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Evaluating and designing materials for the ESP classroom

Ana Bocanegra-Valle

This paper explores the development of printed materials in ESP from a practical point of view and aims to shed light on issues of concern to ESP practitioners when they set about writing materials for classroom use. Such matters include the reasons for ESP materials development, the value of authentic materials, the evaluation of published materials, the development of original and adapted in-house materials, and the corresponding implications for the ESP practitioner. Sample activities have been included and commented so as to illustrate the issues raised and to be of practical guidance to in-service and prospective developers of ESP materials.

1 Introduction

Materials design and evaluation as a key area within EFL/ESL (English as a Foreign Language/English as a Second Language) teaching goes back to Cunningsworth (1984) and has since then developed into a topic that has been dealt with in many volumes (Sheldon, 1987; McDonough and Shaw, 1993; Tomlinson, 1998, 2003a; McGrath, 2002; or Renandya, 2003, to name but a few), journal papers, conferences, courses, seminars, workshops and other forms of academic interest around the world. In fact, the existence of an international association such as MATSDA attests the relevance now enjoyed by materials development in language learning¹. Many universities and language centres have begun to offer specialised modules or Master's and PhD courses on materials development. Moreover, at some universities, materials development may be regarded as a key merit for candidates applying for a job and on the same level as a PhD degree, teaching experience or (near-) native language competence².

Turning attention to the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), a milestone in materials development was Herbert's (1965) textbook *The Structure of Technical English*. This was a pioneering work for two reasons: 1) it was the first coursebook focused on ESP and the learning of applied languages (engineering English) – from then onwards the number of ESP textbooks rose steadily and generously, especially from the 90s to the present

¹ Since its foundation in 1993, the Materials Development Association (MATSDA) has been a meeting point for all those interested in the design, evaluation and development of high-quality materials for the learning of languages (see URL: <http://www.matsda.org.uk>).

² Recently, a Finnish university announcing a post for a native-speaker English lecturer stated the following requirement for potential applicants: "Experience in producing teaching materials significant for teaching. Both planning and production will be considered. Selected samples of the teaching material may be enclosed".

and in certain areas such as Business English; and 2) Herbert followed a corpus-based approach to materials design, so popular nowadays, by researching the actual language of engineering publications and providing a basic corpus of expert language to be mastered by learners (then, future engineers).

This paper explores the position of coursebook materials design and evaluation in ESP and aims to shed light on what issues are of concern to ESP practitioners when they set about writing materials for classroom use or potential publication. It focuses on *printed* materials as the most usual medium for classroom materials delivery; however, many theoretical and practical insights herein may be relevant and applicable to audiovisual and/or computer-based materials. Based on my personal experience and practice as a researcher, in-house materials writer and ESP practitioner, I will try to give some hints on the multifaceted nature of materials development and offer practical guidance to in-service and prospective materials developers.

2 Materials development and ESP

2.1 What are materials in ESP?

In language teaching, *materials* are:

Anything which is used to help to teach language learners. Materials can be found in the form of a textbook, a workbook, a cassette, a CD-Rom, a video, a photocopied handout, a newspaper, a paragraph written on a whiteboard: anything which presents or informs about the language being learned. (Tomlinson, 1998: xi)

Such a definition might also serve the purpose of ESP materials; however, four main issues should be emphasised before proceeding any further:

- 1) There are *major* and *minor* ESP areas/courses, and published materials are sensible to this reality. Business English and Maritime English are examples of these³. Some courses that are tailor-made to suit a particular group of students would also fall within the *minor* category (for instance, English for tourism to a group of taxi drivers and policemen in a popular town for British tourists).
- 2) *Subject-matter content* is fundamental to ESP materials. Also known as *carrier content*, *informative content*, *discipline-based knowledge*, *specific*

³ St John (1996: 9) found that “of 24 ESP books claimed as new in 1994, 21 were business related”. About a decade later I had a rough look at the 2006 catalogue of the *English Book Centre* and data revealed that the situation remained the same. The highest number of published titles was in the area of “Banking, Business and Finance” (215 titles). Far behind this *top* ESP area, titles numbered 20 for “Tourism” and “Science and Technology”, 13 for “Computing and Telecommunications”, 8 for “Medicine and Health”, 4 for “Aviation” and “Law”, 3 for “Engineering”, and closed with “Agriculture” (2 titles) and “Maritime” (1 title).

content, specialist knowledge or expert knowledge, this refers to the information which is specific to a particular discipline and which people, like students and future experts, possess in their mother tongue. ESP teachers will need a reasonable understanding of the specific discipline as well as “an interest in the disciplines or professional activities the students are involved in” (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: 14).

- 3) All too often, ESP teachers become evaluators, designers and developers of materials, simply because “publishers are naturally reluctant to produce materials for very limited markets” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987: 106) and most ESP areas conform to this reality. These roles are not exclusive to ESP teachers but, if compared with EFL/ESL teachers, they are more often engaged in the task of evaluating, designing and developing materials for their classroom use. It is precisely this additional role of materials providers/developers that has endowed ESP teachers with the denomination of *practitioners* (Robinson, 1991)⁴.
- 4) Unlike EFL/ESL teaching, there exists a mismatch between pedagogy and research; that is, there is a gap between coursebooks and pedagogical practice, on the one hand, and research findings, on the other. For instance, as Harwood (2005: 150) found, there is “a lack of fit between how academic writers write and what the textbooks teach about writing”.

2.2 What does ESP materials development entail?

Materials are particularly useful in ESP because they play a key role in exposing learners to the language of a particular discipline as it is actually used; in short, they are a source of “real language” (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: 171). Developing materials for the ESP classroom is a trade-off between learning needs, language content and subject-matter content which implies the review of a number of issues:

- What is the target topic/what will be the carrier content?
- Is this topic relevant for my students/the discipline?
- What do I, as an ESP practitioner, know about the carrier content?
- What are my students supposed to know about the carrier content?
- To what extent do materials reflect the language/conventions of the discipline?
- What are the learning goals?
- What is the target language form/function/skill?
- What materials are available, suitable and accessible?
- What teaching equipment is required and available?

⁴ The practical volume edited by Master and Brinton (1998) is a good example of current practices worldwide. Arranged into seven ESP macro-areas, the wide range of contributions felicitously illustrates in-service ESP practitioners’ commitment to in-house materials design and development.

- How much time should be spent on the design, development and implementation of activities?
- Will materials be classroom-oriented or provide additional work?

At its most basic level, the process of ESP materials development is as shown in Figure 1. Firstly, available materials are reviewed, evaluated and selected according to different criteria and with reference to a particular ESP course. Then, if there is a lack of materials, or if materials available are not suitable according to such evaluation, practitioners might be required to develop materials from scratch or abridge, extend, refine, rewrite – in short, adapt – the available materials for a particular learning situation, ESP area, target group of learners, timing or set of resources. There exists the possibility that, although there are materials available for classroom use, practitioners feel the need to provide additional materials for out-of-classroom work, self-study or the like. In this case, the process would not differ.

Lastly, because materials development is an ongoing process, those engaged in creating or adapting materials will be required to pilot test or perform evaluative reviews so as to adjust materials over time in response to implementation outcomes, current trends in the field or research findings. This last step is a desirable practice because “materials that undergo this evaluative review and revision process are likely to serve student and teacher audiences more effectively than materials that do not” (Stoller et al., 2006: 175). Developing materials is a matter of trial and error, and it will be convenient to bear in mind that materials that are appropriate for a particular ESP course/area may not prove so efficient for other ESP courses/areas.

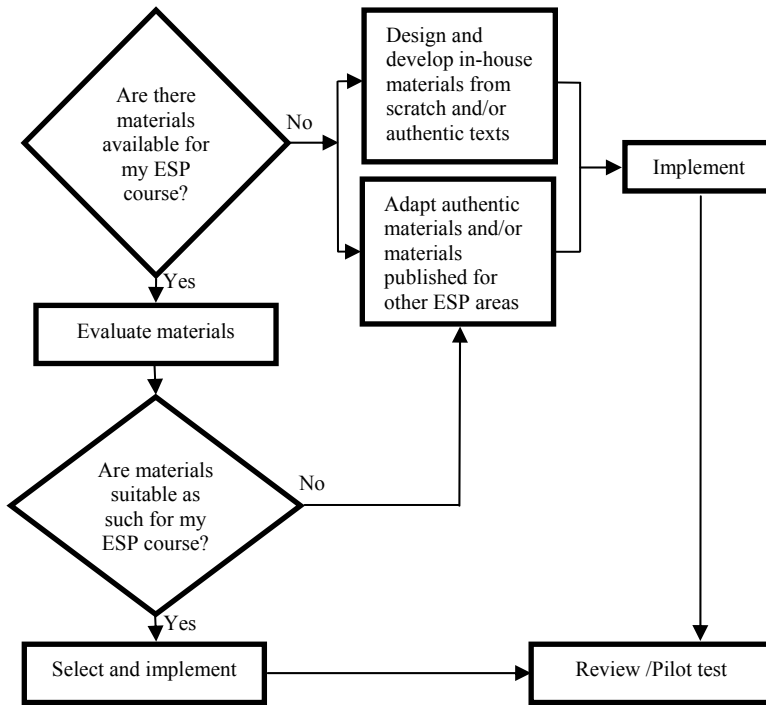


Figure 1. Flowchart on the process of ESP materials development

2.3 The value of authenticity

Authentic, genuine, real, natural or *unsimplified* are adjectives randomly used today in ESP to refer to texts or materials that can be used within language-learning contexts but which were specifically written or developed for an audience other than language learners. Similarly, an *authentic text* would be a text “normally used in the students’ specialist subject area: written by specialists for specialists” (Jordan, 1997: 113).

The notion of *authenticity* has been subject to controversy for some decades, and there might be scholars who would still disagree with today’s generally accepted definition. Henry Widdowson (for whom the authenticity of materials had to be understood in terms of their appropriateness, interaction, outcomes and efficiency rather than based on their origin) stirred up lively discussions on the belief that “what is real or authentic to users is not authentic to learners” (Widdowson, 1998: 19). The view of authenticity in terms of appropriate language use regardless of the origin of the materials (Kuo, 1993), the distinction between text authenticity and learner authenticity

(Lee, 1995), or authenticity of purpose versus genuineness of text (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998) sustained the literature of the time.

An eclectic view is that aired by Mishan (2005), who links theory, research and practice to provide a five-factored criteria for measuring authenticity: i) provenance and authorship of the text; ii) original communicative and sociocultural purpose of the text; iii) original content of the text; iv) learning activity engendered by the text; and v) learners' perceptions of and attitudes towards the text and its corresponding activity. Mishan's (2005) manual generously illustrates how authentic materials can be used in the general language classroom and may be a source of inspiration when attempting to develop materials and tasks for ESP learners.

The two texts in Figure 2 may serve to illustrate this discussion. Text I was extracted from an authentic publication (for an expert audience) and Text II from a non-authentic publication (for ESP learners)⁵.

Text I	Text II
<p>The Nickel-Cadmium Cell. In this cell the active material of the positive plate is nickel-peroxide, and of the negative, metallic cadmium. The active materials are contained in perforated steel tubes which are assembled in steel frames to form complete positive and negative plates. The positive and negative plates are separated by ebonite rod insulators, and the complete cell is erected in a welded sheet steel container. The electrolyte is a solution of pure potassium hydroxide of specific gravity 1.19. On discharge, the nickel peroxide is reduced to a lower oxide while the cadmium is oxidized. On charge the process is reversed.</p>	<p>Nickel-cadmium cell (NiCad). The electrodes are of nickel (+) and cadmium (-) and the electrolyte is potassium hydroxide. It has an EMF of 1.2V and is made in the same sizes as primary cells, e.g. HP2, PP3; button types are also available. High currents can be supplied. Recharging must be by a constant current power supply because of the very low internal resistance.</p>
<p>(Laws, W. (1991) <i>Electricity Applied to Marine Engineering</i>, London: The Institute of Marine Engineers, page 417)</p>	<p>(Glendinning, E.H. and J. McEwan (1993) <i>Oxford English for Electronics</i>. Oxford: OUP, page 27)</p>

Figure 2. The language of authentic versus simplified texts

A swift comparison shows the following main differences:

- 1) Text I is more content-specific than Text II, it provides far more information, more data and greater detail; hence, subject-matter

⁵ It must be noted that Text II is *not* an explicit adaptation of Text I. They are two independent texts with similar content (The Nickel-Cadmium Cell is the carrier content) which I happened to find and, to my understanding, can be paralleled and compared for the purposes of this paper.

complexity is higher and learners should be more familiar with the target discipline;

- 2) In relation to 1) above, the language used to convey such specificity is much more elaborated in Text I as regards:
 - Lexical density: “The electrolyte is a solution of pure potassium hydroxide of specific gravity 1.19” (Text I) versus “The electrolyte is potassium hydroxide” (Text II).
 - Grammatical structures: compare “The active materials are contained in perforated steel tubes which are assembled in steel frames to form complete positive and negative plates” (Text I) with the absence of subordinate and complementary clauses in Text II.
 - Sentence length: compare “In this cell the active material of the positive plate is nickel-peroxide, and of the negative, metallic cadmium” (Text I) with “The electrodes are of nickel (+) and cadmium (-)” (Text II), which is much shorter.
 - Language simplification: in the example above, symbols in Text II act as visuals for simplifying the use of the language and assisting understanding.
 - Linguistic devices: writing is more elaborated in Text I because it makes use of more links, time relaters, etc. that serve different functions (e.g., showing a step in a process).
- 3) In contrast with Text II, the cognitive load when processing the information provided in Text I is much higher. Consider “On discharge, the nickel peroxide is reduced to a lower oxide while the cadmium is oxidized. On charge the process is reversed” (Text I) versus “Recharging must be by a constant current power supply because of the very low internal resistance” (Text II). Text I is focused on what happens during the charging/discharging process whereas Text II does not pay attention to such a process but to a condition for the process to take place.

For most materials writers, the great disadvantage of an authentic text is that the amount of information outweighs the amount of learnable language; in this sense, simplified texts help learners focus their attention on the main language features and use. Nevertheless, as Tomlinson (2003b: 5) claims:

the counter-argument is that such texts overprotect learners, deprive them of the opportunities for acquisition provided by rich texts and do not prepare them for the reality of language use, whereas authentic texts (i.e., texts not written especially for language teaching) can provide exposure to language as it is typically used.

Moreover, when simplifying a text there is a risk of distorting language and making the text inauthentic (Islam and Mares, 2003). This possibility is particularly important in the field of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (as a branch of ESP) because EAP is very genre-dependent and “materials to

familiarize students with a given genre are necessarily authentic texts” (Barnard and Zemach, 2003: 313).

There may be convincing arguments in favour of, or against, the nature and role of authentic materials in language learning, but their extensive use in ESP classrooms is common practice today. Authentic materials are a link between the classroom and the outside world (Wong et al., 1995) and, since the advent of Internet, they are more varied and accessible than ever, thus providing ESP practitioners with a diversity of ‘take-away formats’ (video, audio, pictures and text) awaiting time investment and exploitation effort⁶.

3 Evaluating published materials

Measuring the potential teaching/learning value of authentic texts, coursebooks and other types of materials is one of the ESP practitioner’s duties. Unlike language teaching at primary or secondary school levels, where administrations, departments or staff choose particular coursebooks for a whole institution, materials evaluation is particularly frequent in ESP at tertiary level. This is simply due to the fact that, as a general rule, no single coursebook is followed from beginning to end but, rather, extracts (units, exercises or tasks) from a number of published materials are brought together and, if necessary, supplemented with in-house activities. The reasons for evaluation, however, are common to language teachers in general because there is a need to examine the implications that certain materials may have for a particular course and to come to grounded opinions about the appropriateness of the methodology and content of the materials for a particular context (Littlejohn, 1998).

The use of already available materials implies pros and cons, and these vary according to each target ESP course. Unfortunately, there is no global recipe to carry out an effective evaluation at all levels and for all areas; however, some relevant works suggest methods, include checklists and provide criteria which help to identify gaps, avoid pitfalls, recognise achievements, and confront strengths and weaknesses so as to make decisions for materials use. Materials are mostly evaluated through questionnaires and checklists or analysis sheets, but there are also other methods like interviews, observation procedures, rating scales, and so forth.

Ur (1996), Jordan (1997), Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), Ellis (1998), Littlejohn (1998), Hall (2000), Tomlinson et al. (2001), Islam and Mares (2003), Rubdy (2003) or Tomlinson (2003c), to name but a few, provide general guidelines, establish factors, suggest criteria or provide instructions on how to evaluate published language-learning materials for classroom use

⁶ Barahona and Arnó (2001), for instance, is a good example of how authentic material from the Internet can be implemented in EAP courses.

which may be of relevance to ESP⁷. More specifically, Cunningsworth (1995), Candlin et al. (2002), Barnard and Zemach (2003), Pritchard (2004), Flinders (2005) and Chan (2009) provide criteria, checklists and analytical descriptions with varying levels of detail for particular ESP areas.

Some scholars (Littlejohn, 1998; Rubdy, 2003; Tomlinson, 2003c) complain that, even though useful for their purpose, most frameworks (checklists and questionnaires, mainly) that exist to aid in materials evaluation make general, impressionistic judgements on the materials and do not provide a detailed analysis. From my point of view, Pritchard's (2004) and Chan's (2009) proposals for two particular ESP disciplines fill this gap.

Pritchard (2004) offers an in-depth evaluation of published materials for Maritime English, a field of ESP which particularly stands out as an example of a *minor* discipline. Pritchard covered a wide selection of textbooks and audiovisual materials published between the mid-80s and 90s by searching worldwide through well-known publishing houses, educational institutions and training establishments. Pritchard's detailed survey is of most use to all those ESP practitioners who seek to evaluate ESP materials (not only Maritime English materials) in a consistent manner. Moreover, it is also a neat example of how to make ESP materials evaluation a coherent, systematic, objective and credible activity. On the other hand, Chan (2009) devises her checklist for a radically different discipline. By making use of research findings, she presents a six-step model for linking pedagogical considerations and the particular discourse of Business English, and develops a two-part topic-specific checklist for materials evaluation. Part A categorises pedagogical considerations into six issues of common concern to ESP courses (needs analysis, learning objectives, methodological approach, naturalness of the language models, contextualization of the language, and learner autonomy) which can thus be replicated as such in ESP areas other than Business English. Part B is more topic-specific but may also serve as a guide to other specialised discourse types if supported by research findings.

Materials evaluation is not a straight-forward exercise but a process that "depending on its purpose and the context of use it can embrace different perspectives (prospective, ongoing and/or retrospective) and can be multidimensional (external and/or internal; static and/or dynamic)" (Rubdy, 2003: 54). As a cyclical process, it aims to match course needs with available solutions as well as to bring about improvements in current and future classroom work. In line with this final purpose, Stoller et al. (2006) support *pilot testing* (also known as *class testing* or *trialing*) as an effective means of evaluating the efficiency of (i.e., validating) materials. One of the advantages of pilot testing is that mismatches between course aims and the materials

⁷ Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Sheldon (1987, 1988), Robinson (1991), McDonough and Shaw (1993) and Griffiths (1995), although perhaps a little dated, are still worth reading.

themselves are revealed and corrective measures can be taken and implemented.

When evaluating materials, it might also be useful to take into consideration the potential feedback and expert opinion of subject-matter colleagues on the timely inclusion of certain topics or the relevance of certain activities. Should the opportunity arise, it would also be advisable to obtain perceptions and feedback from learners as potential or actual users of certain materials. In short, both expert colleagues and learners may be extremely illuminating in helping ESP practitioners match, following Dudley-Evans and St John's (1998) terms, carrier content (i.e., the subject matter) to real content (i.e., the specific language).

4 The case for in-house materials

In-house materials refer to materials developed locally by a particular teacher or group of teachers for a particular course, a particular group of students and with the resources available at a particular time. As opposed to published materials, they are also referred to as *tailor-made materials*, *locally produced materials*, *self-designed materials*, *internal materials*, *home-made materials* or *home-grown materials*. In the context of language learning, in-house materials may be developed either from scratch or by adapting existing learning materials and authentic materials/texts. Materials adaptation is defined as:

Making changes to materials in order to improve them or to make them more suitable for a particular type of learner. Adaptation can include reducing, adding, omitting, modifying and supplementing. Most teachers adapt materials every time they use a textbook in order to maximise the value of the book for their particular learners. (Tomlinson, 1998: xi)

In contrast to materials evaluation, in-house materials is an under-researched area: literature is wanting and principled frameworks and criteria for in-house materials development and adaptation are scarce. Some suggestions for materials production and/or adaptation may be found in the relevant literature (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998; Jolly and Bolitho, 1998; Tomlinson, 1998, 2003a; Barnard and Zemach, 2003; Islam and Mares, 2003; Saraceni, 2003) and can be customised for use in ESP contexts, as required.

The reasons why ESP practitioners need to grow their own materials may be varied and can be summed up as follows:

- To have course materials
- To add variety to available materials and classroom work
- To supplement coursebooks and other available materials
- To exploit authentic materials
- To foster particular language items or skills

- To modify or increase/decrease the difficulty of learning targets
- To enhance or simplify informative content
- To attend to learners' needs, lacks and wants
- To highlight genre and/or discourse conventions
- To cater for learning diversity (i.e., differing learning styles)
- To deal with large, heterogeneous learner groups
- To maximise resources and time available
- To provide supplementary work
- To promote language learning autonomy
- To adapt the course to suit the demands of a particular institution and/or country/region

Some ESP areas are particularly sensitive to in-house materials due to the lack of published materials available. Hence, ESP practitioners dealing with *minor* disciplines (in the sense discussed above) are required to rely wholly or mostly on their self-designed materials. In other cases, materials available may be too country/region-specific or, on the contrary, too internationally oriented; therefore, some replacement may be needed⁸. There might be other particular circumstances, such as external mandates, by which ESP practitioners may feel obliged to provide their own materials. In any case, following Krzanowski (1998), as far as possible good self-designed ESP materials should:

- balance informative, language and communicative content (i.e., “adequacy of content”);
- be based on topics of general academic and professional interest;
- be directly linked to related degree/course/curriculum;
- be recyclable and evergreen;
- be evaluated against length and time available;
- be set in a memorable context;
- meet the criterion of authenticity;
- ideally cover both language and skills;
- offer students the opportunity to gain transferable skills;
- not over-promote one discrete skill;
- lend themselves to being adapted and/or extended;
- stimulate student interaction;
- adapt preferences to learners' needs and knowledge;
- be professionally printed and edited;
- help practitioners develop their own teaching style.

⁸ For instance, a Maritime English teacher in southern Spain may feel the need to replace a unit with the carrier content of “particulars of icebreakers” with a unit that includes the carrier content of “particulars of fishing vessels”, which, in this particular case, will be more relevant to the profession given the fishing industry in the area and the absence of icebreakers.

5 A sample of in-house materials for the ESP classroom

This section provides examples of in-house materials developed from scratch and by adaptation⁹. When attempting to produce your own materials and/or adapt available materials, I would suggest following these Ten Commandments:

- I evaluate resources and time available
- II evaluate input (terminology, grammar, level of formality, relevance to the discipline, etc.)
- III contrast students' formal (linguistic) knowledge with that required by the piece of oral and written discourse
- IV contrast students' content (subject-matter) knowledge with that required by the piece of oral and written discourse
- V evaluate the relevance of learning goals against the unit/course/discipline
- VI consider the relevance of carrier content (subject matter) within the unit/course/discipline
- VII consider the relevance of the real content (language) within the unit/course/discipline
- VIII consider timing, lay-out and edition requirements
- IX take into account updating and recyclability
- X be aware of your limitations

Materials may be adapted by means of different techniques as explained and illustrated in Figure 3. Moreover, this range of techniques may be applied for adapting materials across disciplines, within disciplines, from other learning materials and from authentic materials.

⁹ This issue has been of particular interest to me for some time. For more illustrative materials of this kind, see Bocanegra (1997, 1999, 2001).

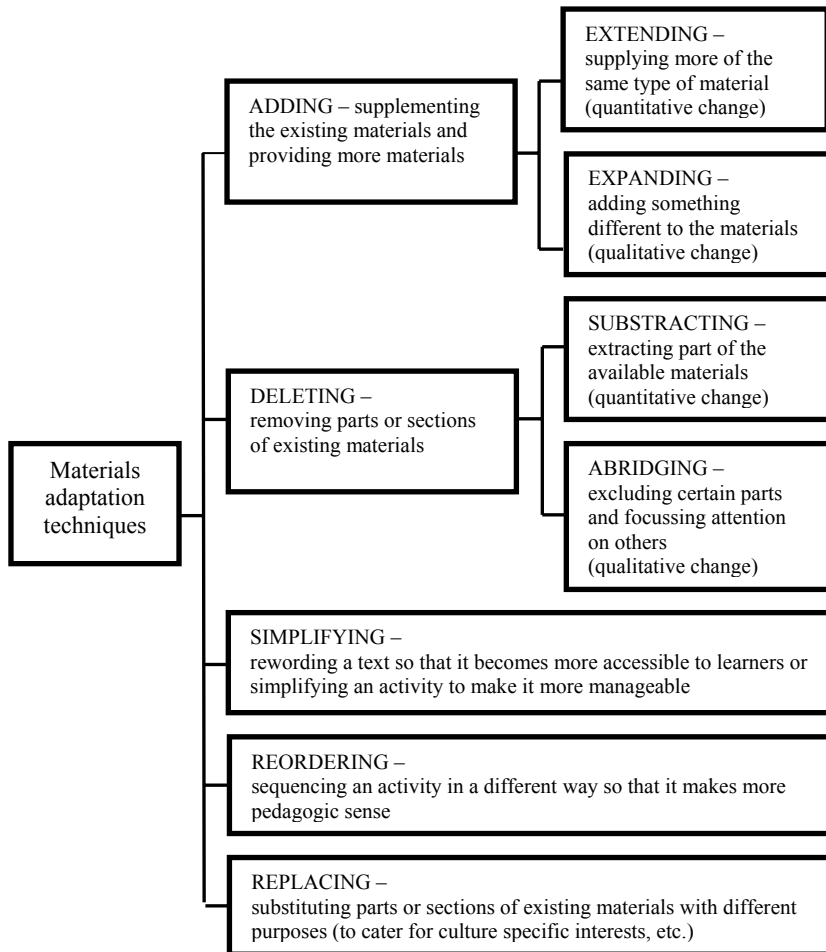


Figure 3. Techniques for adapting materials (based on Islam and Mares, 2003: 91-92)

SAMPLE ACTIVITY 1: *A presentation to the board* (see Appendix)

This example illustrates how materials can be adapted across disciplines from published learning materials and by means of extending, expanding and replacing techniques. The original exercise was found in Waistell, M. (1993) *Executive Listening*, London: Nelson, page 81. It was a follow-up exercise to

promote vocabulary learning targeted at a Business English audience. The original exercise consisted of a text with gaps to be filled in with words from a lead-in exercise and considering the graph included. For the adaptation task I inserted a blank graph, tried to imitate a real speech to the board and provided a more visual layout by making use of different visuals. The language of the reference text has been adapted so as to resemble oral language and contain terminology relevant to the new ESP area (industrial engineering). The main similarities and differences between source and adapted material are summarised in Table 1.

Feature	Original exercise	Adapted exercise
<i>ESP area</i>	Business English	English for industrial engineering
<i>Language level</i>	Intermediate	Low-intermediate
<i>Learning aim</i>	Terminology	Reading comprehension
<i>Tasks</i>	Fill in gaps from graph and lead-in text	Skim text and draw graph from text
<i>Type of input</i>	Graph and lead-in text	Text
<i>Language</i>	Imitating oral language but not presented as such	Imitating oral language and presented as such
<i>Rubrics</i>	Direct instructions to carry out the exercise	Building of context to resemble a real professional situation
<i>Visual aids</i>	Graph drawn	Graph to be drawn. Representation of context where input occurs. Oral language is brought into context
<i>Preparation time</i>	0 mins	45 mins approx.
<i>Implementation time</i>	5 mins	5 mins
<i>Group work</i>	Individual work	Individual work
<i>Variations</i>	No	Yes. Working in pairs, one student performs the role of advisor to the company reading the annual report and another student fills in the graph paying attention to the oral input. Additional aim: to provide opportunities for speaking and listening

Table 1. *A presentation to the board*: similarities and differences between authentic and adapted material

SAMPLE ACTIVITY 2: *My ship's voyage* (see Appendix)

This example illustrates how materials can be adapted within disciplines from published learning materials (Blakey, T.N. (1987) *English for Maritime Purposes*, London: Prentice Hall, page 100) and by means of extending, expanding, reordering and replacing techniques. Here, Maritime English learners were asked to write a similar description to the one exemplified by using the prompts given and inserting the corresponding prepositions and definite article if necessary. The main similarities and differences between source and adapted material are summarised in Table 2.

Feature	Original exercise	Adapted exercise
<i>ESP area</i>	Maritime English	Maritime English
<i>Exercises/Tasks</i>	One/Two	Four/Six
<i>Language level</i>	Low	Low-intermediate
<i>Grammatical aim</i>	Place/movement prepositions, definite article, simple past	Place, movement and time prepositions, definite article, simple past, past continuous and superlatives
<i>Vocabulary aim</i>	Ship types, manoeuvres, geographical names	Ship types, manoeuvres, geographical names, types of cargo, identification
<i>Skills aim</i>	Reading comprehension, guided writing	Reading comprehension, guided and free writing, listening and speaking
<i>Tasks</i>	Describe as guided	Choose among options, deduce grammar rule, relate prepositions to place and movement, transfer information from and to visual aid, interact orally
<i>Type of input</i>	Text	Text, drawing, peers
<i>Rubrics</i>	Direct instructions to carry out the exercise	Building of context to resemble a real context. Gradual presentation with increasing difficulty
<i>Visual aids</i>	No	Yes. Maps
<i>Preparation time</i>	0 mins	60 mins approx.
<i>Implementation time</i>	10-15 mins	45-50 mins
<i>Group work</i>	Teacher to large group, individual work	Teacher to large group, individual work, pair-work with oral interaction

Table 2. *My ship's voyage*: similarities and differences between authentic and adapted material

SAMPLE ACTIVITY 3: *Abandoning ship* (see Appendix)

This example illustrates how authentic available materials, other than published texts/books, can be used for the design of classroom exercises. The source used is an instruction card that can be found (usually posted) on board any vessel and shows how a packed evacuation suit must be worn when abandoning ship. The procedure I followed for the layout was scanning the card, reordering the pictures using the corresponding computer tool and deleting part of the language in the instructions. The main aim was to provide opportunities for learners to interact orally in a large group while at the same time requiring them to classify information and become accustomed to the language of instructions relevant to their professional field. Students are introduced to the topic by the set of questions in Step 1 (pre-communicative activity). Then, they carry out the task by exchanging information and interacting orally (Step 2). Finally, Step 3 provides some grammar practice of relevance to the language of instructions. Students are not explicitly taught how to use the verb in the imperative tense; they are encouraged to have a look at the example [1], consider the verbs provided in the table, and deduce how a verb must be used for giving instructions and orders. The form *don't* may be additionally added to provide practice on negative instructions and orders.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY 4: *Emergency rescue boats* (see Appendix)

This example illustrates one of the many possibilities that the Internet offers as an authentic source for the development of web-based materials. The source material was extracted from the official site of a company specialised in marine and other products (<http://www.avoninflatables.co.uk/>). The whole exercise was developed from scratch by making use of the commercial information provided on-line, a picture of the products offered and basic computer tools for providing a more learner-friendly layout. The main aim of the exercise is to practise specific vocabulary by interacting orally. By asking questions and requesting specific data, students are required to fill in the table of specifications with the missing information. This is an information gap activity in which learners are asked to share information with restricted co-operation: one learner possesses some information which his/her partner must discover by taking the initiative and by formulating relevant questions. The difficulty of this exercise lies in the ability of learners to comprehend figures and interpret abbreviated dimensions. It can work as a sort of note-taking practice, which will be very useful in the profession because grasping spellings and, particularly, numbers through speech is quite a difficult task, even for proficient non-native speakers.

6 The teacher's role revisited

EFL/ESL and ESP teaching materials development shares a common rationale and methodology. The process of evaluating and designing materials to be used in an EFL/ESL classroom does not differ significantly from doing the same for an ESP context. The difference, however, lies in an unbalanced distribution of duties. As previously discussed, ESP practitioners are more often faced with the task and responsibility of developing learning materials. Furthermore, they are also required to be aware and familiarised with the specialist knowledge relevant to the learners and to keep learning materials updated with the latest innovations in the target discipline.

Administrations and other stakeholders (including learners) take for granted that a good ESP teacher is also a good materials writer or a good developer of course materials. For Dudley-Evans and St John (1998: 173) this is a myth to be disputed because “only a small proportion of good teachers are also good designers of course materials. What all ESP practitioners have to be is good providers of materials”. Indeed, even though materials writers were good teachers, “not all good teachers [would] make good materials writers” (Barnard and Zemach, 2003: 313). This is particularly evident if ESP practitioners lack the necessary grounding in materials evaluation, design and development, which in most cases makes them act as materials developers driven by personal intuition, beliefs and experience, if they have any. In any case, materials writing may also be understood as a need to reduce dependency on publisher materials and, more importantly, as a means of professional development (Jolly and Bolitho, 1998).

Current ESP practitioners cannot remain unaware of the fact that “materials have evolved into much more complex objects” (Littlejohn, 1998: 190) and that such complexity puts additional pressure on professionals in their day-to-day work. The most immediate example is the Internet as a source of authentic materials, which are just a mouse-click away. In most cases, teachers and learners are computer literate; thus, it places heavier workloads and more challenging demands on the teaching profession if practitioners are required to rely on authenticity to develop learning materials for classroom use.

Barnard and Zemach (2003: 313) claim that ESP practitioners, as prospective materials writers, should have “teaching experience in the relevant specialism”, “some degree of knowledge of the relevant specialism”, “an interest in the relevant specialism”, and “familiarity with learning materials available for the specialism”, among others. To my understanding, this heavy reliance on “specialism” is the key feature that emphasises the difference between EFL/ESL teachers and ESP practitioners as materials providers, at the same time as it challenges the latter to:

- become familiar with the specialist subject (carrier content);

- become familiar with the language of the subject (real content);
- become familiar with the teaching of adult learners, and large/heterogeneous groups;
- become familiar with materials evaluation, design and development;
- be ready to spend time on evaluating, designing and developing materials;
- be ready to review, pilot test and update materials;
- be creative, imaginative and flexible;
- be ready to accept new challenges and overcome anti-scientific attitudes;
- be ready to rely on expert colleagues' knowledge and professional experience; and,
- be ready to take into account students' specialist knowledge.

7 Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have tried to cover a range of important issues within the scope of ESP materials development, paying particular attention to the ESP practitioner, the case for materials evaluation, and the possibilities and challenges of in-house materials for minor ESP areas. It has also been my intention to confront the notion of authenticity when reviewing texts and materials for classroom use and to identify key areas of potential research. Figures and tables have been included to enhance a practical approach, and examples and activities have been analysed in the light of such discussions. The evaluation, design and eventual development of materials offer a great potential for ESP practitioners and researchers alike. It is hoped that the ideas expressed herein and the personal experience shared both contribute to enrich current classroom practice and fruitful research.

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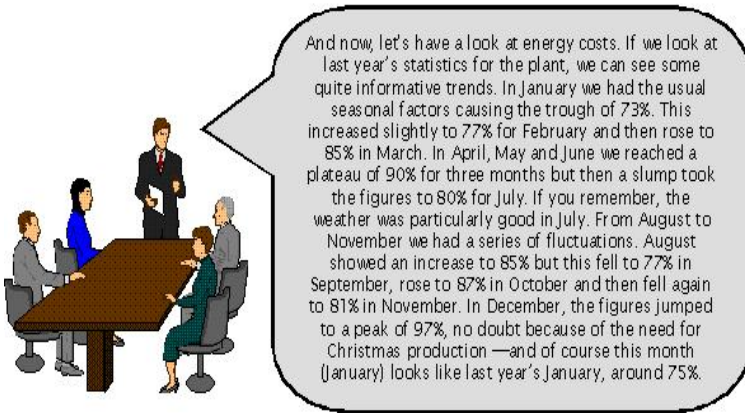
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Appendix

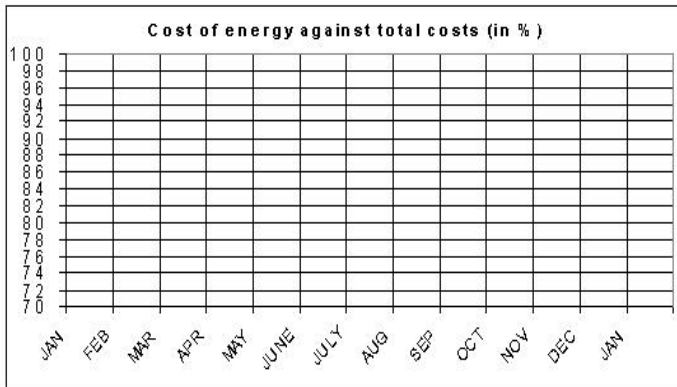
SAMPLE ACTIVITY 1: *A presentation to the board*

PAPERALIA is a paper plant located outside Manchester (UK). The Managing Director is presenting the annual report to the other members of the Paperalia board.

The following extract refers to that part of his speech which evaluates the cost of energy used by the plant in relation to the total production costs. As a member of the board, you prefer visual information. Read the final report and complete the following graph according to the information provided.



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SAMPLE ACTIVITY 2: *My ship's voyage*

Exercise 1.- What do you know about the Titanic? Choose the best prepositions in the following passage.

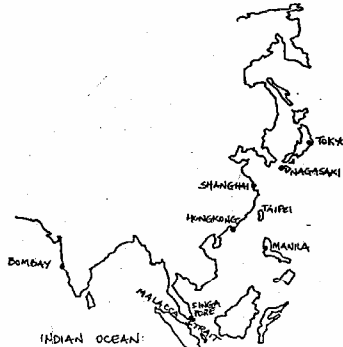
- Vessel Titanic, a liner OF/AT 46,328 tons, was the largest ship OF/IN the world when she was built. She struck an iceberg IN/ON the North Atlantic IN/ON her maiden voyage IN/ON 1912 and sank with the loss of 1,490 lives. She was sailing OF/FROM Southampton TO/UNTIL New York ON/IN 10 April 1912.

Now read the description of a voyage made by MV Diomedea paying particular attention to the prepositions of place. Underline them, compare with your answers for the text above and discuss.

- On 6 April, 1979 the French general cargo vessel, MV Diomedea, was fully loaded when she left the port of New Orleans in the USA for Hawaii in the Hawaiian Islands. She steamed across the Gulf of Mexico, through the Yucatan Channel and along the north coast of Jamaica, calling at Kingston. Then she sailed through the Panama Canal and across the Pacific Ocean to Hawaii.

Exercise 2.- Write a similar description for the voyage outlined below and follow the vessel by plotting her route in the map. Use the appropriate prepositions and the definite article (*the*) where necessary:

10/9/80 - bulk oil carrier - SS Enterprise - partial load - Nagasaki - Japan - Bombay - India - east coast of China - Taiwan Strait - South China Sea - Singapore - Strait of Malacca - Indian Ocean - Sri Lanka - west coast of India - Bombay.



Exercise 3.- Pair work. Take your time to make a similar voyage using the prompts below, then, describe that voyage to your partner who will follow it on the map provided. Once your partner's vessel has arrived safely to her destination port, it is time to return and your partner will describe the voyage back. Exchange roles and ... enjoy your voyage!

16/6/80 - Italy - passenger liner - MV Orient - Southampton - UK - Naples - Italy - English Channel - Bay of Biscay - west coast of Portugal - Lisbon - Strait of Gibraltar - Mediterranean Sea - Naples.



Exercise 4.- Describe in a similar way a personal voyage or a voyage on which you would love to set off.

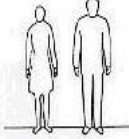
SAMPLE ACTIVITY 3: *Abandoning ship*

STEP 1. Have a look at the pictures below to answer these questions briefly:


- A What are the pictures showing?
- B When would you be following these instructions?
- C Have you ever worn a suit like this?
- D If so, when was that?

STEP 2. Imagine you have to abandon your ship. Look again at the pictures below and work with your partner to put the ten stages to be followed in the correct order. The instructions below will help you in case of doubt.


INSTRUCTIONS




[1] Emergency!
[1] Emergency!
Abandon ship



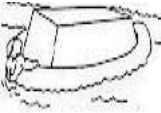
[] _____
lifejacket again




[] _____ to
liferaft and
_____ calm




[] _____
stair and _____




[] _____
liferaft and
_____ rescue



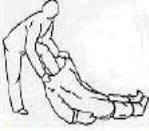
[] _____
lifejacket




[] _____
PAK EVAC from wallet




[] _____
lifejacket



[] _____ suit
through neck entry



[] _____
lifejacket wallet



[] _____ suit,
hood, and _____ drawcord
to maximum

PACKED EVACUATION SUIT FOR AN ABANDON SHIP SITUATION

PAK EVAC © a premeditated evacuation suit, also termed, 'once-only suit'

STEP 3. Now use the verbs below to complete the instructions for each picture and stage.

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| To Pick Up | To Put On | To Put Up | To Enter |
| To Climb Down | To Enter | To Put On | To Keep |
| To Remove | To Tighten | To Await | To Open |
| To Pick Up | To Make Way | To Board | To Abandon |

SAMPLE ACTIVITY 4: *Emergency rescue boats*

Below you will find some information about the well-known AVON Emergency Rescue Boats. Would you like to know more about their specifications? First of all, decide with a partner who will be Student A and who will be Student B. Then, work with him/her to fill in the missing specifications in the table provided but do not share your paper with him/her (and do not let him/her look at yours, either!).



AVON Emergency Rescue Boats

AVON has just released its brand new emergency rescue boats 380 and 310. Standard equipment includes two paddles, high-output foot bellows (for manual inflation), pressure relief valves (to bleed off over-inflation), and a repair kit.

Student a

SPECIFICATIONS			
Item		ERB-310	ERB-380
Length	Overall	10'0"	
	Inside	6'9"	
Beam	Overall	4'10"	
	Inside	2'4"	
Tube Diameter	Bow	13.5"	
	Stern	15"	
Weight		111 lbs	
Stowed Dimensions		43" x 21" x 13"	
Capacity	Weight	924 lbs	
	Persons	5	
Motor (max Hp)		10 Hp	
Prices		\$ 3,970.00	

Student b

SPECIFICATIONS			
Item		ERB-310	ERB-380
Length	Overall		12'5"
	Inside		8'10"
Beam	Overall		5'6"
	Inside		2'8"
Tube Diameter	Bow		15"
	Stern		17"
Weight			170 lbs
Stowed Dimensions			47" x 26" x 20"
Capacity	Weight		1430 lbs
	Persons		7
Motor (max Hp)			20 Hp
Prices			\$4,995.00

