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OUT WITH THE TEXTBOOK

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Out with the textbook

With the emergence of the internet and the increased amount of private language teaching, the use of textbooks is losing its importance. Though textbooks can be useful for both teachers and students, they can also be repetitive and energy draining. Many teachers choose to follow a course book for a variety of reasons: obligation by their institution or lack of teaching experience and therefore, the need for guidance. But what can definitely be observed is the necessity to motivate the learner, and this can be a tough task while hiding behind a textbook.

Structure in language learning

An element of repetition is an essential part of language learning and the reinforcement of language is often achieved through it. What can be difficult for learners to understand, however, is when a teacher simply follows a textbook and lets the book dictate the content and pace of classes. Students will value what they are learning far more when the teacher evidently puts a lot of effort into the preparation of their classes and also when they obviously enjoy what they are teaching. The production of original material is a way of demonstrating this. If a teacher creates their own resources, they will be able to structure their curriculum accordingly, and the benefit to the learners is endless.



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The influence of the Internet

The internet is a limitless resource that is becoming ever more important in the language learning field. Book sales are decreasing drastically and though this is concerning, it is easy to see why. Of course, we do not want to see content producers disappear as they provide a valuable service, but textbooks tend to be pricey and the teacher will always run the risk of repeating already seen activities. There is nothing worse than having to repeat the same exercises over and over because the teacher lacks the imagination to come up with something original.

Later, there is the increase in demand to learn languages online. Whether it be exam preparation or even learning languages independently just for fun, students are looking for a more flexible way of attending class. Being able to study online offers a wider range of timetables, prices and teachers; therefore, it is probably right to think of online language learning as the future of the field.

A final thing is that students should study in a consistent way so that they make steady progress. Having resources readily available on the internet will give students access to learning out of class hours and also a way for teachers to follow progress.



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Level of the students

As a teacher, classes and activities should be a constant process of self reflection and even adjustment through the process of reflexive teaching. It is important to ensure that students feel both challenged and motivated; this way their progress will be enhanced. Textbooks can impede this process as teachers can feel obligated to complete all of the exercises in them, or it can lead to complaints from parents and the students themselves because they will feel that they have wasted their money. Teachers must overcome this obstacle, through adaptation of texts and exercises.

Secondly, textbooks can be difficult to judge level-wise. There is nothing worse than teaching students with material that is either too hard for them or way to easy. It can make everyone feel trapped and of course, learning is limited further.

The final thing is that although textbooks are adapted, this process can be slow and texts can become outdated in the blink of an eye. Teachers who write their own material can focus topics on the interests of their learners and this has countless advantages in relation to their motivation and participation in class. If learners are truly interested in what they are learning about, their level will improve no end.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, a textbook should be seen as a tool to aid teaching, but not the be all and end all. Resources such as texts, audios and speaking activities should be selected carefully to assist the advancement of language learners. Text books **MUST NOT** be followed strictly or everyone will be sorry.



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