

Materials Development



Trainer's handbook

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How to use this handbook

Objectives

This module sets out to:

- consider the importance of making mother tongue and bilingual reading materials
- focus on oral stories as an important source for reading materials
- give participants skill and confidence in making books and other reading materials
- provide participants with information and guidance on the different aspects of materials development.

Structure

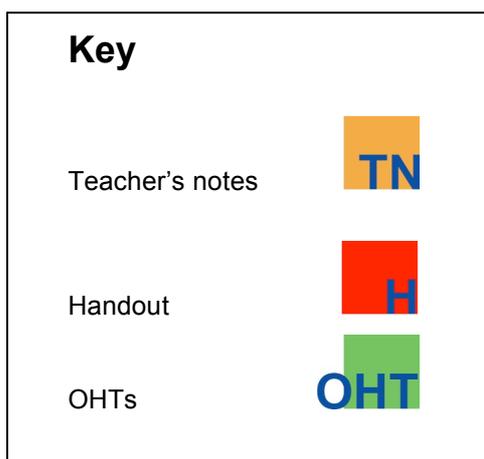
The topics covered are:

- first language acquisition
- stages in first language acquisition
- theories of language learning
- language learning quiz
- a lesson in Clunkclickish

Organization

Each activity:

- starts with teacher's notes which set out the purpose of the activity, the materials required and instructions for how to proceed
- Is followed by the relevant OHTs and handouts.



Materials development objectives

- To consider the importance of making mother tongue and bilingual reading materials.
- To focus on oral stories as an important source for reading materials.
- To give participants skill and confidence in making books and other reading materials.
- To provide participants with information and guidance on the different aspects of materials development.



Using stories to create print

Purpose

To stimulate participants to think about themselves as sources of reading material, and to demonstrate how teachers can create reading materials in their own language/s

Materials

Oral heritage OHT

A1 paper and pens

Instructions

Display **Oral heritage** OHT and explain that you are going to explore ways of using stories in participants' mother tongues to produce reading materials for children.

Ask participants to think about a story that was told to them when they were young. Who told it to them? In what language?

Share it with a partner.

When you take feedback:

- Ask participants to try to recall the feelings or emotions they experienced through the story.
- Point out that one of the reasons that stories are so powerful is because our emotions are involved.

Now ask a volunteer to share one short story with the group.

As s/he tells the story, write it on a poster size piece of paper.

Ask the participants to:

- read through the story with you
- suggest what the relevance of the activity might be.

When you take feedback, focus on the fact that:

- Reading material can be created in any language
- All teachers can create reading material in this way.

The oral heritage

- The systematic underdevelopment of African languages as languages of print since colonial times, together with the demand of modern societies for literate citizens, means that teachers face many challenges.
- One such challenge is to find ways to create print-rich classroom environments that will support children's literacy learning.
- Africa has a long and rich heritage of oral story telling.
- Under colonial rule, and since Independence, the potential and importance of stories for learning has been devalued in many countries.
- Yet telling oral stories provides the foundation for written ones. For young children, stories can be powerful stepping-stones to literacy learning.



Making basic books

Purpose

- To develop participants' skills and confidence in making books.
- To help participants to appreciate the value of encouraging children to make books.

Materials

- Making books OHT
- **Designing books OHT**
- **Basic books** Handout
- **Materials development checklist** Handout
- Sheets of paper, scissors, pen, pencils

Instructions

Ask participants whether they have done any book making with children and invite them to brainstorm the benefits.

Display the **Making books OHT** which should serve as a summary of the possible benefits. Ask participants to identify any practical issues in helping children to plan and design their books.

Display the **Designing books OHT** and ask participants for comments before inviting them to make their own basic book.

Distribute **Basic books** handout, paper, scissors and writing materials.

Ask participants to try making each of the basic books and to choose one of the models as the basis for writing a story of their own.

Ask participants to present the story and to share their thoughts on the process either to the whole or a small group.

When this part of the activity is finished, distribute the **Materials development checklist** handout. Ask participants to critique their own attempts, making reference to the checklist.

When taking feedback, pay particular attention to:

- The language which they have used and why
- How easy it is to make a very pleasing end product

How they would go about using this approach with children that they teach.

Designing books

Page size

Page size is determined by the size of the paper available. If you can vary the paper, different size books can be created for different purposes, e.g. very small books to look at alone, larger ones to share, big books to read with a group.

Page layout

- Decide how many pages you are going to use (6 pages makes a basic book, which neatly accommodates the traditional story format of beginning, middle and end).
- Decide how you are going to set out the book. Although it is more complicated to use two languages, some decisions are the same for all page designs.



Making books

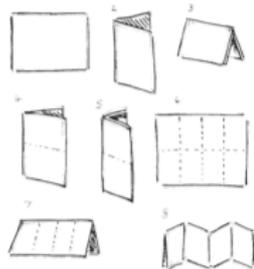
Book making has the following benefits for children:

- It encourages children to take responsibility for their own learning.
- It encourages collaboration: two or more children can produce a book together by working on separate sheets of paper, which are then stuck into the book.
- Children take turns to be author and illustrator and have a great sense of achievement.
- Children see themselves as authors and/or illustrators. This motivates them to want to write more and make their next book better than the one before.
- Books are made to be read. Children think about who will read their work, and concentrate on the appearance of the book – design, illustration and handwriting.



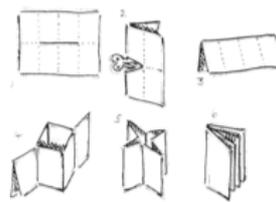
Making basic books

The concertina book



- 1 Lay paper in front of you in the landscape position
- 2 Fold vertically in half
- 3 Then fold horizontally in half
- 4 Open the crease you have just made
- 5 Now fold vertically in half
- 6 Open up whole sheet
- 7 Fold horizontally in half
- 8 Zig-zag panels to make concertina book

The origami book



- 1 Fold sheet of paper as for concertina book up to stage 6. Cut central panels as shown with craft knife, or
- 2 Fold sheet vertically in half and cut central panels with scissors
- 3 Fold whole sheet horizontally in half
- 4 Push left and right panels to centre to form firstly central cube
- 5 Then a cross
- 6 Finally fold panels round to make six page book



Making materials

- All document production involves a number of stages, such as planning, drafting, editing, designing, etc.
- Even 'self-made' materials require careful thought and decisions for them to be as useful and attractive as possible.

Producing bilingual texts involves additional issues such as decisions about cultural appropriateness and translation.

Checklist for materials development

Checklists vary according to particular contexts and circumstances. The following is a guideline.

Planning

- What kinds of materials are needed?
- Who are the readers and how are they going to use the materials?
- How are the materials going to be produced?
- Who is going to make the materials, and who is responsible for what?

Resources

- Are any funds available for making the material?
- What paper can you get hold of? Is it better to use cheap paper which will tear quickly or longer lasting paper?
- How will you illustrate the material? Are there good artists in the community or among the children? What art materials can you get hold of?

Language

- How many languages are to be used?
- Who is responsible for translation?
- Is the translation appropriate for the readers?
- What decisions are being made about dialect variation?
- Is the text consistent in grammar, punctuation, spelling?
- If the text is a translation how does it reflect the original text? Is it at the same reading level?
- Can you make provision for translations to be tested on readers?

Design issues

- Is the page layout appropriate for the way the material is going to be used?
- If the text is bi- or multi-lingual, are the languages treated equally?
- Is there too much text, making it difficult to read?
- Is there a clear structure with headings, captions for illustrations, etc to allow the reader to navigate their way around the text?
- Have the page designs been tried out on readers?

Making bilingual books

Purpose

- To develop participants' skills and confidence in making bilingual books.
- To draw their attention to important design issues.

Materials

- Bilingual books **OHT**
- Multilingual materials **OHT**
- Making bilingual books **handout**
- Materials development **handout**
- Sheets of paper, scissors, pen, pencils

Instructions

This activity will work best if participants have already completed the Basic Books topic. Display **Bilingual books OHT** and explain that this is an example of a bilingual book made by children.

Now display the **Multilingual materials OHT**. Ask participants whether they agree with the observations on the OHT and to express any reservations that they may have.

Distribute **Making bilingual books handout**, paper, scissors and writing materials.

Ask participants to translate an existing story – perhaps one that they produced in the Basic books activity – into the mother tongue and then produce a bilingual story using one of the formats in the handout.

When this part of the activity is finished, distribute the Materials development checklist. Ask participants to critique their own attempts, making reference to the checklist.

When taking feedback, pay particular attention to the language issues highlighted in the checklist.

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Bilingual book

A vertical light blue bar is positioned on the left side of the slide.

Making multilingual reading materials

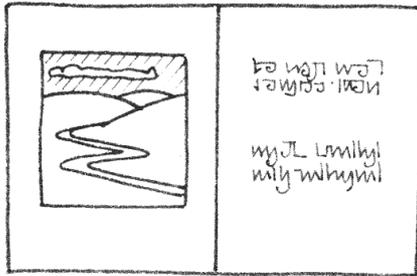
- In a multilingual environment, whether or not a language is displayed, makes a clear statement about the way you value that language for reading and writing purposes.
- Children, family members and other visitors feel affirmed and respected when they see notices, signs and other reading materials in their language.
- Quality counts! If we want languages to have equal status in print, we need to treat the low-status language in the same way as the high-status language, e.g. when making signs, use the same quality paper, pens, finishing touches for any language/s used.



Making bilingual books

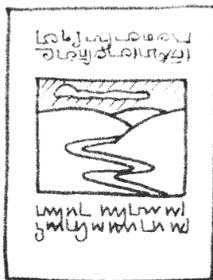
Take an existing story – perhaps one that you made in the Basic books activity.
Translate it into the mother tongue.
Produce a bilingual story using one of the formats below

Picture on the left, both texts on the right-hand page



This kind of layout, where the picture takes up one page of a double page spread, supports reading strategies where both languages are read together. It also allows teachers to use the picture independently of the text.

One text above the other separated by a picture



In this layout the pictures make a strong divide between the two languages. If you use this layout one of the languages can be covered up and children encouraged to focus on the other. If children are reading on their own, however, the separation of the two texts can mean they concentrate on the more familiar language.

Text side by side with a picture above or below



This approach to page layout works well when languages are read in different directions, such as with English and Urdu.

Making materials

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- Is there a clear structure with headings, captions for illustrations, etc to allow the reader to navigate their way around the text?
- Have the page designs been tried out on readers?

Make a story

Purpose

To help participants practice generating stories

Materials

Moving from oral to written language OHT

Story starters OHT

Large sheet of paper, felt tip pen

Instructions

Display **Moving from oral to written language** OHT. Ask participants if they agree or disagree with the two statements and give their reasons.

Now display the **Story starters** OHT and explain that you are going to use these as the basis for group stories.

Ask participants to work in small groups. Ask each group to choose one of the sentences from the **Story starters** OHT. Members of the group then take turns to add a sentence to a story. One member of the group should act as scribe.

When this activity is over, the group chooses one story to dictate to you. Write it up on the board or on a large sheet of paper as they dictate it to you. Read the story together.

When taking feedback, point out:

- How this activity can be used to generate reading materials in any language
- How this activity can be used with children of all ages.

Moving from oral to written language

- In print scarce environments there are not enough reading materials in African languages or in ex-colonial languages.
- The wealth of oral language can form a bridge to print through stories.



Story starters

- I began to feel suspicious when...
- I heard a noise and went to investigate.
- Since I was a child, I have loved to...
- People were very kind to me after...
- I want to tell you the story of...
- Far away and long ago...
- I opened my grandfather's trunk and I could hardly believe my eyes.



Print makes sense

Purpose

To help participants realise the importance of exposing children to regular, enjoyable encounters with print

To empower participants to make their own reading materials

Materials

large sheets of paper

paints, crayons, pencils, felt tip pens, old magazines, glue, scissors

Sharing print **OHT**

Making a poster **OHT**

Instructions

Display **Sharing print OHT**. Ask participants to discuss in small groups whether or not they agree in principle with the statements made on the OHT. Assure them that they should feel free to express any concerns or reservations they might have.

Display the **Making a poster OHT**. Ask participants to think about how they will make their own poster either working alone or in groups.

The participants display their posters and take turns to read them with the group.

When taking feedback, point out that trainers can encourage teachers to create similar posters with children in class.

Sharing books

- When we share regular stories, songs or rhymes in print with children, we help them to realise that written language (print), like oral language is meaningful.
- When children experience print in their mother tongue, they grow to love reading and to value their own language for literacy.
- Such experiences also provide important foundations for learning to read.
- We can make our own materials very easily using oral rhymes, songs and stories.



Making a poster

What will you use for the text of the poster:

- a rhyme?
- a riddle?
- a song?
- something else?

How will you illustrate the poster:

- painting?
- drawing?
- magazine pictures?
- a mixture?

