

# Collaborative Pathways: Design-Based Research in Language Materials Development

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## MILITARY ENGLISH ESSENTIALS

Military Studies: A Coursebook for  
the Undergraduate Study  
Programmes



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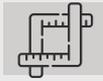
”Materials help to **organise** the teaching-learning **process** by **providing** a **path** ....

Good materials should ... **provide a clear and coherent unit structure** which will guide teacher and learner ...to **maximise the chances of learning.**”

(Hutchinson and Waters, 2003)

# Why Design a Coursebook?

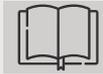
## MAIN BENEFITS:



clearly defined framework



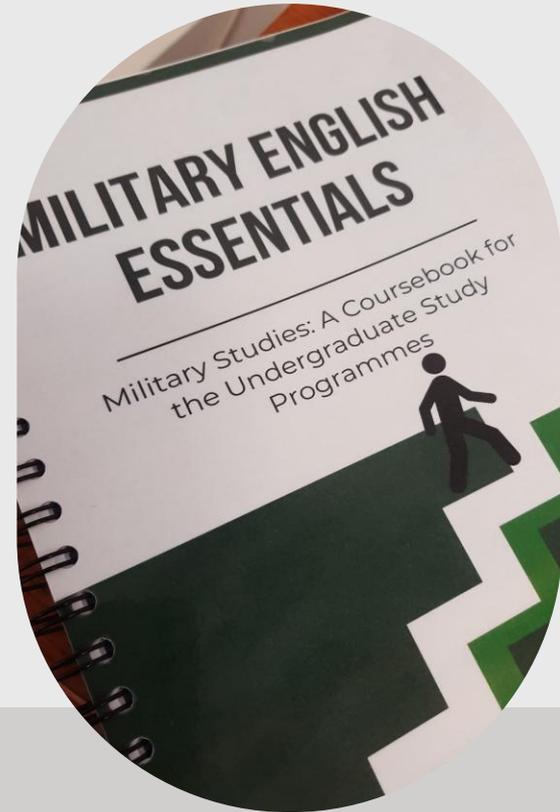
coherent and logical sequence



central learning resource



suitable content



# Designing an ESP Coursebook: Military English in an Academic Setting

## LANGUAGE FOR OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATION



## LANGUAGE FOR ACADEMIC LEARNING



**04** Coursebook designed to bridge academic and operational environments

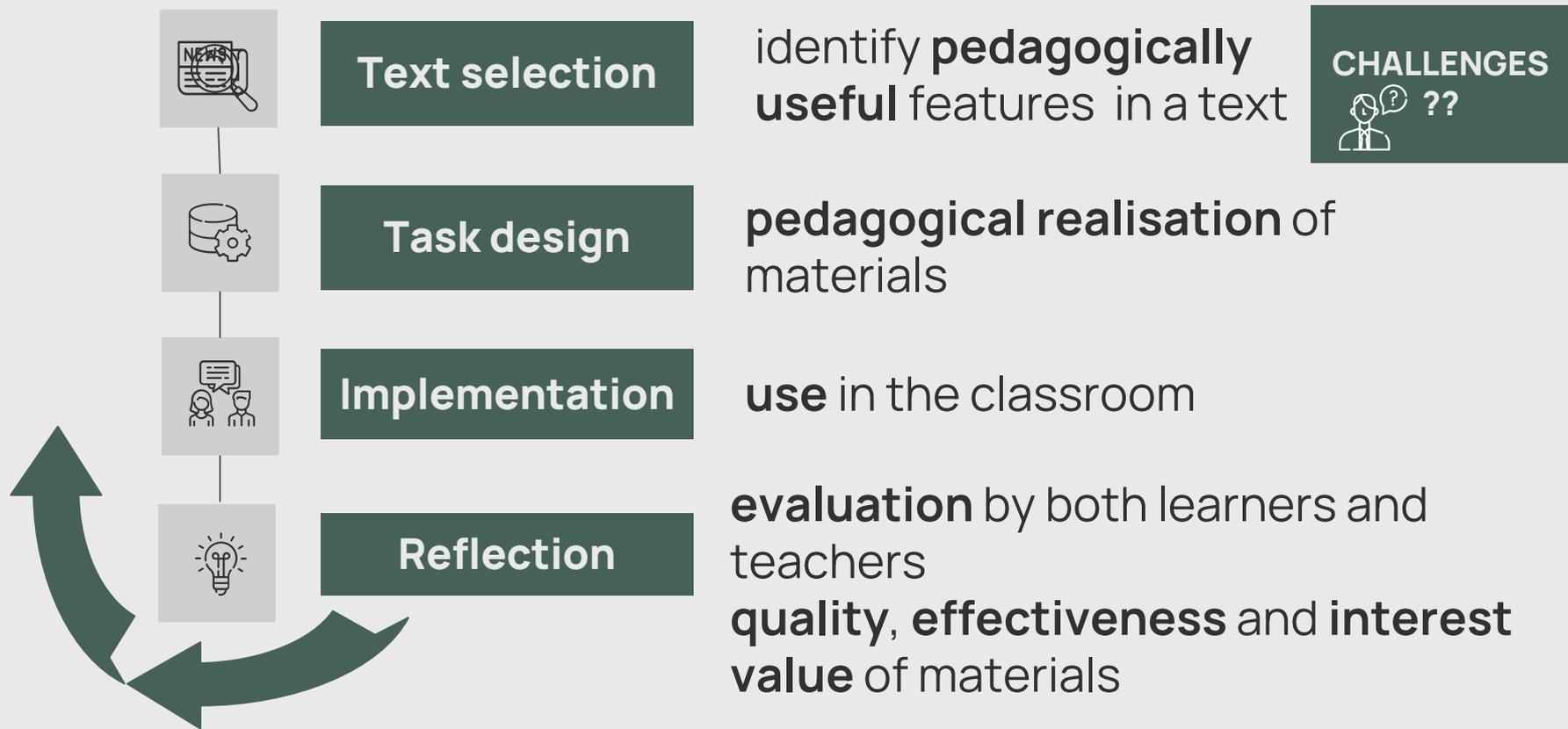
**03** Balancing academic demands and operational communication needs

**02** Choice of materials and task design

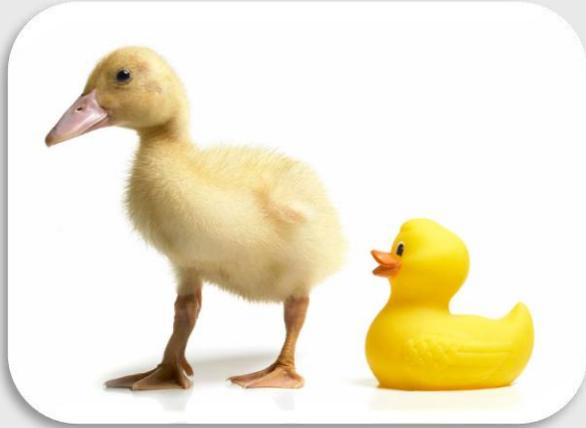
**01** Specific learning environment and learner profile

→ **CONTEXT SENSITIVE**  
→ **LEARNER-ORIENTED**

# Designing an ESP Coursebook: Military English in an Academic Setting



# Designing an ESP Coursebook: the Issue of Authenticity



What is meant by  
an *authentic* text?

ESP teachers – materials providers  
Our challenges:

- selecting **relevant texts/essential** vocabulary
- navigating **authenticity** and **relevance** from a non-native perspective
- balancing authenticity and **pedagogical suitability**

# Designing an ESP Coursebook: the Issue of Authenticity

Different definitions of authenticity in ELT

"A text is only truly authentic if it is exploited in ways that **reflect real world use**." *Dudley-Evans and St. John, 2000*

"Authenticity is not a characteristic of a text in itself: it is a feature of a text in a **particular context**."

*Hutchinson and Waters, 2003*

An authentic text "is **not written or spoken for language teaching purposes**." *Tomlinson 1998*

"Authenticity lies in the **nature of interaction** between the reader and the text." *Widdowson 1983*

Is AI generated text considered authentic?  
*No...it lacks **genuine human experience, intent and ownership**. (AI generated answer)*



## Designing an ESP Coursebook: the Issue of Authenticity

“...authenticity is a **function** not only of the language but also of the participants, the **use** to which language is put, the **setting**, the nature of the **interaction**, and the **interpretation** the participants bring to both setting and the activity.”

*(Taylor, 1994)*

- more important than **literal authenticity**:
  - **comprehensibility**
  - **appropriateness** – language and tasks
  
  - **functional authenticity**  
*What do we want the text to do?*
- pedagogical value – **authentic** learning purpose

# Designing an ESP Coursebook: Choosing and Adapting Authentic Materials



## ADAPTATION STRATEGIES:

- **modify** texts
- **break down** texts into manageable chunks
- **use** scaffolding techniques
- **provide** footnotes
- **create** glossaries for specialized vocabulary
- **use visuals** for language work...

MILITARY OPERATIONS	
<b>advance to contact</b>	To advance to contact is an action to conduct an offensive operation designed to gain or re-establish contact with the enemy.
<b>attrit</b>	To gradually weaken or reduce the strength, effectiveness, or numbers of an enemy force through sustained attacks, pressure, or losses over time. This strategy aims to wear down the opponent rather than achieving a quick, decisive victory.
<b>battlefield</b>	The physical location where a battle between opposing military forces takes place
<b>breach</b>	To employ all available means to break through or secure a passage through an enemy defence, obstacle, minefield, or fortification.
<b>bypass</b>	To direct a unit to manoeuvre around an obstacle, avoiding combat with an enemy force.
<b>ceasefire</b>	An agreement to stop fighting temporarily, often as a step toward peace talks or a permanent settlement.
<b>centre of gravity (COG)</b>	The main source of strength or power for a force; it can be a physical asset (like a key city or military base), a capability (such as air superiority), or an intangible factor (like public support or leadership).
<b>chain of command</b>	The hierarchical structure in an organization, especially the military, that defines authority levels and the order of responsibility for giving and following orders.
<b>civil-military operations</b>	Operations that aim to foster collaboration between military forces and civilian communities or organizations particularly in humanitarian contexts or post-disaster environments.
<b>close-quarters combat</b>	Fighting at very short distances, often in buildings, trenches, or confined spaces, where quick reactions and hand-to-hand combat skills are critical.

Infantry units are very versatile: airborne, air assault, mechanized, and ranger. Each has its own unique skills and a common mission: "To close enemy by means of close combat. Regardless of their mode of transport, truck, or foot they..."

• **Alborno Infantry unit**... seize and secure vital objectives. They can penetrate deep into enemy territory.

• **Air assault Infantry unit**... Key to their success is their mechanized and motor mounted direct-fire and fighting system that enhances same mobility as armoured vehicles, mechanized in combat support encompasses (10) ... Military Police.

The primary role of Army is to ensure that the successful reconstruction of tactical units provide resources in a way!

### COMPREHENSION CH

1. Answer the questions.
- What is the main objective?
  - Why are heavy forces forces?
  - What kind of operation: d. How do airborne Infantry e. How do mechanized at f. What is the goal of combat?
2. Discuss.
- Why do you think the operations?
  - What are some advantages?

# Approaches to ESP Coursebook Design

## Research-informed materials development

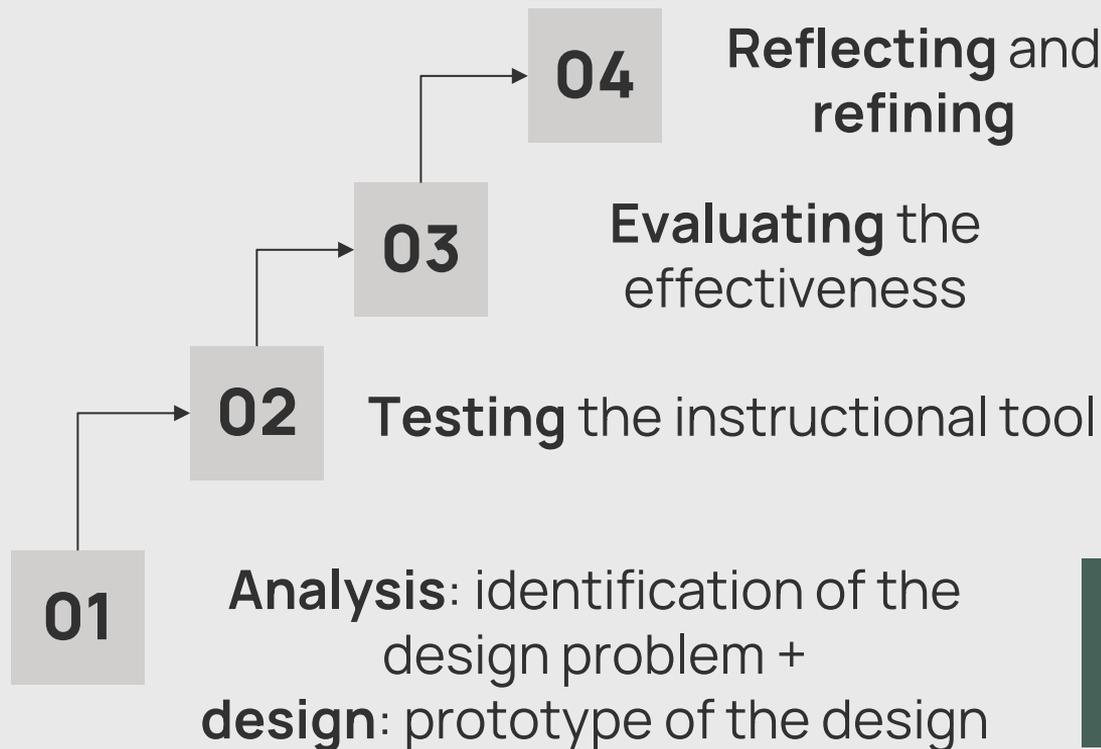
1. Text-driven approach
2. Task-based learning
3. Language-awareness approach
4. Form-focused instruction

→ principles of **RELEVANCE** and **PROCESSING**

## A combination of approaches

- 01** a genre mediated by texts
- 02** the development of receptive and productive skills
- 03** coherence of language and context ensured by the activities
- 04** solving tasks through communication activities (real-world environment)

# DBR as an Approach to ESP Coursebook Design



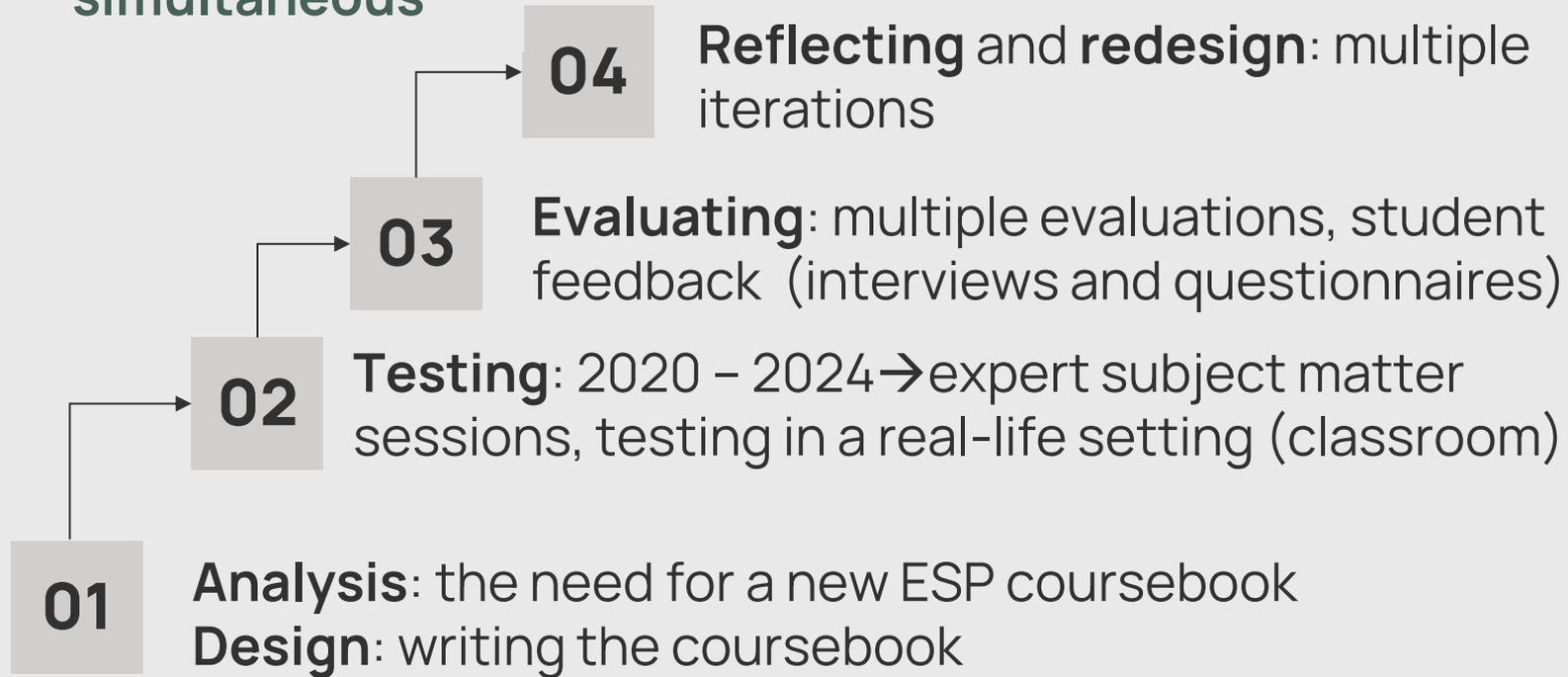
→ **CYCLICAL AND ITERATIVE NATURE**

→ multiple iterations → longitudinal character

**= a pragmatic methodological approach**

→ overlap of phases: testing and evaluating simultaneous

# DBR as an Approach to ESP Coursebook Design



PROGRESSIVE REFINEMENT

# Student Feedback: Demographics

Student  
evaluations:  
1. 2023/2024  
2. 2024/2025



**88% male**; average age: 19.7 years



**91.18%** with **more than 10 years of English** learning experience



**Self-assessment: average 3.5**

- 29.41% - 3 out of 5 (fairly good communication, some mistakes)
- 32.35% - 4 out of 5 (confident in conversation, reading, and writing)



**79.41%** with **partial experience in military English** (mostly through video games, movies)



Preferred learning style:

**70.59%** learning through **interactive and real-life situations**

**17.56%** preferring **reading and writing** activities

# Our Concerns

Are there differences in learners' perceptions of the material based on

1. **language proficiency levels,**
2. **self-assessment** of English language competence,
3. preferred **learning styles?**

Statistical analysis (One-way ANOVA)

1.  $p=0.6929$
2.  $p=0.1771$
3.  $p=0.9555$

=  $> 0.05$  → **NO** statistically significant differences



# Student Suggestions: Areas of Improvement

- open-ended questions in the questionnaire

## INTERACTION

- more group work activities (17.24%)



## MILITARY TERMINOLOGY

- providing definitions of military concepts and terminology (10.34%)



## LANGUAGE STRUCTURES

- more focus on language structures
- more detailed explanations of structures (20.69%)







## **DBR: Collaboration and Mixed Methods Approach**

- collaboration between:
  1. teachers
  2. teachers and subject matter experts
  3. teachers and students

## **DBR: Generating Design Principles**

- validating and producing design principles that can be generalised

# Insights from DBR: Transferable Design Principles

1

**Authentic, domain-relevant discourse:** authentic texts and tasks reflecting learners' professional reality

2

**Research-informed approach:** balance between meaning-focused communication and linguistic accuracy

3

**Collaboration as a design principle:** systematic collaboration between teachers, students, subject-matter experts and other stakeholders

4

**Iterative evaluation:** continuous cycles of classroom implementation, learner feedback, and materials refinement

5

**Research and practice alignment through pragmatic inquiry:** dual focus on practical problem-solving and theoretical contribution

# Collaboration: Co-Constructing an ESP coursebook

- collaboration enhances **motivation**, students feel **engaged** and important in the learning process
- students are active **contributors** and **co-creators**
- collaboration creates a sense of **shared purpose**

Collaboration is a Superpower



Collaboration...may involve the "mutual engagement" of individuals working together to **achieve a shared goal** that is **co-constructed**.

*Boon, 2018*

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# Thank you.

*Any questions?*

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