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ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB -A PROPOSAL FOR A WEB-BASED COURSEBOOK SUPPLEMENT

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1. Introduction - foreign language teaching in tertiary education in Poland

Teaching English for Specific Purposes is widespread in many countries of the world, also in Poland, however, with teachers facing many obstacles and trying to come up with creative solutions to the problems of teachers and students. Nowadays, in the era of Information Technology present in every sphere of life, teachers of ESP more and more frequently use computers and the Internet to facilitate teaching and enhance the learning experience provided to students. The aim of this article is to describe the situation of ESP teachers in Poland, prove the urgent need for new ways of delivering instruction and to show the solutions to the problems in the form of a Web-based coursebook supplement, which is a series of classroom lessons or self-study activities using the Web resources to learn English.

In introduction, it seems necessary to evoke the foreign language teaching context at Polish universities by highlighting its main characteristics. The current situation of learning a foreign language at a tertiary level is the continuation of language instruction from the secondary school, students leaving school around the intermediate level and starting the tertiary English at this level. Due to the strong student pressure to study English, it is the case that most students learn the language, even if their starting language level is lower than intermediate, with the extreme cases starting as absolute beginners. This has a detrimental effect on the quality of language instruction by creating mixed-ability groups. When starting classes with first year students, ESP teachers administer placement tests to diagnose students' abilities and distribute them among language groups, but the priority is the main subject organization, which may result in a situation when all students on a given year have to attend a single language group. Currently the average amount of language instruction is 120 hours, distributed among four semesters of studies, however, with plans to decrease it. Language groups differ in size from 10 to almost 30 students, with mixed ability groups when it was not possible to organize a few language level groups.

When comparing secondary and tertiary language education, one can see much smaller language exposure (around 450 hrs vs. 120 hrs), change of student attitude (where English is not seen as one of the major subjects to be obligatorily taken at school-leaving exams, but rather an add-on to main faculty subjects), language level (with groups being more heterogeneous), change in the role of the teacher (the teacher becoming more of organizer, facilitator, materials writer, while less of a resource and a teaching aid), availability of materials (where instead of a variety of multi-level coursebooks with accompanying materials one has little choice as for the textbook, being forced into the role of materials writer).

2. Language needs and expectations of language students

When devising any language learning course, it is absolutely essential to start with creating a learner profile and investigating the target learner's expectations about the different aspects of the course (Nunan, 1995; Harmer, 1991). Learner needs, apart from logistical considerations, administrative considerations, psychosocial

considerations, are what a course designer has to take into account, according to Richards and Rodgers (1986). As Nunan (1987) suggests, the modern classrooms should experience a shift from a teacher-centred curriculum, decided upon in advance by the teacher, to a learner-centred one, where the purpose for learning, individual differences, learning styles preferences, interests determine to a large extent the content and methodology of the course.

For the purposes of the current research, a survey was carried out in a group of first-year archaeology students, intending to investigate their attitude towards learning the foreign language and the expectations as for the course. As it turned out, language needs of students are multifold, and sometimes hard to reconcile. On the one hand, learners expect the development of general language proficiency, including gaining mastery in reading, listening, writing and speaking, enlarging vocabulary, perfecting the use of the grammatical system and enhancing communicative abilities. Another aspect of language instruction is learning English for a given purpose, with the specific aims of getting to know specialized vocabulary, enlarging one's knowledge of the subject matter by reading in English and being able to use the language in the prospective job by becoming prepared for some common situations such as going for an interview or conducting professional correspondence. Finally, students would like to become proficient enough to do research for their B.A./B.Sc. or M.A./M.Sc. theses, so they must be able to find and evaluate English language sources, read and understand articles and books, translate, analyse, synthethise. As can be seen, with such a wide array of needs and relatively little amount of language instruction, the teacher must be careful with choosing contents, materials, methods, mode of work, to motivate students to work on their own and showing them effective ways of looking for information.

3. ESP materials on the Polish market – an analysis.

At this point, it is necessary to present the results of a thorough analysis of ESP materials accessible on the Polish market. As shown in the findings of some research into teacher attitude to the coursebook (Krajka, 2002), for many teachers the coursebook equals the language teaching method, and when selecting materials they might not even realize that they adopt a certain set of beliefs about the learning objectives, techniques, procedures, the teacher's role and the learner's role. In order to raise the consciousness of teachers, many researchers suggest a more thorough coursebook evaluation (Harmer, 1991; Cunningsworth, 1984; Sheldon, 1988; Williams, 1983). The problem of coursebook evaluation and, in consequence, its adaptation or supplementing becomes especially up-to-date in the case of ESP materials, where, as can be seen in the analysis below, the accessibility of materials differs according to the discipline studied.

There are numerous coursebooks that can be used by teachers of English for business, economics, marketing and related disciplines. Similarly to general English coursebooks on the secondary level, they are developed in many language levels, with a multitude of accompanying materials and sufficient teacher guidance in teacher's books, teacher resource books, tests, video cassettes and coursebook-related software (*Market Leader*, *Powerhouse, First/New Insights into Business* from Longman Pearson Education, *In Company, Business to Go* by Macmillan, *English for Business Communication, English for International Banking and Finance* from Cambridge University Press or *International Express* by Oxford University Press).

The teachers of English for science have fewer materials at their disposal, with only some basic titles on one level, providing reading development and ESP vocabulary, however, without developing all the skills equally and with much less focus on grammar (*Oxford English for Information Technology, Basic English for Computing, Oxford English for Electronics* from Oxford University Press, *Infotech* published by Cambridge University Press, *English for Science* from Longman Pearson Education).

A similar situation is with tourism/hotel/catering, where individual titles might not be the sufficient source of input for classes of different language needs and especially on lower language levels, and such coursebooks as *Check In, May I Help You, Ready to Order* (Longman Pearson Education), *Highly Recommended, High Season* (Oxford University Press), *Test Your Professional English* series: hotel and catering (Penguin Longman), *English for Tourism, English for International Tourism* (Longman Pearson Education), *Going International, First Class, At Your Service* (Oxford University Press) are not likely to form a satisfactory source of teaching materials for Polish ESP teachers.

When teaching English in faculties related to culture, such as history, culture studies, social studies and political studies, one could make profitable use of cultural readers of various kinds, such as *The World of English*, *Britain Explored*, *An Illustrated History of Britain/the USA*, *Britain/America in Close-up*, *Life in Modern Britain/America* (Longman Pearson Education). Though usually containing texts, reading comprehension questions, vocabulary exercises and questions for discussion, they could hardly be used as core materials for the development of language from pre-intermediate level upwards.

In comparison with the faculties given above, coursebooks in other areas are either accessible as single titles (law with *Test Your Professional English series* from Penguin Longman or medicine with *Test Your Professional English series* from Penguin Longman and *English in Medicine* published by Cambridge University Press), while there are a number of faculties where there are no coursebooks or other language materials on the market, nor are there any plans for that. European studies, biotechnology, philosophy, library science are just a few examples of faculties where coursebooks are not available, and teachers must look for some other ways of finding materials and running lessons.

Due to the inadequacy or non-existence of ELT materials for some specific purposes, university teachers can adopt a variety of solutions, with the following ones most frequently implemented by ESP teachers in Poland:

- using a general English coursebook and supplementing it with additional texts (from magazines such as *Newsweek* or *Time*) to be read and translated by students;
- using a general English coursebook and assigning subject matter projects;
- using a general English coursebook with subject matter target language school coursebooks (e.g., *GCSE Revision Guide* series, Parsons, 2002);
- using a general English coursebook and a Web-based coursebook in a self-study mode;
- using a general English coursebook and a Web-based coursebook in the classroom.

The focus of the present paper is to discuss the last two solutions, where the teacher uses the Web-based component alongside the general English coursebook, as lessons using the Internet as a basis for conducting lessons or self-study activities. This is so due to enormous amount and wide accessibility of varied material and flexibility of mode of work.

4. Supplementing a coursebook with Internet-based activities

According to McDonough and Shaw (1993), the basic principles of adapting materials are the following:

- personalising the content, when the teacher wants to address particular learning styles of individual students. Internet-based tasks allow that, as each student or pair of students work on a separate computer, on a different material, sometimes have a different task to do, and are able to proceed at their own pace using their favourite learning methods;
- individualising the content, when the teacher lets students choose materials whose subject matter or graphic design are interesting and appealing to them. In this way, Internet-based instruction increases motivation and gives students responsibility for learning, instead of imposing the same material on them;
- localising the content, when working on specific sites allows the teacher to adapt materials in terms of
 geography or culture, supplement a one-sided view of the coursebook with some other attitudes on life,
 present some other aspects of matters put forward by the coursebook, or give a fuller context of
 specific geographic places mentioned.

All these, according to McDonough and Shaw, may be accomplished using the following techniques:

- adding/expanding (giving the same quality of material but more quantity) students go to the site of online newspapers, www.onlinenewspapers.com, and read a few articles about current affairs in different countries, then share these with other groups;
- deleting/subtracting (reducing only quantity, leaving quality unchanged) students go to an Internet bookshop, e.g., www.amazon.com, and read the summaries of books instead of extracts from them;

- rewriting (relating the structure of activity to students' needs) after having read a text about Auckland, students search the Web and design a 3-day trip, book a flight and a hotel, plan every hour of their stay, find sights and entertainment places interesting to them;
- restructuring (changing the mode of presentation or focus of the activity) instead of reading texts about disasters, students go to http://www.fema.gov/hazards/ website, where they need to find the information about particular disasters to complete the table;
- simplifying (making texts simpler in terms of structure, lexis, grammar) instead of having students read a text about marriage conditions, students could research the websites in different countries to check what are the necessary conditions to get married, where it is easiest or the most difficult to get married;
- re-ordering (changing the order of activities/grammar exercises).

Apart from these techniques, it is possible to adapt the coursebook in some more ways:

- adding authenticity: students go to Dumb Laws (<u>www.dumblaws.com</u>) to read authentic laws from different countries, working on real material and at the same time practising the use of modal verbs;
- adding recency: students go to The Internet Movie Database (<u>www.imdb.com</u>) to read about the films that are going to appear on screen soon;
- adding variety and choice: students go to www.biography.com and choose the biography they want to read about:
- adding novelty: Internet sites and modes of work on the Net are going to be a surprise for students, instead of a coursebook which tends to have the same predictable structure and repetitive activities;
- adding interactivity: using the communication tools the Internet offers (email, chat, videoconferencing) adds an additional dimension to the classroom and enables international class cooperation.

5. Creating Web-based coursebook supplements

In the light of what has been said above about the language needs and expectations of ESP students in Poland, it seems justified to combine the two elements: general English teaching to provide sound grammatical and lexical base, as well as to develop the skills, and a Web-based coursebook supplement, with Internet lessons, self-study projects and other activities, giving the ESP input. The idea of making Web-based coursebook supplements (Krajka, 2001a; Krajka, 2002) is justified by the necessity of finding alternative ways of providing language input and materials for ESP instruction due to the inaccessibility of published commercial ELT materials for many faculties.

Implementing the idea of using a Web-based coursebook supplement should increase the quality of ESP instruction for the following reasons:

- the teacher gets access to the materials from a specialized subject matter, with the possibility to create interesting and authentic tasks on different language levels;
- for teachers of many disciplines, the Web may be the only alternative as the source of ESP materials, especially in EFL countries where authentic materials are scarce and relatively expensive;
- increased exposure to language instruction will surely result in the development of language skills, and because of the prominent element of learner autonomy students should also acquire the procedures of getting and extracting information, analyzing websites, producing summaries or reports, which will come in useful in their professional career;
- the existence of the Web-based component will help build up computer skills and Internet skills, making students confident and skilful users of the Web.

At this moment, one should not be overenthusiastic about the use of the Internet in teaching ESP and regard Internet-based instruction as a panacea for all classroom problems. The teacher starting to implement the online component needs to overcome a number of common problems and difficulties:

- getting access to the computer lab for English classes, which might not be easy due to the amount of other IT classes in underresourced colleges and universities;
- having the Internet lab with sufficiently fast connection, which will have a great influence on the choice of

- online tasks. With slower connection, one should make more static lessons, making students focused on one or two sites, and refrain from using search engines.
- the student-computer ratio, with too many students using one computer. Here the teacher should form pairs of students to work on one computer each; make bigger groups, where the whole group would do some offline language tasks and only one representative would do some online work; or even give groups online access on a rota basis if there is only one computer available.
- the class having different level of computer skills, and consequently the teacher careful to make mixed-computer-ability groups, and being ready to occasionally do some technical teaching.
- the online component taking more time than planned, due to the amount of information and sometimes technical problems, and the teacher finding it hard to realize the lesson plan. In such a case, close monitoring, proper timing and constant teacher control over time is necessary to ensure students get the most of the lesson.
- finally, once the teacher and students become accustomed and willing to learn online, it must be remembered that the proper balance between regular language instruction and online ESP instruction should be monitored to ensure, on the one hand, general language development, and, on the other, provide needed vocabulary input.

The process of creating a Web-based coursebook supplement can be described as follows:

- creating a student profile;
- conducting a student needs analysis;
- analysing coursebook structures, topics, functions, lexis and trying to come up with corresponding Web-based ones;
- ordering them into a syllabus;
- finding and evaluating relevant materials (texts, recordings, activities, resources);
- matching the materials with structures, topics, functions, lexis;
- creating classroom tasks and language exercises;
- beta-testing the coursebook by students and fellow teachers.

As can be seen, the steps of the process as given above demand the shift in the role of the teacher, from a language provider to a materials writer, from a teaching aid and a resource to an organizer and a facilitator.

When making an ESP Web supplement, the true interactive nature of the Internet needs to be exploited, by including such tools as:

- a dedicated discussion group, set up by the teacher (see Krajka, 2001b, on how to set up and use a discussion group in language teaching);
- international subject matter discussion lists, with students subscribing and sending messages;
- a class chatroom, added to the class website as a Java applet (e.g., http://www.jpilot.com);
- discussions with guest speakers in a chat room;
- a class partnership with some other English-for-a-given-discipline class, with the elements of an email exchange between students, coordination of teachers, class-to-class discussions and a collaborative website (see Krajka, 2001c).

When thinking about the activities, depending on whether it is possible to conduct the lessons in-class or not, the teacher could include both standard communicative language activities (dialogues, role plays, simulations, question-answer, reading and multiple choice), and Web-based ones, such as interpersonal exchanges (keypal exchanges with a similar ESP class, electronic appearances, ask a question); information collection and analysis (treasure hunts, telefieldtrips, focus discipline research); Web publishing and editing (collaborative writing, class webpublishing) and online problem-solving (WebQuests, simulations and games, online research modules). For more on these, see Luzon Marco, 2001a; Luzon Marco, 2001b; Brown, 1999.

The important element of a Web-based coursebook would be developing learner autonomy by placing some responsibility for learning on students, letting them become materials writers, making decisions on the content and contributing to the learning process (see Krajka, Grudzinska, 2002). One way of doing this would be to

include the idea of authoring software that could be implemented both by the teacher and students. The former could use either authoring multimedia programs (*Hot Potatoes*, *Wida Authoring Suite*) or Web-based services (*Puzzlemaker*, http://www.puzzlemaker.com, *Headline Makers*, http://lang.swarthmore.edu/makers/index.htm) to create self-study Web-based reading and listening comprehension questions, self-study grammar quizzes, self-study ESP vocabulary quizzes and self-study subject area research questions (for a fuller discussion and a step-by-step tutorial of Web-based authoring tools, see Krajka, 2003). On the other hand, given the wide accessibility of such authoring tools and their user-friendliness, the teacher should involve students in the process by making them create quizzes of various types for the rest of the class, such as self-study ESP vocabulary quizzes, self-study subject area research questions and self-study reading comprehension tasks. Thanks to that solution, the teacher will be able to get a much larger learning impact by getting a wider range of exercises and tasks, while the students will learn how to make important decisions of isolating main language points, prioritizing, synthesizing, analyzing.

6. A Web-based coursebook for archaeology students – a case study

6.1. The description of the coursebook

In order to demonstrate the practical application of the ideas outlined above, a case study will be presented. The teacher has a class of 24 students, with their level of English varying from pre-intermediate to intermediate+. The students study archaeology, and according to the curriculum of studies they have English for 2 hours a week, 30 weeks a year, for 2 years, giving a total of 120 hours over two years. The course does not end in a written exam, but in an oral questioning (*zaliczenie*). The classes are sometimes separated by more than a one-week break due to archaeology fieldtrips. As there is no specialized coursebook for English for archaeology, the teacher uses a general English coursebook, *Wavelength Pre-Intermediate* (Longman Pearson Education).

When making the Web-based coursebook supplement, the next stage (after coming up with a student profile and making a thorough language needs' analysis) was to examine the coursebook and isolate different threads of its syllabus. *Wavelength* follows a hybrid syllabus, combining a grammatical thread, a topical thread, a functional thread. Table 1 shows the grammatical material of the book divided into units.

Unit 1: Present Simple and Present Continuous

Unit 2: Past Simple, *used to*, comparative adjectives/structures

Unit 3: Past Simple, remember + infinitive + -ing

Unit 4: -ing and -ed adjectives, Past Simple vs. Present Perfect

Unit 5: modal verbs (have to, don't have to, can, can't)

Unit 6: Present Continuous, be going to, will

Unit 7: first conditional, compounds with every-, some-, any-, no-

Unit 8: future predictions (*will* and *might*), conditional questions

Unit 9: Present Perfect with for and since

Unit 10: Past Continuous and Past Simple

Unit 11: Second Conditional

Unit 12: reported commands

Unit 13: countable and uncountable nouns, *be going to* for predictions and plans, Present Perfect with *yet*Unit 14: countable and uncountable nouns, prepositions of place and movement, the passive

Unit 15: *one* and *ones*, defining relative clauses

Unit 16: reported speech statements and questions, subject and object pronouns, so and such

Table 1. Wavelength Pre-Intermediate's grammatical thread.

Alongside the grammatical thread of the syllabus, the book also features a topical thread, where texts and recordings are grouped around certain themes:

Unit 1: meeting people Unit 2: money Unit 3: biographies Unit 4: at the cinema Unit 5: rules and regulations, summer jobs Unit 6: places, weather, holiday plans Unit 7: film characters, film scenes Unit 8: actions and consequences Unit 9: rooms, favourite things Unit 10: love stories, relationships Unit 11: inventions and gadgets Unit 12: cars, signs of the zodiac Unit 13: holiday plans Unit 14: criminals and crimes Unit 15: gossiping about people Unit 16: coincidences

Table 2. Wavelength's Pre-Intermediate topical thread.

The coursebook used also has functional elements, with requests, offers, answers (Unit 1); giving opinions, agreeing, disagreeing (Unit 2); showing interest (Unit 5); asking for information, giving directions (Unit 6); telephoning, asking for repetition (Unit 9); giving advice in Unit 11; making complaints (Unit 13) and miming, talking round words (Unit 15).

6.2. Wavelength's Web-based coursebook supplement

The final section of the present paper attempts to take the above considerations into account, and to propose a tentative outline of a Web-based supplement for the students of archaeology, whose aim it would be to provide ESP grammar and vocabulary input, make use of the appeal the Internet has for students, use the

almost infinite amount of materials and fast access to them.

Since the coursebook has 6-page long units, each subdivided into 3-4 lessons of 45 minutes; after every four units there is a 1-page intensive reading and listening section and after every four units there is a 1-page grammar and vocabulary revision section, then the Web-based supplement will have two Web-based lessons made for each unit, with possible extensions for self-study; a Web-based project; self-study quizzes; an intensive Web reading section and a writing task, all every four units. In this way the amount of Web-based instruction and standard coursebook instruction will be balanced in the ratio of 1-4.

For the topical thread of the coursebook, the careful consideration has been carried out, and the topics that are as close as possible to the ones of the coursebook, but pertaining to the ESP area of study, have been found. Table 3 compares the original topics with their ESP extensions.

U 1: Meeting people (people)	Meeting archaeology experts	
U 2: Money matters (money)	Financing the expedition	
U 3: It's your life (biographies)	Archaeologists from the past	
U 4: Hooray for Hollywood (cinema)	Too true to make a film – true stories of curse and death	
U 5: Playing by the rules (rules and regulations)	Do's and Don'ts on an excavation site	
U 6: Where on earth? (places, weather)	Finding and describing new digouts	
U 7: The cruel heart (film characters, film scenes)	Crime on the site part one	
U 8: Future dreams or nightmares (actions and consequences)	What will happen if we?	
U 9: My place (describing rooms)	The temple uncovered	
U 10: He loves me, he loves me not (relationships)	Love and hatred on the site	
U 11: If(inventions, gadgets)	Shall we make the work easier?	
U 12: Love me, love my car (zodiac signs)	The supernatural in our command	
U 13: What a holiday (holiday plans)	Work on holiday, holiday at work	
U 14: Crime doesn't pay (crime)	Crime on the site part two	
U 15: What are you talking about (gossiping)	Did you hear that they found?	
U 16: The strangest thing happened to me (coincidences)	Tales from the expedition	

Table 3. The corresponding topics of the coursebook and the Web-based supplement.

A similar procedure was carried out using the functional thread, where the social English expressions and the situations they were presented and practiced in were related to the ESP discipline of archaeology students, with the following result:

U 1: Requests, offers, answers	Asking questions about digging techniques (ask-an-expert)	
U 2: Giving opinions, agreeing, disagreeing	Discussing the expenses on the expedition (group work	
	discussion)	
U 5: Showing interest	Listening to others talking about archaeology research (chat	
	discussion with a partner class)	
U 6: Asking for information, giving directions	Showing others the place of new digouts on the maps (pair work	
	task, chat room task, discussion group email task)	
U 9: Telephoning, asking for repetition	Talking about the new sites (pair work)	
U 11: Giving advice	Tips for inexperienced diggers (class website bulletin board)	
U 13: Making complaints	Dealing with a complaining non-digging boy/girlfriend (pair work	
	speaking task)	
U 15: Using relative clauses	Describing what you have found (email letter)	

Table 4. The functional thread related to the ESP discipline.

The other components of the Web-based coursebook supplement, namely the intensive reading sections, writing tasks and projects, added as an extension unit after every four units, were devised in accordance with the topics, structures and functions in the four units, so that they served as consolidation of the language material introduced in some situation relating to the students' future profession. The results can be seen in Table

Intensive reading sections:	Writing tasks:	Projects:
Archaeologists from the past – reading for specific information (to compare).	The archaeologist of the millennium – my recommendation.	The expedition budget plan, with implementation and expenditure
2. Crime on the site – reading and continuing the story.	2. The account of the survivor – a diary of an archaeologist.	2. The excavation site rules and regulations listing
3. How things work – reading to extract the most important points.	3. The inexplicable chain of events on the site – an article for a tabloid newspaper.	3. A murder on the site – the supernatural or the villain? The police investigation.
4. Tales from the expedition – reading and putting the events/paragraphs in the correct order	4. Promoting the excavations and fundraising – a passionate speech to a party of business people	4. Archaeology in the future – how to make the work more effective

Table 5. The Web-based extension units.

To conclude this section, it must be said that the ideas presented are very much the work in progress. It is the author's sincere belief that it will be possible to develop similar Web-based coursebook supplements and evaluate the usefulness and the impact they make on language learning. What can be observed at the moment is that such collections of Internet lessons are fairly easy to produce due to a great variety of materials on the Net and inexpensive in terms of production, with the medium being a website or a CD-ROM, in comparison with any book edition. If a teacher makes a coursebook supplement with reference to a given class, then it is possible to address the needs of an individual class, and also to modify the already existing coursebook supplement to suit the interests or level of this class. It seems that because Web-based coursebook supplements enable the general language development, provide ESP vocabulary input, give students the practice in the ESP professional world, at the same time building their computer skills and exploiting the powerful motivation of the Internet, developing learner autonomy and giving students the influence on the course of learning within the frames set by the teacher, such teaching materials should be developed by teachers either for classroom instruction or for self-study.

7. Conclusion. ESP on the WWW – perspectives for the future.

In conclusion, it could be said that it does not seem to be the question of whether or not to use the Internet and computers in learning English for Specific Purposes, because most teachers and students are convinced as to enormous benefits given by the use of modern technologies in the classroom. At the moment, a few scenarios for the future relationships between classroom teaching and Internet-based teaching can be envisaged:

- ELT publishers add Web-based coursebook supplements to their general English coursebooks (as CD-ROMs or Web-based materials)
- teachers acquire the rules of making Web-based supplements and create them on the local level
- ESP Web portals enable teachers to share their own materials, providing free access to a multitude of resources in different disciplines, on different language levels and supplementing different widespread coursebooks.

The above, of course, place power in the hands of different players in the field. Any of these scenarios will eventually lead to a much better situation of ESP teachers, facilitate their work, equip them with materials of better quality and in bigger quantity.

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