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**Responding to National  
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# PROCEEDING

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## JOURNEY-ORIENTED MATERIALS ADAPTATION: RESPONDING TO CHANGE

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### Summary

Language teaching under the umbrella of the communicative approach gives greater prominence to the issue of learner-centeredness. Learner-centeredness being emphasized, instructional materials designers are to add a process dimension. In other words, in instructional materials development there ought to be an emphasis on process rather than on static knowledge. There should be a response to change a change from destination-oriented design to journey-oriented one.

Three common ways are employed in materials development. A teacher might attempt to write his/her own new materials. Another might evaluate teaching materials by matching it his/her own teaching purpose. Some others in fact most teachers are involved in the last way, adapting materials. Materials adaptation involves changing the existing materials so that they become more suitable for specific learners or classroom situations. This indirectly involves sequencing

full paper

# Journey-Oriented Materials Adaptation: Responding To Change

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## 1. Workshop Objectives

This workshop is expected to enable the participants:

- a. to experience a model of cooperative class where think-pair-share and team practice activities exist
- b. to explore a range of interactive tasks including information gap activities
- c. to appreciate the importance of adapting existing materials creatively

## 2. Workshop “Commandments”

First Commandment : workshop participants are to attempt to do their best

Second Commandment: workshop participants are to work cooperatively

## 3. Workshop Underlying Theories

### 3.1 Materials Development

The thing to consider after instructional objectives are determined is materials preparation. It is as important as the other components in teaching. In fact, teaching materials are, Richards (2001:251) argues, “a key component in most language programs”. Richards goes on claiming that teaching materials usually serve as the language input learners receive and the language practice happening in class. Having similar claim, Brown (2001:136) points out that teaching materials contribute to the richness of language instruction. There are three

possible ways to get to actual teaching materials. Teachers can write their own materials. Teachers can select from existing materials. They can also modify existing materials. Hutchinson and Waters (1987:96) use the terms materials writing, materials evaluation and materials adaptation to refer to those three alternatives respectively.

In writing their own materials, teachers prepare 4 elements. Presenting a model of materials writing, Hutchinson and Waters (1987:108-18) suggest the preparation of input, context focus, language focus and task. Input can be a text, a dialogue or any piece of communication data. Preparing context focus means determining the topics to study, while preparing the language focus is creating the exercise that gives the chance to the learners to analyze and synthesize the language. The 'task' element means that materials should be designed to provide communicative tasks to enable the learners to use the language.

Unlike Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Richards (2001:264-67) puts forward only 2 elements to take into account if teachers want to write their own materials. They are input and exercise. Taking input into account means preparing anything that initiates the learning process. Some examples of input are conversational extracts, topics, and pictures. Related to exercise element, teachers need to prepare exercises that engage learners in using the skills related to teaching objectives. Careful preparation is carried out in deciding the types of exercises to employ.

In evaluating materials, teachers are involved in choosing the existing materials or in choosing one of the existing textbooks to use in a language instruction. Guidelines in choosing or evaluating textbooks are needed to come up with the one that best fits the purpose of one's teaching. Nunan (1995:223-24) taking the idea of Breen and Candlin (1987) proposes 34 questions as the guide for investigating materials. They are grouped into 2 phases. Phase 1 is intended for initial questions consisting of 4 groups. Group 1 question is summarized as "What do the materials aim to do and what do they contain?". Group 2 question says "What do the materials make your learners do while they are learning?". "What do the materials expect you to teach your learners in the classroom?"

belongs to Group 3 question. Group 4 includes “Are materials the only source in classroom language learning?”. Phase 2 is intended for the consideration of the learners and the materials which are classified into 3 groups. Group 1 questions are summarized as “Are the materials appropriate to your learners’ need and interests?” Group 2 questions are summarized as “Are the materials appropriate to your learners’ own approaches to language learning?”. “Are the materials appropriate to the classroom teaching/learning process?” is the major question of Group 3.

Adapting Robinett’s (1978), Brown (2001:142) similarly suggests criteria for textbook evaluation. They cover 12 points as follows: (1) goals of the course for which the guiding question is “Will this textbook help to accomplish your course goals?”, (2) background of the students for which the guiding question is “Does the book fit the students’ background?”, (3) approach for which the guiding question is “Does the theoretical approach reflected in the book reflect a philosophy that you and your institution and your students can easily identify with?”, (4) language skills for which the guiding question is “Does the book integrate the ‘four skills’?”, (5) general content for which the guiding question is “Does the book reflect what is known about language and language learning?”, (6) quality of practice material, (7) sequencing for which the guiding question is “How is the book sequenced?”, (8) vocabulary for which the guiding question is “Does the book pay sufficient attention to words and word study?”, (9) general sociolinguistic factors, (10) format for which the guiding question is “Is the book attractive, usable, and durable?”, (11) accompanying material for which the guiding question is “Are there useful supplementary materials?”, (12) teacher’s guide for which the guiding question is “Is it useful?”.

In adapting materials, teachers carry out the role of ‘providers of good materials’. Duddley-Evans and St. John (1988) in Richards (2001:260) recommend the abilities of a good provider of materials as follows:

1. select appropriately from the existing materials
2. be creative with the existing materials
3. modify activities to suit learners’ needs

#### 4. supplement by providing additional activities

This adaptation job of a good provider of materials includes some activities. Richards (2001: 260-61) highlights 6 activities considered to be essential 'skills' for teachers to develop. Modifying content includes changing the content to suit the target learners – their age, gender, or social class background. Adding or deleting content is, as the phrase suggests, done by adding some activities or dropping some sections of the content. Reorganizing content is carried out by, among others, arranging the units in what the teachers consider a more suitable order. In addressing omissions, the teachers perform a similar job as adding content. They might add vocabulary activities or grammar activities to a unit. In modifying tasks, the teachers may change activities to give them additional focus or to make them personalized practice. When the teachers find insufficient practice, they might create additional practice tasks. This particular job is included in extending tasks.

Among the three alternatives, the one employed most is materials adaptation. Having no time to really write their own materials, teachers most of the time select from the existing materials and modify the existing tasks. It is now time to discuss Task before we go on with the discussion of Learner-centeredness.

### 3.2 Task

Tasks are defined differently by experts. Two definitions will be exposed in this particular section of the underlying theories. Long (1985) in Nunan (1999:24) argues that a task

is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some rewards. Thus examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing a letter, weighing a patient, sorting letters, taking a hotel reservation, writing a cheque, finding a street destination, and helping someone cross the road. In other words, by *task* is meant the hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in-between.

Peter Skehan (1998) in Brown (2001:50) defines task as an activity in which

- meaning is primary;
- there is some communication problem to solve;
- there is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities;
- task completion has some priorities; and
- the assessment of the task is in terms of outcome.

Brown (2001:50) claims that a task is special form of technique and that a task may be comprised of several techniques. He further provides an example showing that a problem solving task may include the techniques of grammatical explanation, teacher-initiated questions and a specific turn-taking procedure.

Simply put, tasks are activities designed to equip students with opportunities for creative use of language. Tasks are designed for the sake of the students. It is then the right time to discuss the next underlying theory of this paper: learner-centeredness.

### 3.3 Learner-centeredness

Learners will, as claimed by proponents of a learner-centered approach, bring different belief and attitude about the nature of language learning. Concerning this idea, Nunan (1995:178) more particularly points out:

A learner centred approach is based on the belief that learners will bring to the learning situation different beliefs and attitudes about the nature of language and language learning and that these beliefs and attitudes need to be taken into consideration in the selection of content and learning experiences.

Brown underscores some characteristics of learner-centeredness. They are:

- techniques that focus on or account for learners' needs, styles, and goals.
- techniques that give some control to the student (group work or strategy training, for example).
- curricula that include the consultation and input of student and that do not presuppose objectives in advance.
- techniques that allow for student creativity and innovation
- techniques that enhance a student's sense of competence and self-worth.

(Brown, 2001:46-47)

Encouraging teachers to implement learner-centered instruction, Brown (2001:47) further states that this sort of instruction will help provide students with a sense of “ownership” of their learning and as a consequence motivate them intrinsically.

Implementing learner-centeredness does not mean that the teacher hands over rights to the students. It is not a devaluing of the teacher’s professional role if the teacher ‘takes a back seat’ (using the term of Richards, 1998:52). Nunan (1999:12) argues: “ ... learner-centered instruction is not a matter of handing over rights and powers to learners in a unilateral way. Nor does it involve devaluing the teacher. Rather, it is a matter of educating learners so that they can gradually assume greater responsibility for their own learning.”

The idea of learner-centeredness is partly an attempt to involve more student participation in class. How is students’ involvement enhanced? A common question challenging teachers is “What is the most effective method of teaching?” Concerning learner-centeredness, McKeachie (1994:144) argues that the answer is “Students teaching other students.” One typical way to realize this is employing group work. It is now time to have the last underlying theory.

### 3.4 Group Work

Group work is employed in many aspects of language instruction. It is in fact a form of learner activation. Besides giving practice of oral fluency, group work fosters learner responsibility and independence, improves motivation and contributes to a feeling of cooperation and warmth in class (Ur, 2000:232).

Group work is undoubtedly a social activity. A constructivist is in favor of work group as learning is believed to be a social activity. To this point, Kaplan (2002) claims: “Learning is a social activity: our learning is intimately associated with our connection with other human beings ... Conversations, interactions with others and collaborations are an integral aspect of learning.”

Brown (2001:177) defines group work as “... a multiplicity of techniques in which two or more students are assigned a task that involves collaboration and self-initiated language”. In brief the students are given chance to work together. One

of the major purposes of group work is, Brown (2001:177) continues saying, giving students more opportunity to speak.

Relating it to classroom interaction, Brown (2001:178-9) puts forward four advantages of group work. It generates interactive language. It offers an embracing affective climate. It promotes student responsibility and autonomy, and it is a step toward individualizing instruction.

The success of group work depends on effective and careful organization. Ur (2000:234) suggests 4 sections to consider: presentation, process, ending, and feedback. In presentation section, the teacher gives the instruction before giving out material or dividing the class into groups. In process section, the teacher monitors and intervenes to, among others, provide general support and help students having difficulty. In ending section, the teacher sets a time limit. In feedback section, the teacher most importantly expresses appreciation of the effort that has been invested and its results and takes part in, among others, giving the right solution.

#### 4. Workshop Materials

**4.1 The Original Material** (taken from a unit in Speaking 1 course book used at the English Department of Widya Mandala University; it is a compiled one taken from Rooks, 1990)

##### **OPENING A NEW RESTAURANT**

###### **VOCABULARY**

**terrible** very bad

**awful** very bad

**service** way of giving food

**customer** a person who buys

###### **Read and Consider**

You live in Pitsville, Nevada. Your town does not have any good places to eat. The restaurants are bad. The pizza places are terrible. The chicken place is awful, and the hamburger places serve the worst hamburgers in the world! Residents of Pitsville must travel 40 miles to another city to find good food to eat.

At present there are six pizza parlors, three hamburger places, four sandwich shops, two delicatessens, one fried chicken store, one Mexican restaurant, one Greek restaurant, one Italian restaurant, one Chinese restaurant, and one French

restaurant.

It is time to change the situation. You and your friends are going to open a new "international" restaurant. You want to do three things:

- a. Serve good food at a fair prize.
- b. Give good service to your customers.
- c. Make money for yourself.

**Decide and Write**

1. What time of the day will you open? \_\_\_\_\_  
close? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many seats will be in the restaurant? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Describe generally the inside and the outside of the restaurant (color, style, and so on): \_\_\_\_\_
4. Make a sign to put on the outside of the building:

The dinner menu of the \_\_\_\_\_ restaurant

***Soups and Salads***

1. (dish name) \_\_\_\_\_ (cost) \_\_\_\_\_  
(description) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Chef's Greek Salad \$ 2.50  
fresh lettuce, cucumber, oils
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

***Breads***

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

***Main Dishes***

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

***Desserts***

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Beverages**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Discuss**

Verbally compare your decisions with those of your classmates in your discussion group. Listen carefully. Explain your opinions. Describe good restaurants at which you've eaten. Finally the group needs to agree on its decisions. One person in the group should write down the group's decision.

### **Extend**

1. Do you think the restaurant business is an easy business? Why, or why not?
2. What is the best restaurant you know? Why?
3. Do you want to own a business and make \$20,000 a year, or work for a large business and make \$90,000 a year?
4. What are the important things to think about when you choose a job?

If possible bring a food from your country and share it with your class. Write down the recipe and give it to your classmates. Explain to them how to make the dish.

## **4.2 The Modified Material (Journey-oriented Teaching Material)**

### **OPENING A NEW RESTAURANT**

#### **Task 1:**

**Think-pair-share:** 'What do we need to think or prepare to open a new restaurant?'

#### **Task 2:**

##### **Decide your role:**

Choose one of the roles: a chef, a cashier, a manager, a vice manager, a waitress/waiter, an interior designer or decorator, or a customer.

**Task 3:****Group work (preparation for the role play):**

Form 4 groups: The chef(s) and manager(s)/vice manager(s) get together to form Group 1.

The waitresses/waiters and the cashier are in Group 2. The interior designer or the decorators belong to Group 3. Group 4 is the customer group. Get from your teacher the description of what you have to do in your group.

Here is the general description of the role play this class is expected to produce: a group of customers (a young couple, or a family of 3-4 members) enters a new restaurant and are served by a waiter/waitress. The manager/vice manager once in a while appears in the scene. The chef cooks near the customers' table.

**Task 4:****Role play:**

The chef, the cashier, the manager, the vice manager, and the waitresses or waiters wear the name cards prepared by the decorators. The chef gets dressed (wearing the hat, the apron made by the decorators). The customers are served by the waiter/waitress. The managers monitor and help when necessary. The decorators are now taking part in being the audience - listening carefully to get the content of the role play.

**Task 5:**

Form pairs and talk about what you've learnt in this session.

Careful analysis to the modified material above indicates that Task 1 employs one of the cooperative learning structures. This is meant as a brainstorming to activate students' background knowledge. Expected answers include among others (1) personnel preparation e.g. a chef, a cashier, waitresses/waiters, (2) place preparation: romantic atmosphere, decoration, (3) menu making and price consideration.

Tasks 2-3 enable the students to work actively to foster their responsibility and independence and contribute to a feeling of cooperation in class. The group work provides students more opportunity to speak.

Task 4 is designed to bring out the chance for the students to carry out the communicative exercise. The information gap activity exists especially when the customers apply the 'special' message that is not known by the other parties (the manager, waitresses/waiters, or the chef). Task 5 is meant to obtain the students' perspective on the respective class and give feedback as well as insights the teacher may not be aware of.

Concerning Task 3, the teacher is to prepare cards to be distributed. The followings is what is written on each card:

**Task for Group 1 (the chef and manager/vice manager)**

Work together to decide the restaurant name, and to prepare for the menu (including the price). Think of the reasons why the restaurant manager should be around in the restaurant.

**Task for Group 2 (the waitresses/waiters and the cashier)**

Prepare the words/sentences that you'll use in serving customers (when taking an order and assisting the payment). Prepare what to say to let the 20% discount revealed and think of the reasons. You are also expected to prepare a discount voucher to distribute to customers; you might need to ask the manager for the discount and the validity of the voucher.

**Task for Group 3 (the interior designers or decorators)**

Prepare a table of a restaurant, make a hat and an apron for the chef, and name cards for the restaurant personnel. Make use of the things in the bag brought by your teacher to set up the table.

**Task for Group 4 (the customers)**

Plan to have dinner at a new restaurant. Decide what to order. Prepare the phrases/sentences to use for ordering food.  
A special message: You find dirty food (2 flies are inside the soup). Prepare the complaint. You can ask to talk to the restaurant manager or the chef.

Some notes to heed by the teacher are worth presenting to end this sub-topic. To realize the information gap activity, the customers group (Group 4) is not supposed to get contact with the other three groups (the waitresses/waiters, the cashier, the chef(s) and the manager and/or the vice manager). To facilitate the students belonging to, especially, Group 3, the teacher needs to bring into the classroom the following things: some used plastic glasses, plastic spoons and forks, clips, scissors, cutter, glue, used paper, markers, some plastic flowers, a bell, some cord/rope, cello tape, a stapler, name card holders, newspaper (for the apron). Students are reminded to use English in their group work; this is especially confirmed to Group 3 members (the designers or the decorators) who might think no language practice is involved when they carry out their task.

## 5. Workshop Participants in Action

In every workshop, the participants are to be actively involved in performing some tasks. The workshop participants are briefly supposed to be in action especially to achieve the predetermined workshop objectives. The facilitator of the workshop then leads the workshop following the procedure as follows:

1. Greet the workshop participants and inform the objectives of the workshop.
2. Distribute the workshop material as displayed in 4.2
3. Ask the workshop participants to do Task 1.
4. Ask the workshop participants to do Task 2.
5. Ask the workshop participants to do Task 3. First, divide the workshop participants into 4 groups (Group 1 consists of the chef and manager/vice manager, Group 2 the waitresses/waiters and the cashier, Group 3 the interior designers or decorators, Group 4 the customers). Then distribute the group task notes (see the complete notes appearing before the last paragraph of 4.2).
6. Move around to assist the students during the group work (their preparation for the role play).
7. Stop the workshop participants and ask them to do Task 4.
8. Stop the workshop participants and ask them to do Task 5.
9. Inform the participants that the model of journey-oriented instruction is over.
10. Review the main related literature, namely materials development.
11. Distribute an instructional material taken from a commercially published textbook.
12. Assign the workshop participants to work in groups to modify the instructional material distributed by devising interactive tasks keeping the journey-oriented design.
13. Move around to assist and ensure the job is carried out.
14. Ask 1 group to share the result of their group work.
15. Provide feedback.

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