Chapter 2

DEVELOPING THE COURSE MATERIALS

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This chapter shows how the course materials were developed, using procedures based on principles of task-based training. It looks at how materials and techniques were selected and how tasks were standardized and improved.

2.1 Task-based training

The determining element of the training approach was its task-based nature. Course designers decided at a very early stage that the content of the course should be realised through sequences of carefully designed tasks, which allow participants to derive from their own classroom teaching experience, and at the same time to develop that. In addition to this, sample examination tasks applied in real teaching (in our case real testing) situations were used for training purposes.

Cameron (1997) describes the essence of this approach as follows:

> '…the task can also function usefully as a unit in teacher development at two levels. Firstly, the task can capture aspects of classroom reality at a central level of description, enabling generalisation upwards into lesson and course planning, and more detailed analysis downwards into language learning processes, and their interrelation with teaching. … Secondly, in addition to the use of classroom tasks as resources for training, the training itself can be task-based, making use of similar stages and components as classroom tasks, and thus modeling task-based methodology and thinking for trainees.'
> (Cameron, 1997: 345)

When the design process of the first detailed version of the course began, the team of course designers started to work on the basis of the following general guidelines:

Sample 1: General notes for course designers

Hungarian Examination Reform Project
New Érettségi Teacher Training Course

General notes for course designers, January 1999

First of all, let's remind ourselves of the **course aims** *:*
1. *To present the task and text types in the exam specifications*
2. *To develop teachers' awareness of the tasks, their purpose and underlying principles*
3. *To consider teaching and learning implications of the new exam procedures*
4. *To plan, deliver and report back on classroom experiences based on these implications*

The different parts of the course seem to have fallen into this **basic pattern** *:*
a) *Focus on the* **skill** *- establishing the principles of the skill to be tested*
b) *Focus on the* **exam** *- presenting the way the skill is tested in the new exam*
c) *Focus on* **assessment** *- preparing for the exam and delivering it, understanding the assessment methods*
d) *Focus on* **teaching** *- identifying classroom implications of the new exam and applying some*
e) **Reflect** *on and share classroom experiences*

The pattern is similar for each course component, which gives the course coherence, but the way the pattern is applied is very different, giving the course variety. We should try to make sure that the course keeps this coherence when we revise it.

In addition, each part of the course contains some:
- *reference to the teachers' own classroom experiences*
- *examples from standard reference and training books on teaching and testing*
- *reference to the exam reform public document*
- *samples from the pilots conducted so far*
- *examples from suitable course books*
- *classroom observation*
- *rating scales (for speaking and writing)*
- *opportunities to actually do examples presented*
- *opportunities to reflect on the significance of what is presented*
- *opportunities to express opinions about the new exam*
- *encouragement to view the new exam positively*

Let's try to make sure that the course maintains a **balance** *of these things. We should also bear in mind that the course lasts the whole day, so the time in the day of each session, energy levels of participants and so on are important.*

We need **materials** *that can be used by trainers session by session and put together into a* **booklet** *or folder. A possible format is on the next page. Each session should have clear* **aims** *, expressed either as aims, or in terms of what the participants will do during the session. Each activity should have* **clear, simple instructions.** *Materials should be in photocopiable form.*

(by Philip Glover, January 1999)

While designing the individual tasks and sessions, the course designers had to go back to these guidelines again and again, making sure that the tasks fulfil all the above requirements, and both the materials and the chosen techniques are in harmony with the general aims of the course. The two Advisers, Prof J Charles Alderson and Philip Glover consulted the team constantly and checked this process.

2.2. Selecting the materials

The materials had to be selected according to the content of the course. The targeted areas were the following: teaching and testing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, plus use of English. Since the content reflected the examination description and specifications, the course designers turned to the only public document about the examination at the time, the *Working Document* (Vándor, 1998). In order to select the most important areas, the examination description of each paper was thoroughly examined from the point of view of the new elements they contained compared with the current examinations. These new elements were highlighted in each skill (plus the use of English paper), and the materials were then selected with great emphasis on them.

While selecting the materials for the course, two main aims had to be born in mind:
1. The materials had to present clear and typical examples of the new examinations, since only thus could they inform teachers about the principles, content and procedures of the new examination system.
2. Through the materials the participants had to study, analyse and practise the classroom implications of the new examinations.

To satisfy the first aim, the course designers selected materials from the item-bank, which was developing parallel to the course. A team of trained item-writers had been supplying the project with items for each paper continuously since June 1998. The course designers themselves went through the process of item-writer training, and participated in each standardisation and evaluation event together with the project team members. It was absolutely essential for them to know the exact mechanism of writing, analysing, evaluating, selecting and piloting items in order to be able to give valid information about them in the later courses.

A selection of the items from the item-bank was piloted all over Hungary. The pilots held in December 1998 (for speaking and writing tasks) and in April 1999 (for reading, listening and use of English tasks) provided excellent sample materials for the pilot courses (for more details about these pilot examinations see Alderson *et al,* 2000). Since two more pilots took place in 2000, the updated version of the course will present examples from them as well. The materials taken from the pilots were used for the following purposes in the sessions:

a) demonstrating the content and procedures of the new examinations
b) serving as practice material for demonstrating and practising the new grading system that was planned to be introduced along with the new examinations
c) serving as sample tasks for trailing in the participants' classrooms

In order to reach the second aim, course designers intended to rely on the course books generally available for teachers in Hungary. Several course books had been analysed, and a selection of materials was presented in each module of the course. Course designers wished to show participants that it is possible to prepare the students for the new examination with the help of the materials currently available in the schools, with very little or no adaptation at all.

2.3 Choosing adequate techniques

The main principle here was that the techniques had to reflect **the best classroom practice** which a teacher can be expected to follow. Whatever happens during the course, in the sessions, it always must provide an example to be followed by the teacher. Also, the techniques had to be able to communicate the content and the message of the course successfully. As Wallace said, *'the methodology of teacher education has a dual function: one function is of course to inform and teach the trainee both in terms of received knowledge and experimental knowledge. Another important function, however, is also to provide exemplification of good teaching practice.'* (Wallace, 1991: 156) The range of teaching methods the trainers used in this course aimed at fulfilling this dual function, with special emphasis on the latter one.

a) Participants went through the following knowledge and skills development during the course:
– exploring experiential knowledge
– developing received knowledge
– developing awareness
– increasing the range of classroom approaches and techniques
– developing the skills of evaluating materials and procedures
– developing the skills of evaluating theory according to practice
– developing pedagogic skills, for example lesson planning

b) The following materials were used during the course:
– lesson plans
– schemes of work
– course materials, textbook materials
– readings
– samples of students' output (written, recorded on video cassette)
– questionnaires
– lists of terms
– classroom teaching

c) The participants were asked to engage in the following activities:
– reading
– listening
– speaking
– writing
– watching
– matching
– comparing
– ordering
– ranking
– classifying
– selecting
– producing
– recording
– gathering data
– evaluating
– adapting
– re-arranging

d) The following techniques were used during the sessions (usually in combination):

– individual work
– pair discussion/ problem-solving
– small or large group discussion/ problem-solving
– plenary discussion
– pyramid discussion
– mingling activities
– role-play
– simulation

The course designers used task types, which were similar to the ones the planned new examination consisted of. A most suitable technique in this course was **loop input**. Trainers chose this technique because, *'in loop input, the content is as much in the process of the session as in the handouts, texts or trainer's talk. …it does take time and help for trainees to realise that answers to questions can be in what has just happened and not in the texts or in words coming from the trainer's mouth. Once trainees have become sensitive to the idea behind loop input, however, they begin to look for information everywhere within the session. Very little is lost and there is less boredom since the trainees search for signs of practice during the preaching and see tips and points in everything.'* (Woodward, 1991: 43) It had taken a considerable amount of time to learn how to apply this technique, but it worked wonderfully during the pilot courses. Both the participants and the trainers enjoyed it, and the pilot courses owed their final success partly to using this technique.

The following sample shows a loop input task.

Sample 2: A summary of the listening sessions which included a loop input task

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Summary of the listening sessions 1-4

Debrecen Pilot Course, Oct. 1-2, 1999
Written by Ildikó Gál

Listening was delivered on Day 1 and 2 in 4 sessions. In those 4 sessions the main aim was
– to present the text and task types in the exam specifications,
– to develop teachers' awareness of the tasks, their purpose and underlying principles,
– to develop teaching and learning implications of the new exam procedures.

First there was a brief discussion about the place of listening in the language learning classroom, then the participants were asked to study **3 listening tasks taken from various course books** *and match them to the task types in the Working Document pp 11-12.*

In the 2nd session the participants had the chance to listen to an interview with Professor Charles Alderson, who talks about the exam reform project. He describes the advantages of the reformed exams, saying that they will have quality control, they will be written by teams of people having been trained in item writing. The new exams will be marked by external moderators, and last but not least the Érettségi of the future will reflect the existing communicative teaching methodology, assessing the students' competence in all skills.

He stresses how important teaching and testing Listening is, and goes on mentioning some of the text and task types of the planned Listening Paper. Finally he gives advice on how to teach listening, underlining the importance of exposing students to a lot of opportunities to spoken English without much guidance in Hungarian. At the same time he emphasises the importance of introducing authentic materials with great care, always keeping in mind the rule of graduality.

The interview was delivered in loop-input form, giving examples of some task types of the WD (namely: gap-filling, spotting errors, collecting arguments and giving short answers to questions).

In the 3rd session the participants had further chances to familiarise themselves with more task types with the help of **three pilot exam tasks** *(Harry and Sue, The Japanese Tobacco Box and Rudolf Zukol, see Alderson et al, 2000: Appendix IV/6, IV/7, IV/12). Having done the tasks, the participants had a discussion about them.*

At the end of the session each participant was given a cassette with 7 items on, among them the 3 pilot exam tasks, so that they would be able to use them when doing their listening assignment.

2.4 Standardising the tasks

a) The format

Initially, the format of the tasks varied from session to session, module to module. As a result of this, the participants of the first pilot course had to cope with a huge amount of task sheets for each session. The number of these was sometimes as high as 12 per session.

Course designers learnt their lesson from the first pilot course, and decided to standardise the tasks for each session. They agreed on the way rubrics had to be phrased, and decided to create a course materials package (regularly referred to as 'course booklet') for the participants. Each phase of the course had a package (Days 1-2, Days 3-4 and Day 5), neatly presented in British Council folders labeled for each participant. This method worked much better during the second pilot course.

The final version of the course will propose using a 3-part bound paperback course booklet, which could be used later as a reference book by the participants.

In the following samples you can observe how a task sheet changed in the standardisation process.

Sample 3a): A separate task sheet from the first version of the course (before the standardisation)

TASKSHEET 6-SPEAKING SESSION 5

ANALYTIC MARKING
Watch the same sample exam task again. Mark it according to the analytic performance scale (Handout 4).

	Student A	Student B
Fluency		
Accuracy and range		
Pronunciation		
Task achievement		
Interactive communication		

Compare and discuss your marks with your colleagues:
Was there any difference from the previous marking?
What and why?

Sample 3b): The same task in standardised form in the course booklet

Day 4, Session 26, Speaking 5
Marking speaking reliably
Task 1- Preparing to use an analytic rating scale for speaking
Read the scale and discuss it with a partner.
Watch sample A again and read the explanation of the grade that was given. Discuss.
Task 2- Using an analytic rating scale
Watch sample B again and give it a grade using the scales. Discuss with a partner.
Compare your grade with the one that was actually given. Discuss.
Task 3- Discussion
In a group of 3 discuss these questions.
Did the rating scales help you grade the speaking better?
How did you feel about using the scales?
What are the implications for teaching?
Summarise the main points of your discussion to the whole group.

b) The timing

Timing caused the greatest problem in the course design process. At first, inexperienced course designers thought 'the more the better', and crammed an impossible number of activities into one session. Though on the one hand this caused serious problems for the deliverers of the first pilot course, on the other hand it immensely helped the selection process: by the end of the second pilot course only the best tasks remained out of the innumerable planned ones. Course deliverers had to be on their toes all the time, and– especially during the first pilot course- had to make on-the-spot decisions as to which activities to keep, which ones to modify, and which ones to leave out completely.

It was essential to stick to the strict timing of the course: it could not be more or less than exactly 35 face-to-face and 25 distance hours. Less was out of the question, but sometimes it seemed that even double the amount of time would not be enough to discuss an interesting problem. Course deliverers had to learn the art of economising with time, and had to make sometimes painful on-the-spot decisions as to what to leave out.

The observers and fellow trainers present in the sessions helped in this process: timing was one of the main topics of the evaluation meetings held after each day. The revision of each task contained an evaluation of time and technique.

2.5 Improving the tasks

This section describes how the training team developed the tasks.

2.5.1 Trying out the tasks

The tasks were tried out during the two pilot courses organised by the British Council in 1999 in Spring in Eger and Autumn in Debrecen. It was essential to try out the tasks in real training situations with real participants, since only in this way was it possible to analyse whether they worked in practice. After each trial the tasks were revised according to the experience.

2.5.2 Evaluating the tasks

a) Criteria for evaluation
The tasks were evaluated according to the following criteria:
a) How did the technique work?
b) Were the materials suitable?
c) Did the task produce the expected outcome?
d) How did the participants react?
e) Was the timing suitable?

The evaluation happened at three levels:

b) Self-evaluation
The writer and the deliverer of a particular task were not necessarily the same people. In the majority of the cases the writer was present in the session in question as an observer but sometimes she delivered the task herself. Self-evaluation took place in two directions: both the writer and the deliverer of the task formed an opinion and made suggestions for revision.

Sample 4: Self-reflections on the Debrecen writing sessions from a trainer's interim report

Report on the Writing Sessions
Debrecen Pilot Course, November 1999
by Judit Kiss-Gulyás

'Writing sessions 6 and 7 further continued the investigation of current classroom practices as the issues of correction and the nature of classroom writing activities were discussed. It turned out that correction procedures were worth discussing and participants were eager to share their practices with the others. Further correction techniques were then suggested by the trainer.

As an awareness-raising activity, participants then investigated course book writing activities, their suitability for preparing students for the written component of the exam. As there were a lot of important issues to discuss, the 7[b] session on writing had to be restructured and one activity, preparing a writing lesson plan was left out. Instead, thoughts in connection with the new exam were summarised with the help of a task that made participants think about the writing component of the new exam.

The four writing sessions I held were successful, I think, but quite tiring to run bearing in mind the changes and on-the-spot decisions that had to be made to cater for participant needs. There was some disagreement between Philip and myself concerning the nature of the home assignment and session 7. In the original material participants had to prepare a lesson plan for a writing lesson and ask a colleague, preferably another participant to observe the execution of the planned lesson. The argument Philip mentioned was that every in-service training course should have a lesson observation component. My opinion differed on the grounds that it would be more essential for participants to actually try out the analytic scale to grade their own students. As it meant an extra, time-consuming task, the suggestion was to omit the lesson observation assignment in the case of writing. We reached a consensus and the writing assignment was changed, and participants have been informed about the new one, which gives them further opportunities to try out the analytic writing scale by grading the piloted writing tasks the students were asked to do.

This will be discussed in the closing session on writing. It does not mean, however, that the lesson planning and observation components have been left out altogether, as participants are asked to do this task in connection with speaking. Considering the amount of home assignment, which participants found excessive, this was a justified modification.'

This example shows a critical but very positive approach. This kind of self-reflection provided a great help in spotting the problems, confirming the good things, revising the sessions.

c) Advisers' and observers' evaluation

The advisers and observers present in both pilot courses provided much help and another level of evaluation. Their invaluable comments helped course designers to see their own work in a different light, from several different points of view. Looking at general and particular issues with someone else's eyes enabled the course designers to be more objective, and improve the course materials. The advisers' and observers' suggestions were incorporated in the final version of the course. Below we present two examples of this kind of evaluation: the first is a more general one, commenting and giving advice on the first two days of the first pilot course:

Sample 5a): The Project Adviser's evaluation after Days 1-2 of the first pilot course

> *Dear All,*
>
> *I know that Philip volunteered me to give feedback to the tutors by March 30[b], which is why I am writing this. However, I must say that I feel I have said all there is to say and have little to add, even after reflection over the intervening period.*
>
> *To recap: I thought the first two days had gone remarkably well, much better than I had dared hope. The participants were positive and engaged, and covered a lot of ground, the materials were well done, and professionally presented, and the tutors were very confident without being overwhelming, and got the level just right. I know how nervous people were, but it did not show, and you all came over as competent and knowledgeable*
>
> *The one major comment I made was that I was a little concerned that the main message of each session may have got lost as tutors were properly concerned to ensure that the timetable was kept to (and they did an excellent job of cutting out stuff to ensure that you would indeed finish on schedule). Two suggestions were made: 1) that on future courses, you could have a sheet summarising the main points that were expected to come up, for handing out at the end of each major section, and secondly that such a sheet could be prepared in the interim "gap" and handed out at the beginning of the next two day session as a reminder of what had been covered. Actually I think both would be good, where the second idea could take on board points that had come up in the sessions that had not been*
> *anticipated in the first summary hand-out.*
>
> *The other somewhat controversial issue was that of assessment and feedback. I felt strongly that it was not yet appropriate to give detailed feedback to participants on their "assignments" as you have no idea how these will work, and whether any problems on the assignments might be due to the assignment being over- or under-ambitious, ambiguous, or whatever, and not due to the participants' lack of insight. Certainly they will need encouraging to feel that what they have done – IF they do it – was worth it, but this need not be in the form of formal assessment and feedback at this stage. After all, this is not yet an accredited course, and it is still in draft. Nor are participants paying to do the course. They cannot expect the earth, and the tutors do not need an extra thing to worry about, especially as they have not yet had the relevant experience in providing feedback on written assignments, as far as I know. First learn to walk, then do the marathon!*
>
> *Finally, taking up a point from participants' feedback, which was overwhelmingly positive, do not forget to keep the eye firmly on the exam: this is an examination awareness course after all, which of course relates to best practice, but which has attracted people to it because it is about the examination.*
>
> *Good luck with preparations for the next round*
>
> <div align="right">
>
> *Charles*
>
> </div>

This evaluation was a really encouraging one, which helped to strengthen the trainers' self-confidence. At the same time it spotted the problems and offered professional solutions.

The following example shows how a fellow course designer, who was present at the first pilot course as an observer, commented on the tasks of Days 3-4 in the first pilot course:

Sample 5b): An observer's evaluation

Dear All,

I am sending my reflections on Days 3-4 of the Eger course with congratulations and appreciation.

General remarks:
- *congratulations again on the successful delivery of Day 3 and 4 to Ági, Györgyi and Ildikó*
- *well-organised work, good, relevant, interesting tasks, a great variety of activities*
- *less stress on behalf of the trainers*
- *participants still enthusiastic, but more tired*

Writing
- *Summary first – what to expect during the day – very useful.*
- *Session 1 – elicitation of the 3 factors – appropriate starting.*
- *Task 2 – the instructions (what to do with the task) should come before the grouping in order to start the task immediately in the new group.*
- *Most of the terminology proved to be new or unknown, shouldn't it get more time next time or could the participants get acquainted with them in advance?*
- *Task 3 – attempts to call other people in the groups not the usual spokespersons – very good.*
- *Fewer examples should have been given, more should have been elicited from the participants.*
- *Ági's summary + participants' comments – very useful.*
- *Session 2 – focus on exam Task 1 – appropriate summary again.*
- *Task 2 – calling teachers' attention to analysis – great help.*
- *Sessions 3-4, Task 1: instructions for this task would be better first then the distribution of the task sheets.*
- *Task 2 – we should say clearly when individual work is needed. A survey in the groups about the results might be useful.*
- *Two steps were cut out, why?*
- *Task 3 – individual work, discussion should not be allowed. Suggestions from participants could have been gathered (they might be taken into consideration for further development).*
- *Session 5, tasks 1-2 – left out, why?*
- *Lack of awareness of writing conventions should get more emphasis, teachers need help in this field.*
- *Task 3 – correction – a big issue, more time and practice needed, teachers have little knowledge and are bound to Hungarian conventions.*

Speaking
- *Extremely difficult, but excellent job. Good refreshing, appropriate warmers, clear instructions.*
- *Sessions 1-2, task 1, part 2 – too much emphasis on one question (main differences between spontaneous and rote-learnt conversations, the difference seemed to be obvious).*
- *Task 2 – four examples would have been enough.*
- *Sessions 3-4 – jump into deep water: more information on the whole exam would have been better first, reading about it in the Working Document is not enough.*
- *Task 2 – more clarification of the strategies advisable as teachers have vague ideas. More advice on how to develop these strategies. What about strategies not taken on the spot? Will teachers be able to identify and teach them?*
- *Task 4 – teachers struggle with serious marking problems as current marking is not reliable, it is very subjective.*
- *External marking should get more emphasis. Examples of different levels should be presented.*
- *Task 5 – participants still do not know the other exam types.*
- *Session 6, task 2 – very good: giving advice activates teachers' knowledge and experience.*
- *Useful summary in writing.*

(by dr. Kissné Pótor Katalin observer)

A really thorough and detailed evaluation, which shows how useful it was to have an observer on the spot who participated in the course design process and knew the materials and the session plans in details.

d) Participants' reaction, feedback

The third – and perhaps most authentic – level of evaluation was carried out by the participants themselves. Throughout both pilot courses participants were given several opportunities for oral and written feedback. Their opinions and suggestions were immediately incorporated by the course deliverers and designers.

It was one of the most fantastic experiences to hear these classroom teachers talking about the course: their evaluations were sharp, to the point, and always very constructive, as is shown in sample 6 below. Whenever course designers/trainers lost sight of reality, they signaled with their invaluable classroom experience and put the balance right. Course designers are eternally in debt to these teachers for their help. Without them it would have been impossible to develop the current version of this course.

Sample 6: Participants' feedback on various aspects of the course

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Opinions about the use of piloted tasks:
'It is good to see similar tasks to the would-be érettségi. and to have samples.'
'It is a good thing that we can assess the new tasks and say our opinion about them. Hopefully, this will be taken into consideration.'
'The tasks can be used in the lessons. I have decided to try them out.'
'We could see good examples of different tasks.'
'It is very good that we can try out the piloted tasks with our students.'

Listening:
'I would like to have more listening sample tests, because this is the most frustrating point to 'me. It is the hardest to prepare students for.'

Writing:
'I found it interesting to see the examination task types in connection with writing.'

'Day 3 made me realise that I am a bit too strict or 'old-fashioned' about grammar mistakes when correcting writing exercises.'
'I learned that I should pay more attention to teaching writing (although correcting is the most time-consuming part of it).'

Speaking:
'I liked the video, because we could see students from other schools. I think these were very lively and real presentations.'
'I found it interesting to see the examination task types in connection with speaking.'
'I liked the video recordings. It was interesting to see this new system working.'
'Thank you for making me less worried about pairing the students.'

Grading scales
'I think the scales will be very useful and will help us to be more objective.'
'The evaluation sheets (=grading scales) will be useful for marking both written and oral performances.
'The grading system will, I think, help us to give more objective marks.'
'We got a lot of help how to mark/grade writing and speaking.'
'The sessions were enjoyable and useful, especially the grading scales.'

Feedback on how the course affected former views and worries, classroom practice:
'My views about language teaching have been confirmed, i.e. language has to be taught in its complexity.'
'With the help of these discussions I can have a better insight into my own work at school.'
'I really would like to try a couple of things in my lessons.'

These comments are really positive, show the participants' appreciation of the course designers' and the trainers' efforts. It is also obvious from them that the

course has had the desired effect on the participants' awareness and classroom practice.

2.3.3 Revising the tasks

After having had all the above-mentioned formative evaluation from all these channels about how the tasks had worked in the training sessions of the first pilot course, the team-member responsible for the module revised the task(s) and modified the planning of the actual session the task was part of. The revisions might include the following:

– changing the timing of the session
– deleting whole tasks from the session
– changing the applied training techniques
– changing the materials used
– changing the focus of the task

Below we show an example of how it worked in practice:

Sample 7a): The first version of the Use of English sessions 1-2, containing 8 tasks in all
Use of English Session 1 (40 minutes)

Phase	Technique	Materials
I. Lead-in (15 minutes) **Task 1:** *How do you feel about teaching grammar?* Write down your feelings briefly.	Individual work. (After the session the trainer collects the participants' opinions.)	Small cards, pens.
Task 2: Look at what some students say about *learning* English grammar. Discuss it with your colleagues in your group.	Group work.	Students' opinions (original or photocopy).
Plenary: What did you find out?	Plenary discussion.	
II. Use of English in the language learning process (25 minutes) **Task 3:** Find a person who has a task, which teaches the same area as yours. Decide *together which definition the tasks belong to,* and stick a copy of the task onto the blackboard under the appropriate definition.	Pair work (find your partner). The definitions of *'grammar', 'vocabulary'* and *'discourse'* are written on the blackboard, or on posters, without actually mentioning these names themselves.	The definitions on poster or on the blackboard.

	Each participant is given a task. (The trainer should choose **the greatest possible variety of task types** from the provided sample tasks, because in the next phase it will be important.)	According to the number of participants, the trainer can choose from the photocopies of sample tasks from *New Headway Intermediate* by Liz and John Soars.
Identifying the areas.	Plenary. The trainer sticks (writes) on the words *'grammar'*, *'vocabulary'* and *'discourse'*.	Large cards with these three words.
Task 4: In small groups discuss what kind of *task types* you use in your classroom for teaching these areas.	Group-work. The trainer gives each group an OHT and pens for putting down their ideas. The trainer has a pre-prepared OHT with the list of the possible task types to show them after each group has presented their list.	Empty OHTs and pens for each group. A list of the task types on OHT.
Task 5: *Identify* the task types of the samples taken from the *New Headway Intermediate* course book.	Group-work. The trainer gives each group copies of 6 different sample tasks. (The groups get the same samples.)	Copies of the sample tasks taken from *New Headway Intermediate* by John and Liz Soars.
Summary, conclusions - Teaching Use of English means not only teaching grammar, but vocabulary and discourse also. - There is a huge variety of task types for classroom use to teach these areas. - The existing course books offer a lot of good tasks, which can be used straightaway, or can be adapted to our purposes.	Plenary. **BREAK**	

Use of English Session 2 (50 minutes)

Phase	Technique	Materials
III. Samples from exam materials. **The framework of the Use of English Paper.** **(30 minutes)**		
Task 6: Complete four sample tasks with your partner. Using the *Working Document*, identify the *text type* and the *task type* of each task.	Pair work. The participants are given four samples from the *Use of English Booklets* of the pilot examination, and the relevant chapter of the *Working Document*.	Chapter 5 of the *Working Document*. Sentence-based sample tasks: *Use of English Booklet 4* *Task 1 (correct the error)* *Task 3 (sentence transform.)* Text-based sample tasks: *Use of English Booklet 1* *"Move Over, Webster"* or *"Migratory Birds"* *(spot the error both)* *Use of English Booklet 2* *Article from the Dalesman magazine (gap-filling)* (See Alderson *et al*, 2000: Appendix IV/15-39.)
The framework of the Use of English Paper	Plenary. The trainer shows and explains the framework briefly.	The framework of the Use of English Paper on OHT.
IV. (10 minutes) **Teaching implications**		
Task 7: In groups, give advice to students and colleagues about *how to learn and teach Use of English successfully.* Share your experience with your group-mates. Provide a list of ideas.	Group work, brainstorming. The trainer gives an empty OHT and pens to each group. The trainer prepares her own list of ideas on OHT.	List of ideas on OHT.
V. Practical implementation: Lesson planning, delivering. Self / peer observation. (10 minutes+ distance mode)		
Task 8: Using your course book or a supplementary material, **plan a lesson, which** involves or is aimed at teaching a certain area of Use of English. *Specify aims, describe procedure, predict* how well, and how the students will do the activity. **Deliver the lesson.** At the end of the lesson *ask the students* what they thought of the activity and how they did it, **report** on how the	Plenary. Start in session, complete outside. The trainer tells the participants what is expected from them in the course of the distance module, introduces the classroom observation sheet and the guidelines for the lesson report. Encourages the trainees to carry out self	Guidelines for the lesson report. Classroom observation sheet. List of course books and reference books.

procedures went, how well and how the students did the activity, to what extent aims were achieved and what the students thought about it. If you have an observer with you, involve the observer in this discussion, or divide the class in two and talk to half each- do you get different answers? Use the provided **observation sheet** and the **guidelines** for your report. Bring your lesson plan, your observation sheet(s) and your report with you for the next session.	and peer observations focused at learning and teaching Use of English. Provides them with a list of course books and reference books.	

Sample 7b): The revised version of the Use of English sessions 1-2, containing 5 session tasks plus the homework assignment task (extract from the course booklet)

Day 4, Session 22, Use of English 1

Task 1 – Attitudes to grammar

A. How do you feel about teaching English grammar? Write down your thoughts on the small piece of paper provided and put it on the wall.

B. Read what a group of students say about learning English grammar. Discuss in a group of three.

C. Compare the teachers' thoughts with the students' thoughts. What conclusions do you draw?
Write your conclusions here and discuss with the whole group.

Summary of teachers views

Summary of students' views

Conclusions

Task 2 – Teaching the use of English

A.   Match these words with their definitions

Grammar   Vocabulary   Discourse

1.   Words that make up a language (meanings, connotations, compounding word formation, idioms, phrases, etc.).
2.   Contextualized stretches of language perceived to be meaningful and constructed out of motivated choices. (Formal / informal language, appropriacy of language used in different situations, choice of language according to the purpose of speaking, etc.) (Batstone 1994: 136)
3.   The identification of systematic regularities in language. (Batstone 1994:136)

A.   How do you teach grammar, vocabulary and discourse in class? Give examples of activities you use for each language area and write your ideas down below.
Grammar ……………………………………………………………………….
Vocabulary ……………………………………………………………………
Discourse ……………………………………………………………………

B.   Look at the examples of course book use of English activities.
Which area of language do they practise, grammar, vocabulary or discourse?

Task 3 – Discussion

What conclusions do you draw from this session?

Does use of English mean grammar?
Do you teach the full range of language covered by use of English?
Do course books cover the full range of language areas?

Use of English, sample course book task A, Headway intermediate p 84
Use of English, sample course book task B, Blueprint p 77
Use of English, sample task A- What on earth?
Use of English, sample exam task B-After flying royal visit
Use of English, sample exam task C- Underlined phrases

Day 4, Session 23, Use of English 2

Task 1 – Exam tasks

1. Complete the four sample tasks.
2. Identify the tasks and text types from the exam document.
3. Identify which language area they are intended to test.
4. Give your opinions of the task.
5. Compare your answers with a partner.
6. Discuss your answers with the whole group.

Task 2 – Teaching for the new exam

A. In a group make a list of tips for teachers and students preparing for the new exams.
1. Advice for teachers

2. Advice for learners

B. Report your suggestions to the rest of the group.

Use of English session follow-up task (spend 3 hours on this activity)

Try out one or more of the use of English tests provided with your students.
a) Record their marks in the table.
b) Ask the students for some verbal and written comments on the tasks.
c) Summarise their responses and write the summary in the table. Then compare your students' comments with the comments you made about the tasks. Are your students' comments the same or different to yours?
d) Keep the results for the use of English review session on day 5 of the course.

Text title: .... Number of students in class ....
In the box put the student's answer (a, b, c etc) and then write 1 for a correct answer, 0 for an incorrect answer.

Student (a number)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								
16								
17								
18								
19								
20								
Totals:								

Student comments ……………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………..

When these materials were revised the following elements were changed or left out from the sessions:
–   The lecture-like summary of the first session was left out.
–   The course book examples were changed.
–   The timing was changed.
–   The homework assignment became much simpler and clearer.

The following new elements were introduced in the revised version:
–   Session 22, Task 1/C: Summary of students' and teachers' views
–   Session 22, Task 3: Discussion
–   Session 23, Task 1 /4, 5: Evaluating the task with a partner

2.4 Conclusion

Task design was a crucial element in developing the current version of the NETT Course. All stages described in this chapter were important in this process and none of them could have been left out. Careful selection of course materials, choosing the right training techniques, going through the piloting process were all needed to achieve the aims set by the designer team. Live courses in the near future will test the results of this enormous amount of professional work.