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Preparing materials for ESP teaching

Abstract

ESP is an important area in English Language Teaching today: there is a large variety of professions for which tailor-made courses and materials are of utmost importance for effective and task-based learning. Consequently, the role of ESP teachers at least to some extent differs from the role of General English teachers. It usually involves needs analysis and syllabus design in addition to materials selection (Hutchinson and Waters, 1994). Undoubtedly, all these tasks are equally demanding and contribute to the success of the ESP teaching/learning process, with materials selection coming last as a kind of practical result of effective course development. This paper first presents some aspects of ESP that are decisive for materials selection, as well as materials adaptation and/or writing. The second part outlines the guidelines I followed when preparing the English in Logistics electronic materials for first-year students, and the paper concludes with a presentation and interpretation of the results of a questionnaire designed to gather student opinion on these materials.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), general business textbook, subject-specific materials, tailor-made materials.

Introduction

We live in the era of globalization, in which people coming from all parts of the world need to exchange information on a daily basis. For various reasons, such as Britain's colonial history, the economic power of the United States, the popularity of American films and music, and so on (Harmer, 2007), English has become the main medium of international communication.

Consequently, there is an ever-increasing need for quality English Language Teaching, which has brought about many changes. One of these is the division of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) into General English (GE) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). According to Hutchinson and Waters (1994: 16), ESP can be further subdivided into "two main types of ESP differentiated according to whether the learner requires English for academic study (EAP: English for Academic Purposes) or for work/training (EOP/EVP/VESL: English for Occupational Purposes/English for

Vocational Purposes/Vocational English as a Second Language)". Hutchison and Waters (1994:16) then emphasize that this distinction is not clear-cut because very often "the language learnt for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the student takes up, or returns to, a job". Accordingly, English in logistics could be categorized as both EAP and EOP because students use it in their study environment as well as in their jobs, which are either concurrent or successive, depending on whether students study part-time or full-time.

1. English for specific purposes

For a relatively long time, students studying for different professions were taught more or less General English, which was not always very helpful when applied in real-life situations of different areas of specialism, such as engineering, tourism, science and technology, medicine, and so on. With time, developments in language theory indicated the need to pay more attention to individual learners. This realization together with a growing demand for English courses tailored to students' specific needs led to the emergence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the late 1960s (Hutchinson and Waters, 1994). This area proved to be fertile ground, and so ESP has undergone rapid development in recent decades.

1.1 ESP today

For some time now, English has been the main language of international communication, which has become an integral part of most modern professions. To be able to communicate successfully in English, students of different professions are thus taught ESP, whose overriding characteristics are "the sense of purpose and the sense of vocation" (Harding, 2007: 6). These characteristics predominantly focus on what students will need in their working environments, or, as Harding (2007: 6) puts it: "in ESP – English for Specific Purposes – the purpose for learning the language is paramount and relates directly to what the learner needs to do in their vocation or job".

The large number of different professions has brought about the need for ESP specialisms, all of which share some common characteristics, such as specific needs, technical specialized vocabulary and documentation, specialized texts and interaction, an identifiable working environment, and so on (Harding, 2007: 6). To cater for these subject-specific needs in English teaching/learning, ESP predominantly focuses on language skills, structures, functions and vocabulary that will be needed by the members of a chosen target group in their professional and vocational environment. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that, as Hutchinson and Waters (1994: 19) emphasize, ESP "is not a particular kind of language or

methodology" but "an approach to language learning, which is based on learner need".

In line with these overriding characteristics of ESP, the roles of ESP teachers and learners at least to some extent differ from the roles of GE teachers and learners. The next important aspect in which ESP differs from GE are materials used for teaching and/or learning.

The following sections first briefly outline some crucial issues regarding both ESP teachers and learners. This is followed by a more in-depth discussion of important issues regarding ESP materials.

1.2 ESP teachers

An issue frequently raised with regard to ESP teachers is whether they need to be experts in the subject area in question. The general assumption is that they are primarily language teachers engaged in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and should, above all, be experts in the language and language teaching, and are not required to have specialized subject knowledge. Nevertheless, they do need to have some understanding of the subject area, which is ideally accompanied by a positive attitude towards it. ESP teachers should also have the ability to actively integrate student knowledge about the subject matter or, as Ellis and Johnson (1994: 26) put it: "It is the learners who have the specific content knowledge and who are able to bring that knowledge to the classroom". Good ESP teachers will thus above all be "experts in presenting and explaining the language," who also have the ability "to ask the right questions and make good use of the answers" (Ellis and Johnson, 1994: 26). Other valuable sources of information for ESP teachers are subject teachers and subject-matter textbooks.

To sum up, to make best use of the resources mentioned above when designing a syllabus, selecting, and/or writing materials, as well as teaching the course, ESP teachers should have at least some basic knowledge about the subject matter in question, which is ideally supported by a genuine interest in it. It is even more important that they act as facilitators and encourage pupils to share their own knowledge about the subject matter with the class and to actively participate in the learning process. This characteristic of effective teachers is beautifully articulated in Kahlil Gibran's novel *The Prophet*: "If the teacher is indeed wise, he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind" (as cited in Harmer, 2007: 107).

1.3 ESP learners

Another important aspect in which ESP differs from GE is the target audience and their goals, as well as their motivation to learn the language. When teaching ESP at

the university or higher education level, ESP teachers will most often teach both pre-experience learners and job-experienced learners. Pre-experience learners most often have just finished secondary school and rely mostly on their theoretical knowledge, while job-experienced learners, in addition to having theoretical knowledge, also have some practical experience of using a foreign language in business life. Consequently, as Ellis and Johnson (1994: 5) point out, pre-experience learner expectations of language learning are to a great extent based on their former educational experience, while job-experienced learners will above all focus on "their own shortcomings in terms of fluency, getting the message across, and being able to understand the people from other countries that they have to deal with".

Regardless of these differences between pre-experience and job-experienced learners, the emphasis of ESP teaching/learning for both categories of learners should be on performance or, as emphasized by Ellis and Johnson (1994: 35), they should become "operationally effective".

Motivation - that is, "the student's desire and need to learn" (Haycraft, 1993: 6) - is of key importance for both pre-experience and job-experienced learners. In the first situation, considering that most students have no or almost no work experience, ESP teachers have to rely primarily on materials and activities they have prepared for their learners. For this reason, materials used in the language course should preferably relate to knowledge gained in other courses and learners' future jobs. When teaching job-experienced learners, on the other hand, ESP teachers can also focus on what learners do in their jobs and at least to some extent relate the teaching/learning materials and course activities to that. The direct use of the learner's experience in the ESP teaching/learning process is thus important for the motivation of both pre-experience and job-experienced learners, the most important distinction being whether ESP teachers predominantly refer to knowledge gained in other professional courses or the learner's practical experience gained on-the-job.

2. ESP materials

Materials selection, adaptation, or writing is an important area in ESP teaching, representing a practical result of effective course development and providing students with materials that will equip them with the knowledge they will need in their future business life.

One of the most important issues regarding ESP materials selection and/or writing is whether the materials selected should be solely or primarily subject specific and what the most appropriate ratio of general materials to subject-specific materials is. General materials focus on one's general ability to communicate more effectively, while subject-specific materials focus on a particular job or industry (Ellis and Johnson, 1994). When carefully selected, both general and subject-specific materials will equip the students with the necessary skills and knowledge, but subject-specific

materials nevertheless better cater for ESP learners' specific needs. Consequently, ESP learners will very often feel more affinity for materials that they find relevant to their area of specialism. The use of subject-specific textbooks is also more in line with the realization that students are individuals with different needs, styles, and interests and with some central traits of cognitive theory, which, as Skela points out, are the following:

- It focuses on purposeful learning;
- The learner is seen as an active processor of information;
- Learning is the process by which the learner tries to make sense of the information by imposing a meaningful interpretation or pattern on it;
- One of the basic teaching techniques is problem-solving;
- Recently it has been associated with a focus on deliberate acquisition of a language as a logical system;
- The importance of carefully selected rules, which can provide an important shortcut in learning process
(adapted from Skela, 2008: 159).

According to Prabhu (1994: 94), another important issue regarding materials is that they should be used as sources: "The fact that materials need to be used as sources rather than as pre-constructed courses should not be regarded as a weakness of task-based teaching; it can in fact be a strength for any form of teaching".

2.1 Materials selection

As Ellis and Johnson (1994: 115) emphasize, the choice of materials has a major impact on what happens in the course. This impact is demonstrated on the following three levels:

- It "determines what kind of language the learners will be exposed to and, as a consequence, the substance of what they will learn in terms of vocabulary, structures, and functions";
- It "has implications for the methods and techniques by which the learners will learn";
- Last but not least, "the subject of or content of the materials is an essential component of the package from the point of view of relevance and motivation".

The selection of ESP materials should thus above all depend on the needs of the learners in relation to their future or present jobs: that is, materials should focus on the appropriate topics and include "tasks and activities that practise the target skills areas" (Ellis and Johnson, 1994: 115). Another important criterion that should be taken into account when selecting materials is the level of language knowledge students have already acquired and the target level they will need to communicate successfully in their jobs.

ESP is predominantly student-centred, and consequently students' considerations should be at the top of the list of selection criteria. According to Lewis and Hill, students' considerations include the following:

- Will the materials be useful to the students?
- Do they stimulate students' curiosity?
- Are the materials relevant to the students and their needs?
- Are they fun to do?
- Will the students find the tasks and activities worth doing (adapted from Lewis and Hill, 1993: 52-53)?

To sum up, after analysing learner needs and setting objectives for the course, the ESP teacher has to select materials that will help the students achieve the course objectives (Ellis and Johnson, 1994). These materials should also relate closely to the learners' specific skills and content needs, which is an important precondition for full exploitation of the materials as well as the learners' motivation.

2.2 Readily available textbooks vs. tailor-made materials

The decision on whether to use a readily available textbook or tailor-made materials is primarily based on the learners' subject area. If their subject area is more general, the likelihood of finding suitable published materials is much higher. Accordingly, ESP teachers will most often select suitable materials from existing printed materials. In the case of more specific subject areas, the most widely accepted view is that ESP teachers should also first "question whether the learners' needs are significantly different from those of other groups" and, if possible, select from existing printed materials and resort to writing materials "when all other possibilities of providing materials have been exhausted" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1994: 125). The findings of research conducted by Djurić, Godnič Vičič and Jurković (2008), in Slovenia indicate that another decisive factor in materials selection or writing is the institution's view on materials writing. If the institution encourages teachers to develop tailor-made materials and if there are several teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes, the institutions are more likely to provide their students with tailor-made materials. These writers also point out that the number of tailor-made materials for LSP in Slovenian higher education institutions is relatively high, due mainly to the fact that teachers here strive to cater for the specific needs of the professional language they teach. To meet this end, they either adapt commercial textbooks to the specific needs of the specific subject area and to the level of students' language knowledge or prepare in-house materials if no suitable printed materials are available in the market (Djurić, Godnič Vičič and Jurković 2008).

If a teacher resorts to using a readily available textbook, the selection of structures, vocabulary, skills, functions, and so on is conditioned by the textbook to a large extent and can be extended into other areas teachers find relevant to their students. Tailor-made materials, on the other hand, provide the teacher with the opportunity to decide on combinations of vocabulary, functions and structures and to develop

materials that will introduce most relevant vocabulary and related functions and structures.

A final but significant factor is that psychologically a textbook represents something concrete and thus gives a measure of progress and achievement throughout the course (Haycraft, 1987). Consequently, when designing materials teachers should bear this in mind and prepare materials that present a logical whole and in which the sequence of units is logical and enables the students to see and evaluate their progress.

Although learners can undoubtedly learn most of the needed skills, functions and to a great extent also general terminology from general business textbooks, they will undoubtedly gain even more when using tailor-made materials or a combination of a general business textbook and tailor-made materials because these two options are more likely to provide them with directly applicable knowledge.

2.3 Tailor-made materials

Tailor-made materials will provide students with activities that suit the specific needs of their future or current jobs or, as Sheerin (1989: 25) points out: "In-house produced material is extremely valuable as it is inevitably more precisely geared to the needs of students than published material". When determining what tasks to include in ESP materials, teachers should thus above all strive to select and/or design tasks that will simulate the learner's real-life business situations as closely as possible.

No matter how good these materials are, they should leave some room for flexibility and give the teacher the opportunity to respond to the needs of individual learners (Ellis and Johnson, 1994). At the same time they should encourage students to share their thoughts and experience because both pre-experience and certainly job-experienced students are highly motivated to do so.

When designing tailor-made materials, teachers can rely on some general considerations that can also be used when deciding on the appropriate textbook. According to Haycraft (1987: 127), some of the most important considerations are as follows:
- The length of the course;
- The target audience of the course;
- The appropriate structural grading: students should be taught what they need to know "in the right order with the right priorities";
- The vocabulary should be useful and in current use;
- The appropriate idiomatic English;
- The materials should be "visually alive" and "well presented".

3 ESP materials for English in logistics

Logistics itself is a relatively new science; consequently, there are very few teaching materials available for teaching English in logistics. When we began teaching English in Logistics, my colleagues and I were accordingly faced with the challenge of preparing tailor-made subject-specific materials for our students.

In line with teaching reforms implemented at our faculty, whose aim was to introduce blended e-learning across the board, the tailor-made materials we prepared in our language department are in electronic form. The electronic form at the same time pursues the EU's "e-learning initiative" proposed by the European Commission. One of the key goals of this initiative was "to accelerate the use of the internet and promote multimedia technologies in European education" ("eLearning" [Europe Unit], n.d.). Further to this initiative the EU adopted the "eLearning Programme" in 2004. This programme "aims to use technology to support lifelong learning, and to foster the modernisation necessary to achieve this." One of this programme's four action lines is "to promote e-learning in Europe."

3.1 Electronic form of materials for English in logistics

In today's era of information technology, it is very likely that, when faced with the challenge of preparing teaching materials, teachers will opt for designing electronic materials when possible. They are in line with the EU's "eLearning Programme" and are at the same time becoming increasingly popular with students, most of whom are likely to find them more appealing and motivating because they offer the opportunity for greater independence and choice in learning through audio and video materials, and so on, as well as greater flexibility. Another important advantage of well-selected and designed e-materials is that they very often include intrinsic entertainment characteristics and can thus also be referred to as "edutainment". Nevertheless, teachers responsible for selecting and writing teaching materials should above all strive to prepare materials that will educate students and equip them with the skills that they (will) need in their present or future jobs. The learning process will be even more effective when the materials are motivating and relevant.

Another important advantage of electronic materials is that they offer the opportunity to use a wide range of media resources (e.g. listening materials, video files, live TV and radio, online newspapers, visual stimuli, etc.). Because ESP learners, like any other learners, differ in their learning styles, this advantage allows ESP teachers to select and/or design materials that will cater best for different learning styles, such as auditory channel learners, visual learners, and so on.

3.2 English in logistics for first-year students

In line with the reform mentioned above, whose aim was to introduce blended e-learning in all courses at our faculty, I prepared e-materials for our first-year students. These materials comprise subject-specific topics, which were selected based on prior consultation with other ESP teachers as well as subject teachers. The topics covered include History and Development of Logistics, Careers in Logistics, History and Development of Transportation, Road Transportation, and so on.

All these materials follow the same pattern: each chapter includes an introduction to the topic, questions for revision, a glossary, related grammar and vocabulary exercises, and usually further references to relevant materials on the World Wide Web, which are then followed by activities and exercises that further exploit the topics. These activities, for example, may comprise a reference to a video file or audio file and a transcript or a short summary in which some key vocabulary is missing. These gap-fill exercises are often accompanied by further comprehension questions and exercises.

In addition to offering the opportunity to effectively integrate audio, audio-visual and other materials available on the World Wide Web, the other invaluable advantage of electronic materials is flexibility. Electronic materials can be changed and updated literally on a daily basis, which enables us to include up-to-date sources and adapt materials to a particular group of students.

3.3 Materials evaluation

Materials evaluation is an important part of materials selection as well as the materials development process. In both cases, evaluation is primarily "concerned with relative merit. There is no absolute good or bad – only degrees of fitness for the required purpose" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1994: 96). An evaluation of printed ESP materials will thus above all serve to locate the materials that will best suit the learners' needs with regard to their future or current work area. When no suitable printed materials are found, the evaluation of existing materials can serve as a springboard for development of in-house produced materials. In-house produced, tailor-made materials themselves should also be evaluated in order to provide the basis for their revision with a view to improving their quality and their suitability to the target learners' needs.

The evaluation process of either commercial or tailor-made materials is an ongoing process which is viewed differently by different writers. In her paper on selecting the most appropriate Business English textbook, Čepon (2008) stresses that textbook evaluation should be a multiphase process, in which textbooks are evaluated using various methodologies and ongoing information collection. She also outlines how the evolution process is viewed by some prominent writers, such as Hutchinson and Waters, McDonough and Shaw, Cunningsworth, and so on. According to

Cunningsworth, the three different types of evaluation are pre-use evaluation, in-use evaluation, and post-use evaluation (cited in Čepon 2008: 107).

The English in Logistics electronic literature for first-year students was fully implemented in the 2007/2008 academic year as part of an electronic classroom. The materials evaluation process followed a three-phase pattern: prior to their implementation the materials were evaluated by other language teachers at our faculty, during use they were evaluated by the teachers using them, and finally, at the end of the 2007/2008 academic year, they were evaluated by the students. To gain insight into the students' opinion of the implementation of blended e-learning and the English in Logistics 1 electronic materials with regard to their success and progress in English language learning, I conducted a small study using a questionnaire on blended e-learning and the electronic literature for English in Logistics 1. This study was conducted with first-year university students that attended my courses during the 2007/2008 academic year. Seventy-seven students filled in the questionnaire. Seven questionnaires were incomplete, and the results of the remaining 70 questionnaires are discussed below.

3.4 Student feedback

The questionnaire consisted of 5 questions, in which students were asked to grade:
1) Their success (a) and progress (b) in the English in Logistics 1 course in general (Question no. 1);
2) Their success (a) and progress (b) gained in lectures (Question no. 2);
3) The knowledge they gained with the help of the English in Logistics 1 e-literature and related success (a) and progress (b) (Question no. 3);
4) Their opinion of the e-literature with regard to their success (a) and progress (b) (Question no. 4);
5) Their overall opinion of blended e-learning in the English in Logistics 1 course with regard to their success (a) and progress (b) (Question no. 5).

For all questions (1-5), they could choose the following grades for both success (a) and progress (b): 1 = insufficient, 2 = sufficient, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent. Table 1 shows the number of students that chose a particular answer and the related percentage.

	1	2	3	4	5	Ar. Mean	Median	Modus
1 How would you grade the English in Logistics 1 course?								
a) Success	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	21 (30%)	41 (58.6%)	8 (11.4%)	3.81	4	4
b) Progress	0 (0%)	1 (1.4%)	36 (51.4%)	28 (40%)	5 (7.2%)	3.53	3	3
2 How would you grade the English in Logistics 1 lectures?								
a) Success	0 (0%)	2 (2.9%)	21 (30%)	36 (51.4%)	11 (15.7%)	3.8	4	4

b) Progress	1 (1.4%)	5 (7.1%)	24 (34.3%)	31 (44.3%)	9 (12.9%)	3.59	4	4
3 How would you grade the knowledge you gained with the help of the English in Logistics 1 e-materials?								
a) Success	1 (1.4%)	9 (12.9%)	23 (32.9%)	26 (37.1%)	11 (15.7%)	3.53	4	4
b) Progress	1 (1.4%)	12 (17.1%)	23 (32.9%)	26 (37.1%)	8 (11.5%)	3.4	3	4
4 How would you grade the English in Logistics 1 e-materials?								
a) Success	0 (0%)	4 (5.7%)	10 (14.3%)	34 (48.6%)	22 (31.4%)	4.06	4	4
b) Progress	1 (1.4%)	4 (5.7%)	19 (27.2%)	26 (37.1%)	20 (28.6%)	3.86	4	4
5 What's your overall grade for blended e-learning in the English in Logistics 1 course (blend of live lectures and e-lectures)?								
a) Success	0 (0%)	1 (1.4%)	15 (21.5%)	35 (50%)	19 (27.1%)	4.03	4	4
b) Progress	0 (0%)	1 (1.4%)	21 (30%)	31 (44.3%)	17 (24.3%)	3.91	4	4

Table 1: Blended e-learning in the English in Logistics 1 course in the 2007/2008 academic year

The questionnaire results indicate that most students (48.6%) found the English in Logistics 1 e-materials (Question no. 4) good with regard to their success (arithmetic mean 4.06), while the number of students that found them good with regard to their progress was a bit lower (37.1%; the arithmetic mean 3.86). A relatively small difference between the arithmetic mean for blended e-learning in the English in Logistics 1 course (Question no. 5) with regard to success achieved (4.03) and the arithmetic mean for the English in Logistics 1 e-materials (Question no. 4) with regard to success achieved (4.06) could imply a close correlation between the students' positive attitude towards both blended e-learning and e-materials. A close correlation between their positive attitude towards blended e-learning (Question no. 5) and e-materials (Question no. 4) is also demonstrated in the arithmetic means for progress in blended e-learning (3.91) and the electronic materials (3.86).

This correlation can also be seen in students' answers to Question no. 6, in which they were asked to identify strengths and weaknesses of blended e-learning for English in Logistics 1, and in their answers to Question no. 7, in which they were invited to give their suggestions for the future.

This discussion first focuses on the answers referring to strengths and weaknesses of e-materials. The related strengths of e-materials identified by the students are:
- E-materials are always available (6x);
- More work can be done from home, and so we do not need to spend so much time at the faculty (5x);
- Close correlation between topics and vocabulary covered in live lectures and e-materials (4x),
- A lot of individual work (3x);
- Students can choose when to study (2x);

- Different types of exercises, which suit different types of students (2x);
- No supplementary literature is needed;
- E-learning requires more active student participation;
- In e-materials topics are explained well, e-materials include all the basic information on these topics;
- Glossary of new terms;
- Reference to new electronic sources for further practice;
- Combination of theory and practical work.

The related weaknesses of e-materials identified by the students are:
- If we are not disciplined enough, we do not complete the required workload, which we would do if tasks were included in live lectures (3x);
- Introduction and practice of new vocabulary in live lectures is more effective, especially for weaker students (3x);
- Fewer live lectures;
- Electronic materials do not provide us with pronunciation;
- It is difficult to learn from electronic forms of materials; they need to be printed;
- Materials in electronic form can not be used effectively for self-study;
- Too much material.

In the final question regarding blended e-learning, students were invited to give their suggestions for the English in Logistics 1 course. Their suggestions that are closely related to the e-materials are as follows:
- More exercises (4x);
- More emphasis on grammar (e.g. revision of tenses, etc.) (2x);
- More exercises on vocabulary;
- More audio and video materials.

Based on the students' responses to the questionnaire, it can be concluded that students have a generally positive attitude towards electronic materials. Based on how individuals graded live lectures, electronic material, and blended e-learning in the English in Logistics 1 course, students can be further divided into three major groups:
- A group that demonstrates a preference for live lectures;
- A group that demonstrates a preference for e-lectures and related e-materials;
- A group that demonstrates no obvious preference for either live lectures or e-lectures and related e-materials.

The results of the questionnaire on blended e-learning provided useful information on strengths and weaknesses of the English in Logistics 1 e-literature and will serve for further development and revision of the materials. The first major update and revision of materials will take place this year, and the new materials will be implemented in the 2010/2011 academic year, when they will be re-evaluated in a three-phase process: pre-use, in-use, and post-use.

4. Conclusions

Based on a brief overview of some basic characteristics of ESP and different writers' views on materials selection and/or writing in ESP, it can be concluded that there are no absolute criteria to rely on when selecting teaching/learning materials and deciding whether to use commercial textbooks or in-house produced materials. Commercial materials, according to Ellis and Johnson (1994: 117), are books aiming "to provide material for use at each stage of the lesson", whereas in-house produced materials serve the same purpose but are prepared by ESP teachers themselves. A commonly accepted view on the decision about materials is that ESP teachers should primarily strive to provide students with materials that will equip them with the English language knowledge they will need in their working environment. To meet this end they should preferably select suitable materials from the existing printed textbooks and resort to writing materials only when they have no other options (Hutchinson and Waters, 1994). In the case of well-established disciplines, such as business, banking, accounting, and so on, ESP teachers most often can act in line with this commonly accepted view because there is a rich bank of commercial general business and subject-specific textbooks. This is not the case with some younger subject areas such as logistics, for which there are only a few or no subject-specific textbooks available. To provide students with the materials that will cater for their specific needs, many ESP teachers are thus faced with the challenge of writing tailor-made materials.

As a teacher of English in logistics, I was also faced with the challenge of writing materials for the first-year students at our faculty. The process of writing materials is an ongoing process, in which materials can be updated on the basis of pre-use, in-use, and post-use evaluations. The materials I have written have accordingly been subject to all of three evaluations, while this article focuses only on the post-use evaluation.

The results of the student questionnaire provided insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the course and materials. The questionnaire results indicate that one of the most important advantages of the electronic materials is their availability and the flexibility they offer, giving the students the opportunity to choose when, where, and how fast to learn. The greatest weakness of the materials when compared with live lectures, on the other hand, is that students have to be more disciplined when studying on their own, as well as the fact that vocabulary cannot be introduced and practiced as effectively as in live lectures, especially for weaker students.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that, regardless of the amount of suitable quality readily available textbooks, ESP teachers can always opt for designing tailor-made, subject-specific materials, which can be used in combination with readily available textbooks or on their own. In both cases, when prepared well, tailor-made subject-specific materials will best fit the students' needs and specific subject areas, and thus enhance their motivation for learning. At the same time, although it is very demanding and time-consuming, writing materials also allows the teacher to be actively involved in developing and teaching courses.

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