

MATERIAL DESIGN IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract. The article presents the importance and some key elements of material designing. It discusses the necessary points of it that must be taken into account while planning it. Furthermore, the author is offering her own lesson plan as a sample for implementing into practice.

Key words: Learner's needs, communicative competence, set objectives, learner autonomy, intercultural competence, adapting, adopting

Material designing is a complicated process that demands a great competence, high-level of intelligence or knowledge, mastery of language skills and passion of one's work. Today the teachers should be aware of the importance of creating their own materials and acquiring the skills of adapting or selecting the necessary materials from different sources.

“Material development is anything which is used by teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language”[1, 2].

“Is any systematic description of the techniques and exercises to be used in classroom teaching”[3, 135]

According to Brown's opinion, lesson plan offers the system of different classroom activities used by teachers and learners in the learning process. While designing a lesson plan every teacher should know how to teach, what to teach, whom to teach and why to teach any activity included in the material. An effective lesson plan should include all language skills (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking), interaction patterns (whole class activities, pair work, group work and individual), set clear goals and objectives to each step (what's the purpose of completing of an each task or an activity), certain time limit to every task or activity carefully according to the level of the learners', the procedure of the activities (teacher should describe distinctly what to do in each step). Moreover, in designing process it is important for the teachers to take into account the level of their learners, their interests, attentions and background knowledge. Another important point is to plan their lessons from easy to more complex. In addition to this we should avoid of much identity, for instance, a lot of writing or reading tasks may seem boring for the students. For this reason, the teachers should integrate some audio-visual components, speaking activities or any role-plays in their material design.

A good language teaching material should:

meet the learners' needs;

have certain goals and objectives;

present correct assessment, e.g. formative assessment;

focus on an authentic texts and functional language in context;

help to develop all language skills;
demand learner-centered activities;
provide task-based activities;
build learners' communicative competence;
include necessary learning styles.

However, even if including all these criteria may not guarantee a good result or outcome. Because a certain lesson plan that works well in one class, may not be so effective in another one. The reason can be different: less motivation, inappropriate approach to teaching, having no preparation or other reasons for failure. To avoid of this, every teacher should design his/her own lesson plan, have clear idea of implementing it into teaching process, be able to select appropriate materials from useful sources adequate to their level, interest and even paying attention the learners' intercultural competences. If we don't take these points into account our students may ignore our attempts to teach them.

There are the following steps in material designing:

1. Adopting ➡ Selecting useful materials ➡ Set objectives;
2. Developing ➡ Designing your own lesson plan ➡ Derive content from objectives ➡ Establish a sequence for content;
3. Adapting ➡ Selecting and making adjustments to materials ➡ Define techniques and exercises for each content ➡ Decide on your materials for accomplishing your objectives and developing your content.

Harmer (2001) explains: "Good coursebooks are carefully prepared to offer a coherent syllabus, satisfactory language control, motivating texts, tapes and other assessories such as videotapes, CD-ROMs, extra resource material, and useful web links"[2].

I totally agree with Harmer's point of view here, that coursebooks are really good helpers for the teachers to take control over teaching and learning process effectively, always in hand, create comfort in teaching, as while teaching from one coursebook for a long time repetitively teacher may learn it by heart and it makes it easy to teach from it. But there are several negative points of using a certain coursebook, they are the followings, it:

stops professional development;
kills the interest in teaching and learning;
gets the students bored, as all the lessons are the same;
risks to become outdated, as the language is developing and changing year by year;
makes the teachers lazy, as they stop to create their own lesson plans;
doesn't support learner autonomy and responsibility;
doesn't help the teachers to reflect on their teaching.

This doesn't mean that every teacher should sit and create their own lesson plans, because it is a challenging process and not every teacher is skillful for building his/her materials. However, they should follow the steps as mentioned above they should be aware of adopting, developing and after adapting it into their teaching. It also requires a great effort and time from the teachers to complete this, but time by time they will become excellent material designers in the future.

As a conclusion, I want to point out that material designing is a useful activity that every teacher should master, if they want to achieve a great success in the teaching process. It requires being competent in IT skills, mastery of all language skills including intercultural competence, talented in selecting the most important and useful materials, skillful in teaching and others. I believe the teacher who is really passionate to teaching and loves teaching, who inspires her/his learners is able to create wonders not only in teaching but also in designing interesting and effective lesson plans as well. Here I'd like to share my own lesson plan that I've designed myself.

Lesson plan.

Instructor course: Teaching language systems for communication

Time: 80-min

Class: Experimental groups

Level: Intermediate

Topic: Teaching Vocabulary through idioms

Aim: Ways of presenting and practising Vocabulary through idioms by different interactive methods.

Procedure:

Activities	Integration	Skill practiced	Procedure	Objectives	Time
1. Warm-up activity	T-S	Reading, Speaking	Guess the meaning of these idioms. Teacher distributes the different questions or situations with some idioms to the students and asks them to interpret the meaning of these idioms.	To warm-up	10-min
2. Main part	T-S	Reading, writing	The teacher explains the idioms of the language and guessing its meaning through context. Direct translation does not work in this situation.	To get the learners aware of the usage of idioms	10-min
			Teacher mixes the cards up and places them face-		

<p>3. Memory</p>	<p>S-S</p>	<p>Reading, Speaking</p>	<p>down on a table. Students should find the appropriate definition to these idioms. Suggested answers: blue-sad; butt in – to interfere; chicken – scared, frightened, cry over spilled milk – to be unhappy because of a past event that cannot be changed; hand to mouth – to live in poor conditions from day to day; in hot water – in trouble; a piece of cake – something that is easy to do; to turn a deaf ear – to ignore someone; under the weather – unwell, ill; see red – to get angry; buy smth for a song – to buy smth very cheaply; green thumb – natural ability to grow plants.</p>	<p>To practice the student's comprehension</p>	<p>10-min</p>
<p>4. Idiom story</p>	<p>S-S</p>	<p>Writing, Reading</p>	<p>The teacher asks the students to sit in pairs and think of an especially eventful day in their lives. Tell them to write a narrative story of the day's events: who they met, how they felt, what they did. Ask the students to exchange papers and read their partners' narratives and have each student tell the rest of the class what idioms they have used in their writing.</p>	<p>To consolidate the previous task</p>	<p>25-min</p>
<p>5. Comparison of Expression</p>	<p>S-S</p>	<p>Reading, Writing</p>	<p>Teacher prepares a list of idioms given in the previous activities that have meanings similar to idioms or expressions in the students' L1. Discuss and compare the</p>	<p>To compare idioms or expressions in two languages</p>	<p>15-min</p>

			similarities and differences between the two languages. Suggested answers: Burnini suqmoq, qo'l uchida kun ko'rmoq, boshi berk kuchaga kirib qolmoq, xamirdan qil sug'urmoq, suvtekin, o'tgan ishga salovot, qovog'idan qor yog'moq, quyonyurak.		
6. Multiple Choice	S-S	Writing, Speaking	Teacher asks the students to choose the correct idiom to fill the blanks. After check the answers with the whole class. Suggested answers: sad, interfere, to live in poor condition, very easy, to be ill, natural ability to grow plants, to ignore, frightened;	recognize To appropriate idioms in context	7-min
7. Home task	T-S	Speaking, Listening	The teacher gives home tasks to find some more idioms at home.	To give home tasks.	3-min

Teaching vocabulary through idioms

1. Answer the questions by guessing the meaning of an idiom given in each sentence:
 1. Who is the **apple of your father's eye**? Is it you or one of your brothers or sister?
 2. Have you ever felt **head over heels in love**? What did you do?
 3. Tell your friends about a time when you were **in hot water** with your teacher/boss.
 4. What makes you feel better when you are **under the weather**?
 5. Discuss something you do **once in a blue moon**.
 6. Have you ever been **flat broke**? What did you do?
 7. How much money should you **save for a rainy day**?
 8. Do you know someone who **sticks his/her nose in** other people's business? What does he or she do?
 9. Who would you rather marry, **a good egg or a Jack of all trades**? Why?
 10. What is the best thing to say to **pop the question**?
 11. What would a woman wear if she is **dressed to kill**? What would a man wear?

12. Did your mother or father ever **put her or his foot down** when you wanted to do something? What?

2. Find the appropriate definition to the given idioms:

Blue	Butt in	Chicken	See red
Hand to mouth	Cry over spilled milk	In hot water	A piece of cake
Under the weather	Buy smth for a song	Turn a deaf ear	Green thumb

Sad	To interfere	Scared, frightened	To be unhappy because of a past event that cannot be changed
to live in poor conditions from day to day	In trouble	Something that is easy to do	To ignore someone
Unwell, ill	To get angry	To buy smth very cheaply	Natural ability to grow plants

3. Write a narrative story using the idioms given in the previous tasks

4. Think and write an idiom in your own language that has a meaning similar to an English idiom.

English Uzbek

1. Butt in _____
2. Hand to mouth _____
3. In hot water _____
4. A piece of cake _____
5. Buy something for a song _____
6. Cry over spilled milk _____
7. Blue _____
8. Chicken _____

5. Choose the correct idiom to these blank spaces:

1. Saida seems pretty unhappy these days. I wonder why she's feeling **blue** .
 - a. angry
 - b. sad
 - c. anxious
 - d. scared
2. We've been waiting patiently in this long line, and that woman just **butted in** ahead of us. She should have gone to the end of the line to wait like the rest of us.
 - a. to be late

- b. to act silly
- c. to take a risk
- d. to interfere

3. Some people in areas affected by drought live a **hand-to-mouth** existence. They collect what little food they can and never have enough to save some for another day.

- a. to live in poor conditions
- b. to have a luxurious life
- c. to be in trouble
- d. to rain very heavily

4. When Sevinch studied Turkish, it was **a piece of cake**, but she found that learning Japanese was very hard.

- a. very difficult
- b. very easy
- c. very quickly
- d. very interesting

5. The children and I have had so many colds this winter. The whole family has been **under the weather** for weeks.

- a. to be cold
- b. to be upset
- c. to be ill
- d. to be happy

6. Marhabo really has a **green thumb**. Everything she plants in her garden grows so well.

- a. half the work or effort
- b. natural ability to grow plants
- c. an effortless time or job
- d. to be extremely successful

7. The child had been whining and crying all day. Eventually his mother **turned a deaf ear**.

- a. to ignore
- b. to look after someone
- c. to punish
- d. to laugh at someone

8. Are you too **chicken** to play a trick on the teacher?

- a. brave
- b. frightened
- c. happy
- d. crazy

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