

# Designing Materials Using CBI for English for Adult Learners in Petra Christian University

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## ABSTRACT

*Petra Christian University (PCU) has a vision to be a caring and global university with a commitment to Christian values. In order to be a global university, PCU has to equip its staff so that they can speak to international students and the staff from the international partners. One of the facilities provided by the university is joining an English course. However, they cannot take the General English course because it will take them years to learn English. New materials should be designed in order to fulfill the needs of the staff to speak in English. Thus, a team is formed to design the materials. In designing the materials, the team considered the use of content-based instruction as the most appropriate framework to cater the needs of the staff. This paper will discuss how the team designs the materials and how the use of CBI in the materials helps the staff to improve their speaking skills.*

*Keywords: designing materials, content-based instruction, English for adult learner*

## INTRODUCTION

The vision of Petra Christian University (PCU) is to be a caring and global university with a commitment to Christian values. In order to be a global university, PCU has to equip its staff so that they can speak to international students and the staff from the international partners. Every year there are more than 100 international students joining various programs in PCU such as exchange program, Community Outreach Program (COP) and Petra Summer Program (PSP). PCU also has international partnerships with some universities in Korea, Taiwan, China, Holland, Japan, etc. Because of these conditions, PCU provides facilities to support the staff so that they can serve the international students and partners well. One of the facilities is by providing an English course for the staff. The levels of English proficiency of the staff are various. If they take General English course, it will take them years to learn English. Therefore, a team was formed since last year to design the materials that can cater the needs.

Since there are various needs and levels of English proficiency, the team decided to use content-based instruction (CBI) as the most appropriate framework to accommodate the needs of the staff. According to Stryker and Leaver (1997), these are the characteristics of CBI:

1. It is based on a subject-matter core.
2. It uses authentic language and texts.
3. It is appropriate to the needs of specific groups of students.

Moreover, there are benefits of using CBI to teach English as a foreign language. Peachey (2003) discusses the advantages and disadvantages of using CBI.

The advantages are:

1. The content adds to student interest in the subject.
2. It helps students develop a wider knowledge.
3. It is useful when teaching ESP classes.
4. It can involve students taking information from multiple sources and therefore practice note-taking and integrating discrete skills.
5. It can be tailored to incorporate group work.

The disadvantages are:

1. Students may feel confused as CBI is not explicitly focused on language learning.
2. Difficulties with the topic may lead to large amounts of mother tongue language being used.
3. Difficulties in finding resources for low level students to understand.
4. Students may just copy from source texts without attempting any evaluation.

## DESIGNING MATERIALS

When designing the materials, the team considered to adapt CBI due to the characteristics and the advantages of CBI. Then, the team carried out a need analysis to find out the goals that the university wanted to achieve by asking the staff to join the English course. Because the course needed to be done as soon as possible, the need analysis was conducted orally by an interview. After finding out the needs, the team searched for materials that were suitable for the participants. The team decided to compile the materials due to the limited time.

## THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants were more 60 people with a wide range of English proficiency. In order to divide the groups based on the level, the team decided to have a pair conversation. From the conversation, most of the participants were in the elementary level. Some of them even did not talk during the conversation. When they were asked, they answered in Bahasa Indonesia. There were 45 people who were in the elementary level. These staf needed to be cater first because they were the majority. Then, the team divided them into 3 classes with 15 participants in each class.

## MATERIALS

The materials given were related to what the staff are dealing with in their work. The staff learn how to introduce themselves and their department so that they introduce themselves to the international partners or students. In addition, they learn to do telephoning. The following are the samples of materials given during the course.

## Introducing Yourself and Your Job

**Introducing Yourself (and Your Job)**

You can say:

- Who you are
- Who you work for/with
- Where your work is
- What your job is
- What your responsibilities/duties are

**Introducing yourself**

- My name is Jenni Jones.
- I am Karin Schmidt.

Figure 1

**Where do you live? – Where are you from?**

- I'm from Russia.
- I'm originally from Hamburg but I have been (lived) in London for three years. (until now)
- I'm from Brazil but Sydney is my home now. (Present Simple emphasizing new state)
- I'm from Korea but I am staying in Shanghai for the next few months / until October. (Present Continuous for 'now' and temporary state)
- I live in Seoul but I 'm staying in Shanghai for this project. (Present Continuous state)

Figure 2

**Where do you work?**

- I work in the IT Department. (in a department/unit/division/team)
- I work in London. (in a place)
- I work in the city. (in a place)
- I work in the main building. (in a place)
- I work on the tenth floor. (on a floor)

**What is your job?**

- I'm a Corporate Trainer at/for Sydney Institute. (a Corporate Trainer – or a Corporate Trainer)
- I'm the Chief Trainer at / for ABC Consulting. (There is only one Chief Trainer)

Figure 3

When learning to introduce themselves and their job, they also learn grammar indirectly. They can learn prepositions with the verb 'work'.

**NOTE: Prepositions with 'WORK'**

Work for	a company a person / manager / boss (also work under someone)
Work at	a company / organization connected to a place
Work in	a department / unit / division / team a building / place / city / town
Work on	a floor / level / (of a building) something e.g. a project / a report
Work with	a colleague / a co-worker / a team member (also work alongside someone)

Figure 4

### Telephoning

**On the phone**

- **Introducing yourself**  
*Good morning, Swissair. (How can I help you?)*  
*Hello, the Grand Hotel. Hannah Brown speaking. (What can I do for you?)*  
*Hello, this is ... from ... .*  
*Hello, my name's ... . I'm calling from ... .*
- **Asking for the caller's name**  
*Who's calling, please?*  
*Can I have your name, please?*

Figure 5

- **Saying who you want**  
*Can I have the accounts department?*  
*I'd like to speak to ... .*  
*Could I speak to ..., please?*  
*Is ... there, please?*  
*I'm calling about ... .*
- **Responding**  
*I'll put you through.*  
*Hold the line, please.*  
*I'm sorry he/ she is not available.*  
*I'm afraid he/ she's busy at the moment.*  
*I'm afraid he/ she's away/ not in at the moment/ in a meeting.*

Figure 6

- **Reason for calling**  
*I'm ringing to ... .*  
*I'd like to ... .*  
*I need some information about ... .*
- **Leaving and taking a message**  
*Can I leave a message?*  
*Can I take a message?*  
*Would you like to leave a message?*  
*Please tell him/ her ... .*  
*Could you ask him/ her to call me?*  
*Could you tell him/ her I called?*

Figure 7

**Receptionist:** Good Afternoon, *Abernathy and Jones*<sup>1</sup>, how may I help you<sup>2</sup>?

**Ms. \* Zellinger:** Yes, I would like to speak to Joseph Abernathy, please.

**Receptionist:** I'm sorry, Mr. Abernathy is out of the office<sup>3</sup> at the moment<sup>4</sup>.

**Ms. Zellinger:** Do you know when to expect him<sup>5</sup>?

**Receptionist:** He should be back at about 3:00. Would you like to leave a message?

**Ms. Zellinger:** Yes. My name is Belinda Zellinger.

**Receptionist:** Is that Z-E-L-I-N-G-E-R<sup>6</sup>?

**Ms. Zellinger:** It's with two L's<sup>7</sup>.

**Receptionist:** Okay, and may I tell him what this is in regards to<sup>8</sup>?

**Ms. Zellinger:** Well, it's a rather personal matter...<sup>9</sup>

**Receptionist:** That's okay. How can he reach you<sup>10</sup>, Ms. Zellinger?

**Ms. Zellinger:** At 555-4857.

**Receptionist:** 555-4857<sup>11</sup>. Fine. I will give him the message as soon as he returns<sup>12</sup>.

**Ms. Zellinger:** Thank you very much.

**Receptionist:** You are welcome. Goodbye.

**Notes about the dialog. Here is information about the phrases with numbers above.**

1- *Abernathy and Jones*- this is the company's name

2- how may I help you? = can I help you?

3- out of the office = not here

4- at the moment = now

5- when to expect him = when will he come back?

Figure 8

## FINDINGS

The improvement of the participants' English proficiency was significant. Those who did not speak in the beginning, they could speak using the expressions given in the contexts. Moreover, the participants were interested in learning. They could adapt the contexts given with their own contexts. However, there were some drawbacks experienced:

1. The participants were confused with the language learning. They often asked why they used past tenses, not present tenses, etc.
2. For low level participants, the teachers used more mother tongue to explain the contexts or vocabulary.
3. The team had difficulties to find materials for low level participants.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, besides the disadvantages occurred, the use of CBI is useful for catering to adult learners with special needs. The participants became more confident in using English because the topics were related to their daily work and they could use the expressions learned directly.

## REFERENCES

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### paper text:

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**Figure 4** Telephoning **Figure 5** **Figure 6** **Figure 7** **Figure 8** **FINDINGS** The improvement of the

2

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