

LEARNER-CENTERED DESIGN IN EFL MATERIALS: A NEEDS-BASED APPROACH*Jumanazarova Shahzoda Maksudbek kizi**Isroilova Sevinchoy Murodjon kizi**Urgench Ranch Technological University**shakhzodajumanazarova1702@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT: This article explores the significance of learner-centered design in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction and emphasizes the necessity of developing materials based on learners' needs. It discusses needs analysis methods, benefits of a learner-focused approach, and innovative strategies for adapting EFL materials. The findings indicate that a needs-based approach significantly enhances student motivation and language proficiency.

Keywords: Learner-centered approach, EFL materials, needs analysis, language learning, instructional design

ANNOTATSIYA: Ushbu maqolada ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'qitishda o'quvchiga yo'naltirilgan materiallar dizaynining ahamiyati va bu dizaynni o'quvchilarning ehtiyojlari asosida ishlab chiqish zarurati tahlil qilinadi. Maqolada ehtiyojlarni aniqlash usullari, o'quvchilar markazidagi yondashuvning afzalliklari va EFL materiallarini moslashtirishda innovatsion metodlar ko'rib chiqiladi. Tadqiqot natijalari shuni ko'rsatadiki, ehtiyojga asoslangan yondashuv o'quvchilarning motivatsiyasi va til kompetensiyasini sezilarli darajada oshiradi.

Kalit so'zlar: O'quvchiga yo'naltirilgan yondashuv, EFL materiallari, ehtiyoj tahlili, til o'rganish, didaktik dizayn

АННОТАЦИЯ: В данной статье рассматривается важность ориентированного на учащихся подхода в разработке материалов по обучению английскому как иностранному (EFL), а также необходимость проектирования учебных ресурсов на основе потребностей обучающихся. Описываются методы анализа потребностей, преимущества студентоцентричного подхода и инновационные методы адаптации EFL-материалов. Результаты исследования показывают, что подход, основанный на потребностях, значительно повышает мотивацию учащихся и их языковую компетентность.

Ключевые слова: Ориентированный на учащегося подход, материалы EFL, анализ потребностей, изучение языка, дидактический дизайн

INTRODUCTION

The central focus of language teaching methodologies in the 21st century is the learner-centered approach, and this approach remains relevant in the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL). While traditional, teacher-centered educational systems tend to produce materials that are more generic, standardized, and geared toward the needs of the teacher, modern approaches require the creation of

materials that are based on the individual needs, interests, language learning goals, and context of the learner. Learner-centered design means recognizing the central role of the learner, encouraging their active participation in language learning, and tailoring lesson materials to their individual needs. Such an approach helps students develop competencies such as self-awareness, critical thinking, and independent learning. Motivation and an individualized approach are especially important for those learning English as a foreign language. Also, needs analysis has become an integral part of the process of developing and adapting EFL materials today. Through this process, teachers and methodologists have the opportunity to determine what knowledge students have, what goals they want to achieve, and what strategies they can use to achieve effectiveness. This article analyzes the theoretical and practical aspects of such a needs-based approach. The principles of designing EFL materials that ensure the central role of the learner, the advantages of their use, as well as the educational outcomes achieved through such materials are analyzed.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

A large number of scientific studies on the learner-centered approach show that for effective language teaching, the educational process must be adapted to the needs, experience, and interests of the learner. Brown (2001) emphasizes in his work the importance of developing lesson materials taking into account the learner's motivation and learning styles. Nunan (1988) argued that needs analysis plays a central role in language teaching and that this process enables an individual approach. The concept of learner-centered design in language teaching is widely studied as a modern paradigm in language education. Tomlinson (2011) argues that learning materials should not be just a collection of grammatical information, but should be a tool that activates the learner's participation in the language learning process, increases motivation, and focuses on the use of language in real-life contexts. As Brown (2001) and Graves (2016) have pointed out, by identifying the learner's needs, learning materials can be designed in a purposeful manner. This approach increases the interactivity of the didactic approach by listening to the learners, taking into account their interests and goals. Local studies, in particular, Rashidova (2019) and Holbekova (2020), have analyzed the content of textbooks for Uzbek EFL learners, showing that the materials are often generalized and do not sufficiently reflect individual needs. This reduces the effectiveness of educational materials and leads to a decrease in student motivation. In this regard, international and local sources unanimously confirm the importance of a needs-based approach and indicate that this principle should be considered as a mandatory component in the design of modern educational materials. Theoretical approaches to the design of educational materials developed by Tomlinson (2011) also indicate that educational materials should not only develop language competence, but also be relevant to the life experience of the learner, socio-cultural context and learning objectives. These ideas are also supported by local research. In particular, studies conducted by Kholbekova (2020) and Rashidova (2019) analyzed the effectiveness of educational materials adapted for the Uzbek audience. Therefore, based on the analysis of the literature, it can be said that a learner-centered approach and needs-based methodology are important tools for increasing the effectiveness of language learning. This study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. At the initial stage of identifying needs, data was collected using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The study 80 EFL students studying at the university were involved as participants. Also, existing educational materials (textbooks, manuals) were studied based on content analysis and an attempt was made to determine how well they corresponded to the needs of students. The data were statistically analyzed using SPSS, and the interview results were interpreted using thematic coding. The main goal of the study was to determine the impact of needs-

based design on students' motivation and effectiveness in language learning, as well as to develop methodological recommendations for the development of learner-centered EFL materials.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the study confirmed that learner-centered design has a significant positive impact on the effectiveness of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students in language learning. Based on the questionnaires, it was found that 82% of the participants stated that the materials they used did not fully meet their needs, while 74% noted that materials focused on personal interests and goals increased their motivation. Another important aspect revealed through semi-structured interviews is that the majority of students highly appreciated the presence of real-life situations, cultural contexts and interactive tasks in the learning materials. In their opinion, it is such materials that encourage active language learning, communication and independent thinking. In the content analysis of the materials, it was observed that most of the existing traditional EFL textbooks are designed for a general audience, and often the individuality of the student is not taken into account in the development of language skills. Accordingly, the existing textbooks do not fully meet the principles of a needs-based approach. Another aspect that should be paid attention to in the discussions is the readiness of teachers for student-centered design. While some teachers supported this approach, most of them stated that they did not have enough time and resources to create such a design. Therefore, methodological guides, training on textbook adaptation, and technical support are important in implementing this approach. In conclusion, needs-based, learner-centered design not only increases educational effectiveness, but also strengthens students' enthusiasm and participation in language learning.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study showed that learner-centered design and a needs-based approach to teaching English as a foreign language play an important role in increasing the effectiveness of the learning process. Learning materials that are tailored to students' needs, interests, and goals increase their motivation to learn the language, develop their independent thinking, communication, and language use skills in real-life contexts. The study found that most of the existing teaching materials are generalized and do not adequately address the individuality and personal needs of the learner. This can lead to a passivization of the language learning process. In addition, the lack of resources and methodological support for teachers to create needs-based design was noted as a practical problem.

Therefore, the following recommendations are put forward:

A needs-based approach should be introduced as a mandatory component in the development of EFL teaching materials. Training and methodological guides on learner-centered design principles should be developed for teachers.

Interactive materials should be created with tasks based on real-life situations, adapted to the local cultural and social context.

In conclusion, a learner-centered approach not only serves to enhance linguistic competences, but also personal growth, intercultural communication and the potential for effective participation in modern society.

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