

THE CHALLENGES OF ADAPTING MATERIALS IN EFL CLASSES

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Abstract: this article describes the importance of choosing materials appropriately in teaching English as a foreign language. Finding and selecting items for use in classes might be difficult. Teachers must consider several factors, including authenticity, the original source, target language proficiency, and learners' language levels and ages

Keywords: materials, language, EFL

EFL SINFLARIDA MATERIALLARNI MUVOZLASHTIRISH MUAMMOLARI

Annotatsiya: ushbu maqolada ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'rgatishda to'g'ri material tanlash muhimligi tasvirlangan. Sinflarda foydalanish uchun narsalarni topish va tanlash qiyin bo'lishi mumkin. O'qituvchilar bir nechta omillarni hisobga olishlari kerak, jumladan, haqiqiylik, asl manba, maqsadli tilni bilish va o'quvchilarning til darajasi va yoshi

Kalit so'zlar: materiallar, til, EFL

ПРОБЛЕМЫ АДАПТАЦИИ МАТЕРИАЛОВ НА ЗАНЯТИЯХ EFL

Аннотация: в этой статье описывается важность правильного выбора материалов при обучении английскому языку как иностранному. Поиск и выбор предметов для использования в классах может быть затруднен. Учителя должны учитывать несколько факторов, включая подлинность, первоисточник, уровень владения целевым языком, а также уровень владения языком и возраст учащихся.

Ключевые слова: материалы, язык, EFL

INTRODUCTION

Teaching materials play an important role in language teaching, despite a diverse range of materials and course books, many teachers prefer to produce their own materials for classroom use. There are several reasons why teachers may choose to construct their own teaching materials. Indeed, most teachers spend considerable time finding, selecting, evaluating, and adapting materials. Before discussing the challenges of designing materials, we wish to highlight some advantages as well. An important advantage of teacher-produced materials is contextualization. A key criticism of commercial materials, particularly those produced for the world - wide EFL market is that they are necessarily generic and not aimed at any specific group of learners or any particular cultural or educational context. The possible lack of 'fit' between teaching context and course book has been expressed thus: — Our modern course books are full of speech acts and functions based on situations which most foreign-language students will never encounter... 'Globally' designed course books have continued to be stubbornly Anglo-centric. Appealing to the world market as they do, they cannot by definition draw on local varieties of English and have not gone very far in recognizing English as an international language, either [1]. For many teachers, designing or adapting their own teaching materials, enables them to take into account their particular learning environment and to overcome the lack of the course book.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Another aspect of context is the resources available. Some teaching contexts will be rich in resources such as course books, supplementary texts, readers, computers, audio-visual equipment and consumables such as paper, pens and so on. Other contexts may be extremely impoverished, with little more than an old blackboard and a few pieces of chalk. Finding and choosing materials to use in classes can be a challenge [3]. Teachers must take into account a number of things, including authenticity, the original source, the target language skill, and learners' language levels and ages. After choosing materials, teachers must then decide if the material needs to be further adapted to fit the needs of their learners. A lack of commercial materials forces teachers to fall back on their own resources and designing their own teaching materials can enable them to make best use of the resources available in their teaching context. A further aspect that is not often mentioned in the literature is the cost of commercially produced resources. For many schools, teacher-produced materials can be the best option in terms of both school and student budget. A second area in which teacher-designed materials are an advantage is that of individual needs. Modern teaching methodology increasingly emphasizes the importance of identifying and teaching to the individual needs of learners. English language classrooms are diverse places not only in terms of where they are situated, but also in terms of the individual learners within each context.

Teacher designed materials can be responsive to the heterogeneity inherent in the classroom. This approach encompasses the learners' first languages and cultures, their learning needs and their experiences. Few course books deliberately incorporate opportunities for learners to build on the first language skills already acquired, despite research suggesting that bilingual approaches are most successful in developing second language competence. A teacher can develop materials that incorporate elements of the learners' first language and culture, or at least provide opportunities for acknowledgement and use alongside English. In addition, teacher-prepared materials provide the opportunity to select texts and activities at exactly the right level for particular learners, to ensure appropriate challenge and levels of success.

In designing their own materials, teachers can also make decisions about the most appropriate organizing principle or focus for the materials and activities. In addition, this can be changed over the course of the program if necessary. Most course books remain organized around grammar elements and the PPP (presentation, practice, production) model of teaching, often with an — unrelenting format which can be — deeply unsnagging. By taking more control over materials production, teachers can choose from the range of possibilities, including topics, situations, notions, functions, skills etc, or a combination of these principles, as starting points to develop a variety of materials that focus on the developing needs of their particular group of learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personalization is another advantage of teacher-designed materials. In his 1991 article, Block argues in favor of home-made' materials saying that they add a personal touch to teaching that students appreciate [3]. Tapping into the interests and taking account of the learning styles of students is likely to increase motivation and engagement in learning. Prodromal further suggests that there is also greater choice, freedom and scope for spontaneity when teachers develop their own materials. A further advantage of teacher-designed materials is timeliness. Teachers designing their own materials can respond to local and international events with up-to-date, relevant and high interest topics and tasks. The teachable moment can be more readily seized.

CONCLUSIONS

Along with advantages of material design, there are a number of potential challenges for teachers who would be materials designers. These can be considered under three headings, the first of which is organization. Course books are usually organized around an identifiable principle and follow a discernible pattern throughout. While this can be rather dull and boring (or ‘unrelenting’) it does provide both teachers and students with some security and a — coherent body of work to remember and revise from [2]. In contrast, teacher-designed materials may lack overall coherence and a clear progression. Without some overall organizing principle, materials may be piecemeal and can result in poorly focused activities lacking clear direction. This is frustrating and confusing for learners who may not be able to see how their English is developing.

References:

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