Materials Design and Development

Introduction

Materials design has always been a point of discussion for the linguists, materials producers and the teachers as well, due to the importance and significance of materials in a teaching-learning context. Materials play an important role to provide sound structure and a positive plan for progression in a proper direction. Through interesting activities and clear instructions, they help learners and motivate them to learn effectively. This course will discuss what materials are, the meaning of materials design and development, and the significance of materials in the language teaching/ learning process.

I. What Are Materials?

Materials are essential in the teaching/ learning process. They are the tools and resources teachers and learners use in teaching and learning a language. They are defined as

> […] anything which is used by teachers and learners to facilitate the learning of a language. Materials could obviously be videos, DVDs, emails, YouTube, dictionaries, grammar books, readers, workbooks or photocopied exercises. They could also be newspapers, food packages, photographs, live talks given by invited native speakers, instructions given by a teacher, tasks written on cards or discussions between learners (Tomlinson, 2011, p. 2).

II. Materials Design and Development

Materials design is a theory of language and language learning. It describes the linguistic content of the language. It is concerned with the selection and organization of content.

Materials development is basically dealing with selection, adaptation, and creation of teaching materials (Nunan, 1991). Practically, it focuses on the evaluation and adaptation of published materials.

III. The Importance of Materials

Designing materials is very important in the process of teaching:

1. It helps both teachers and learners to achieve the planned objectives.
2. It motivates both teachers and learners.
3. It facilitates both the process of learning and the process of teaching.
4. It helps to capture the attention of the learners in the classroom.
5. It helps in longer retention of information.
6. It helps in organizing classroom teaching.
7. It makes learning real, practical and fan especially for children.
8. It helps to illustrate and reinforce a skill, a fact, or an idea.
9. It helps to bring novelty and freshness in classroom teaching.
10. It relieves learners from anxiety, fear, and boredom.