

Essential principles of esp materials designing

The advance of the modern world has varied the approaches to language learning and teaching. Students' learning needs have witnessed a lot of changes. To keep pace with these changes adequate course design for ESP, especially the design of new materials, is now in great need.

The materials that can still be found and are still used by some tutors in teaching process, claim to be out-of-date and are much lagging behind in material design, especially in the area of exercise design. The latter referred to, focusing on reading and translation skills, present unsatisfactory performance in integrating skills. As most exercises are designed to check students' understanding, they appear more mechanical. Group work and visuals are not present in the exercises.

The principle of skills integration can be explained as the teaching of the language skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking and translating in conjunction with each other. To provide the quality and relevance of materials and methodology the following objectives should be taken into consideration: vocabulary, grammar, reading, listening, speaking, writing and translation.

In developing language materials two main points can be outlined: 1) selecting texts, and 2) designing exercises.

There are some important principles that should be viewed for each point. Selected texts have to be authentic, adopted, short and accessible, flexible, provide a stimulus for learning, provide models for correct and appropriate language. Designed exercises should be content-based, skill-focused, similar to activities at target situations, contain interesting contexts and enjoyable activities.

Thus ESP tutors have great freedom to choose interesting and motivating topics, demonstrate their inventiveness and creativity. Provided that ESP teachers are to be responsible for developing the course, they need time, skills and support to do so.