Principles and Procedures of Materials Development for Language Teaching

Brian Tomlinson
Principle of Language Acquisition 1

• A pre-requisite for language acquisition is that the learners are exposed to a rich, meaningful and comprehensible input of language in use.
Principles of Materials Development

• 1 Make sure that the materials contain a lot of spoken and written texts which provide extensive experience of language in use.

• 2 Make sure that the language the learners are exposed to is authentic.

• 3 Make sure that the language input is contextualised.
Principle of Language Acquisition 2

• Learners need to be engaged both affectively and cognitively in their language experience
Principles of Materials Development

• 1 Base materials on text or tasks which are likely to achieve engagement rather than on teaching points.

• 2 Make use of activities which get the learners to think about texts and to respond to them personally.

• 3 Make use of activities which get learners to think and feel.

• 4 Make the learning environment and the learning materials as attractive as possible.
Principle of Language Acquisition 3

- Language learners who achieve positive affect are much more likely to achieve communicative competence.
Principles of Materials Development

1. Make sure the texts and tasks are as interesting, relevant and enjoyable as possible.
2. Make the learning environment as comfortable and attractive as possible.
3. Set achievable challenges which help to raise the learners’ self-esteem.
4. Stimulate emotive responses through literature, controversial and provocative texts, personalisation and localisation.
Principle of Language Acquisition 4

• L2 language learners can benefit from using those mental resources which they typically utilise when acquiring and using their L1.
Principles of Materials Development

• 1 Make use of activities which get learners to visualise and to use inner speech.

• 2 Make use of activities which help the learners to reflect on their mental activity during a task and then to try to make more use of mental strategies in a similar task.
Principle of Language Acquisition 5

• Language learners can benefit from noticing salient features of the input and from discovering how they are used.
Principles of Materials Development

• 1 Use an experiential approach.

• 2 Rather than drawing the learners’ attention to a particular feature of a text it is much more powerful to help the learners to make discoveries for themselves.
Principle of Language Acquisition 6

- Learners need opportunities to use language to try to achieve communicative purposes.
Principles of Materials Development

• 1 Provide many opportunities for the learners to produce language in order to achieve intended outcomes.

• 2 Make sure that output activities are designed so that the learners are using language rather than just practising specified features of it.

• 3 Design output activities so that they help learners to develop their ability to communicate fluently, accurately, appropriately and effectively.

• 4 Make sure that the output activities are fully contextualised.