

ELT MATERIALS FOR GENERAL FOUNDATION ENGLISH: A POST-USE EVALUATION.

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ELT MATERIALS FOR GENERAL FOUNDATION ENGLISH: A POST-USE EVALUATION

Faiz Sathi Abdullah

Abstract

It is generally acknowledged that the college/university foundation programme, often instituted as a one-year course of instruction, plays a crucial role in preparing students for graduation to their various academic departments, which are usually located within the same educational institution. Foundation studies programmes in Oman are delivered to cater for the disciplinary, and almost invariably the closely related academic English language needs of the academic departments in addition to the requisite basic computer literacy and mathematical skills. The present study sought to evaluate two sets of teaching-learning ELT materials at a higher education college in Oman on a post-/in-use basis by the teachers of three general to intermediate level English language courses vis-à-vis the first set of *Linguaphone* courses forming the core, and of an *IELTS* Preparation course using the second set, respectively. All the courses were instituted in the General Foundation Programme (GFP). The main research instrument was the Checklist for ELT Materials Evaluation, adapted from Mukundan et al, 2011, that comprised 55 close-ended items and two open-ended items. It was discovered that 16 evaluative items relating to the use of *Linguaphone* course materials in the main were rated as “Good” (as expected, in the interest of target language/speaker authenticity), 29 items as “Adequate”, and 10 items as “Weak”, cf. cultural sensitivity). On the other hand, 43 items relating to the use of the *IELTS* Preparation course book were evaluated “Good/Excellent”,

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with the remaining 12 items being evaluated as only “Adequate/Weak”. The teachers also highlighted aspects of both sets of materials that worked well with their respective classes of students, as well as areas of their use that required improvement. While it was rather tempting to follow up the respective separate evaluation of the two sets of materials with a comparative one of the corresponding merits, or demerits as the case may be, it was determined that this would not be fair given the different levels, teaching-learning objectives, and content make-up of the courses, among other factors. On the global level, however, it was concluded that both sets of materials needed supplementary materials and/or adaptation work on the part of the teachers, with the Linguaphone courses requiring more resourcefulness on the part of the teachers as they endeavoured to meet the teaching-learning outcomes of the courses of instruction concerned.

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Keywords

general foundation studies; post-use ELT materials evaluation; ESL textbook evaluation checklist; language learning materials selection and adaptation; materials and methods in ESL/EFL

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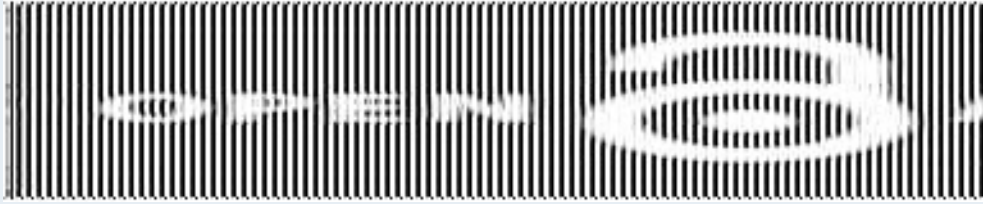
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