, audio files

designed by Indian speakers, further tasks on writing and self—instructional tips for college students to follow while coaching. Students had to tick as many acceptable choices as they can.

Teachers, who work towards professional development, perpetually reflect on their teaching ability, their proficiency in handling the syllabus, similarly, nearly 65% of students responded that they were confident to try and do listening tasks. Richards (1990 p. 6) , as in [12], assumes that in a critical reflection, a learner recollects a past expertise consciously, examines to evaluate himself, which in turn serves as a source for planning and action. As mentioned earlier, language Professors within the Institution are actively concerned with preparing the course material. It successively facilitates them in developing their professional skills. It had been determined to find out the expertise of material design from Professors. The other queries posed were regarding the integration of technology in the materials, the approach of presenting the materials, their impact on students and the rating of students' language proficiency. Finally the Professors were asked to spell out the benefits in preparing and offering the resources for his or her students. . A survey was conducted among the Professors of other Institutions. The queries elicited the amount of years that the Professors have been concerned in material design, the end—users of their materials, their mode of modifying the materials to suit the requirements of the students, students' contribution to preparation of learning content and whether or not the Professors have used materials prepared by other professionals.

2.4. DISCUSSION

Analyzing the feedback given by twenty six students, it is found that almost 93.6% of them felt that the materials provided to them were effective. For the connected question of the adequacy of input provided, 82% of them felt that the input was adequate. Sixty per cent students said that they had learned to try and do the written tasks given in BEC books and 'You Tube' and soft skills coaching materials with the input given through language lab course materials. However, the remaining 40% of them felt that they needed to enhance their writing talent. Similarly, nearly 65% of students responded that they were confident to try and do listening tasks. While 17% felt confident, the remaining 18% felt that the listening tasks were very tough for them. For the question on the effectiveness of the reading materials provided within the language lab, 81% felt that it had been effective, 14% found it to be very effective and 5% found the materials to be ineffective.

After getting the students' inputs, the teacher urged the students to make suggestions for improvising the course materials. The pie chart offers the information in fig 1.

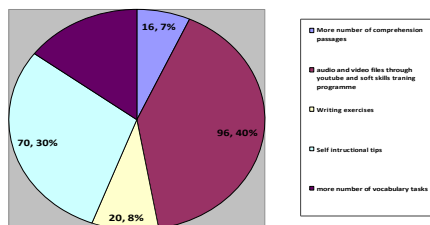


FIGURE 1

As mentioned earlier, students got five options to recommend to the teacher. Nearly 96.33% of them felt the need for being more attentive to non-native speakers' audio files as they're comfortable with the Indian accent and pronunciation. Since these students are exposed to Indian accent and there's a lot of likelihood of their grasp in the audio content with less effort. After then, the response given by a range of students (70.30%), who have steered the availability for self—instructional tips, indicates that they wanted to be independent in their learning method. With reference to the amount of vocabulary tasks given, 35.12% recommend that a lot of tasks ought to be given for business vocabulary. Equally 20.8% of them suggested the importance of providing writing tasks. The rationale is that, generally these ESL students realize writing tasks, significantly BEC writing tasks to be very difficult compared to other skills. This reality is obvious in their response to earlier questions that centered on their writing ability (20% felt the need for improvement). With reference to the reading tasks, only 16.7% of them expected the Professors to produce a lot of reading passages.

Considering the teachers' responses regarding their expertise in designing the learning materials, out of seven Professors, five of them responded to the queries. For the questions on the number of expertise in preparing the training content, whereas 90% of them are involved in this for 1-5 years, solely 25% involved for almost ten years. It should be explicit that those who are concerned within 1—5 years are exposed to material design are exposed to material design only by virtue of working within the Institution. In the case of the Professor, who works on material design for almost ten years, had started working on it while serving in another Institution. Similarly, for the consecutive question on end-users of the materials, 80% of Professors said that their materials were being used by undergraduates and 20% of the postgraduate students. Eighty percent of the Professors modify their materials in order to support the requirements of the syllabus. However, once it involves students' contribution to designing materials, 70% of Professors said that they took their input sometimes. Sixty five per cent of Professors used the resources prepared by other professionals. It's worth mentioning here that once the university was functioning underneath the affiliation of Anna University, Government run Institution, the language materials were offered by them. Currently in some Institutions, the liberty is given to Professors to

the integration of technology in the course material design. Nearly 85% of Professors design materials with the combination of social media like You Tube, and Web 2.0 tools like Blog and Pod casts. Considering the preference to present the materials to students as reading materials, as CDs and as a mixture of reading material and CDs, 65% of the Professors have opted for reading materials and 35% for presenting a mixture of materials and CDs. Considering the effective presentation of the materials, 70% of Professors believed that students have shown ability in handling business connected tasks. However, 30% of the Professors have felt that students are innovating on a few occasions. It should be explicit that students would be able to analyze the tasks provided as a part of learning material and handle them expeditiously, if the materials provided a clear image of corporate work culture. This is often quite evident within the materials designed. All the Professors (100%) take into account that the materials provide adequate exposure to corporate scenario. When asked to rate the proficiency of students, the Professors gave these responses: Refer fig. 2

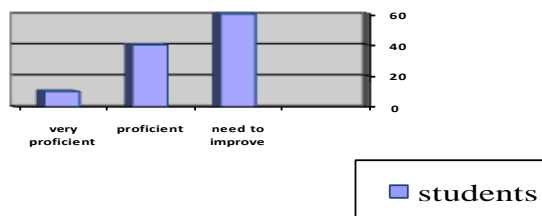


FIGURE 2

Whereas 10% felt that students are very efficient in their language skills, 40% of Professors mentioned that the students are proficient. Remaining 50% consider that students need to improve. This rating reflects the various levels of students' performance within the examination. It should be obvious that in Indian Institutions students admitted in various engineering disciplines exhibit totally different levels of language proficiency. Whereas quite a few have had school education in convents, a substantial range of them come from semi—urban schools. The coaching given within the language lab is geared toward redressing that gap and enhancing students' performance in the examinations. The final question was aimed at eliciting the extent to which the language Professors realized the benefits of designing the materials. The responses received from them appear in the following diagram. Refer fig. 3. It is evident that the teacher enjoys the expertise in designing learning materials. The



design their course materials and at the same time use Anna University modules. Moreover, this has expedited

responses show their interest in developing their knowledge and an enthusiasm for enhancing their skills.

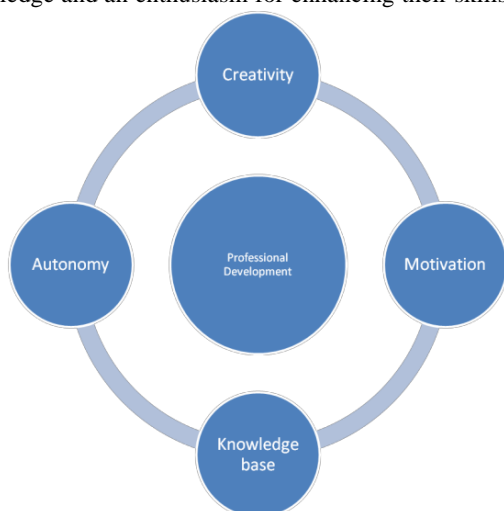


FIGURE 3

III. CONCLUSION

English teachers and professors need to develop in designing materials and students' feedback also stress the importance of faculties developing their professional skills. The trainers should have expertise with classroom environment which would greatly facilitate the evaluation of students' proficiency. Professors understand that there is a lot of work that needs to be done, especially in training teachers to design the materials.

1. Trainers ought to have hands on expertise in using web resources.

2. Trainers should prepare their students to acquire responsibility for his or her learning. In this context, Lai Lai Kwan quotes Dickinson (1987: 11), as in [7] who defines self-access learning as learners using materials in a self-instructed way to facilitate learning as "the term is neutral as to how self-directed or other-directed the learners are". Vicki Trowler (2010 p.3), as in [15] observes —Student engagement is concerned with the interaction between the time, effort and other relevant resources invested by both students and their institutions intended to optimize the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students and the performance, and reputation of the institutionl. This engagement helps them to develop proficiency in selecting relevant learning materials and managing their own learning. We have many resources from Open University (OU). Open Learn is the OU's major contribution to the open educational resources project, which is an Internet empowered worldwide community effort to create a free collaborative virtual space for education, as in [2] Finally, it should be admitted that

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students get an authentic instructional expertise through open resources.

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**APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE
STUDENTS**

Name:

Name of the Institution:

Address:

Branch:

1. Do you think that the materials provided using Computer assisted Language Learning is effective?
Yes No
 2. Do you think that the materials provided using Computer assisted Language Learning is adequate?
Yes No
 3. Do you think that you learnt to do the written tasks given in BEC Books and 'You Tube' through research lab course materials?
Yes No
 4. Do you think that the listening tasks are easy to interpret and understand?
Yes No
 5. Do you think that the reading tasks are effective to enhance the reading skills?
Yes No
- Recommendations for Teachers
6. Whether the comprehension passages are sufficient to you for answering independently?
Yes No
 7. Whether the audio files of nonnative speakers comfortable with the Indian accent and Pronunciation?
Yes No
 8. Whether self instructional tips motivate you to be independent?
Yes No
 9. Whether the vocabulary tasks adequate to develop business vocabulary?
Yes No
 10. Whether BEC writing tasks are very easy?
Yes No

**QUESTIONNAIRE
TEACHERS**

Name:

Name of the Institution where you teach:

Address:

Qualification:

1. How many years of Experience? Please mention _____
2. For whom do you design the materials?
a. Undergraduates' b. Postgraduates
3. Whether the materials support the syllables that designed?
Yes No
4. Do you consider the student's input while designing the syllables?
Yes No
5. Do you use materials designed by others?
Yes No
6. Do you use social media like YouTube, Web 2.0 tools like blogs and Podcast to design the materials?
Yes No
7. Whether you use reading materials alone or a mixture of reading materials and CD's?
a. Reading materials b. A mixture of reading materials and CD's
8. Whether the students are able to handle business connected tasks with the materials provided?
Yes No
9. Do you think that the student's gets exposure to the corporate scenario using the materials designed?
Yes No
10. How do you treat your students' proficiency in language skills?
Very proficient Proficient
Need to improve

Biography



C. Chamundeshwari, M.A(Eng.), M.A.(Soc.), B.Ed., MPhil., PhD Scholar, Assistant Professor and Head, Department of English, Mahendra College of Engineering, Salem, Tamil Nadu has 11 years of teaching experience in Schools and Engineering Colleges. Her areas of interest are Computer Assisted Language Learning and Technical writing. She has presented papers in seven national and international conferences and seminars within the country.



Dr. R. Ganesan, Professor and Head, Department of English has 30 years of teaching English Language for engineering students at Kongu Engineering College, Erode, Tamil Nadu. He heads the Department with 18 faculty Members of whom three are Ph. D., holders. Dr. R. Ganesan has considerable experience in soft skills development and content writing. His areas of interest are American and British Literature, as well as Indian writing in English and technical writing. He is guiding six Ph. D., scholars at Anna University, Coimbatore working on ELT and American Literature. He has attended several national and international conferences within the country. He also organized an International Congress on English Grammar (sixth ICEG) from 9th January to 13 January 2010 at Kongu Engineering College. He is also the coordinator of the Erode ELTAI Chapter.