TEXTBOOKS FOR TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN UPPER GRADES: A PEDAGOGICAL DIAGNOSTIC APPROACH

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Annotation: This article investigates the contribution of textbooks for the teaching of foreign languages in upper-grade classrooms paying attention on their effectiveness through pedagogical diagnostics. It also considers the degree of compliance of the textbooks used with up-to-date pedagogy, the different needs of the pupils as well as the skills required for the learning of a foreign language. Examining prior literature and adding some field data, the paper points out through current practice what is effective in designing and what is not. Suggestions are also made on the construction of diagnostic instruments aimed at measuring and enhancing textbook productivity which is consistent with present day language teaching approaches and norms.
Keywords: Textbooks, foreign language teaching, upper grades, pedagogical diagnostics, curriculum, language proficiency, student engagement, instructional design, educational resources, classroom practices

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada yuqori sinflarda chet tillarini o'rgatishda darsliklarining hissasi o'rganilib, ularning pedagogik diagnostika orqali samaradorligiga e'tibor qaratiladi. Shuningdek, qo'llanilayotgan darsliklarning zamonaviy pedagogikaga moslik darajasi, o'quvchilarning turli ehtiyojlari hamda chet tilini o'rganish uchun zarur bo'lgan ko'nikmalar ham hisobga olinadi. Oldingi adabiyotlarni o'rganib, ba'zi qo'shimcha ma'lumotlarini qo'shgan holda, maqola hozirda qo'llaniliyotgan amaliyot orqali loyihalashda nima samarali va nima yo'qligini ko'rsatadi. Til o'rgatishning bugungi yondashuv va me'yorlariga mos keladigan darslik unumdorligini o'lchash va oshirishga qaratilgan diagnostika asboblarini yaratish bo'yicha ham takliflar bildirilmoqda.
Kalit so'zlar: Darsliklar, chet tilini o'qitish, yuqori sinflar, pedagogik diagnostika, o'quv dasturi, til bilish darajasi, o'quvchilarning faolligi, o'quv dizayni, o'quv resurslari, sinf amaliyoti

Аннотация:В данной статье исследуется вклад учебников в преподавание иностранных языков в старших классах, обращая внимание на их эффективность посредством педагогической диагностики. Также учитывается степень соответствия используемых учебников современной педагогике, различные потребности учащихся, а также навыки, необходимые для изучения иностранного языка. Изучая предыдущую литературу и добавляя некоторые полевые данные, в статье на основе существующей практики указывается, что эффективно при проектировании, а что нет. Также вносятся предложения по созданию диагностических инструментов, направленных на измерение и повышение производительности учебников, которые соответствуют современным подходам и нормам преподавания языка.
Ключевые слова:Учебники, обучение иностранному языку, старшие классы, педагогическая диагностика, учебная программа, владение языком, вовлеченность учащихся, педагогический дизайн, образовательные ресурсы, классная практика.

Introduction

The role of textbooks in foreign language teaching has been highly debated academically. In upper-grade classes, where students are expected to attain advanced levels of proficiency in the target language, textbooks are often used as the core of teaching. However, these learning tools turn out to be effective to a very differing extent, and their actual efficiency is conditioned by such factors as quality of design, correspondence to curricular objectives, and ability to be adapted to students' needs[1].

The article adopts a pedagogical diagnostic approach in the assessment of the role of textbooks in foreign language teaching to upper-grade students. From a diagnostic perspective, it gives an educator the ability for critical evaluation of textbooks for their sufficiency in provoking language skills, accounting for variability in learners, and supporting instructional goals. According to Littlejohn, 2011, "textbooks are not merely tools for learning but also artifacts that reflect broader pedagogical ideologies."[2] Through a synthesis of insights from previous studies and empirical analysis, the present study aimed to point educators and curriculum developers toward effective strategies in textbook design and selection. In this respect, particular attention has been given to the communicative and task-based approach advocated by Rod Ellis (Task-based language learning and teaching, 2003), in order to face better the challenge of advanced levels foreign language teaching. The findings add to the growth of an increasing number of studies which try to bridge the gap between theoretical principles and practical applications in foreign language education.

The Role of Textbooks in Foreign Language Instruction

Textbooks are indeed one of the essential tools in foreign language teaching, giving a structured content and guiding the teaching-learning process. As mentioned by Jack C. Richards in "Curriculum Development in Language Teaching" (2015), textbooks play an important role in standardizing teaching and ensuring linguistic elements' systematic introduction. However, Richards also points out that this is the very reason uniformity sacrifices adaptability, especially within upper-grade classrooms where there are diverse needs and differences in the levels of proficiency. In fact, Kathleen Graves, in "Designing Language Courses: A Guide for Teachers" (2000), underlines that textbooks need to be flexible to accommodate such differences.

Nigel Harwood, in "English Language Teaching Materials: Theory and Practice", supports the view that textbooks are very helpful in fostering communicative competence, especially for advanced learners[3]. He insists that a well-constructed textbook should have authentic materials and real-life tasks to narrow the gap between learning in class and real-life situations. However, most commercial textbooks emphasize grammatical accuracy too much while compromising critical speaking and listening skills needed to gain fluency.

Pedagogical Diagnostics: A Framework for Evaluation

A pedagogical diagnostic approach presents a systematic framework within which the effectiveness of textbooks is evaluated for the realization of instructional objectives. As it was said in the article "The Analysis of Language Teaching Materials: Inside the Trojan Horse", pedagogical diagnostics entail a form of analysis that encompasses content, structure, and

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[1] Graves, K. (2000). *Designing Language Courses: A Guide for Teachers*. Heinle & Heinle.

[2] Littlejohn, A. (2011). The analysis of language teaching materials: Inside the Trojan horse. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), Materials development in language teaching (2nd ed., pp. 179-211). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524740

[3] Harwood, Nigel. *English Language Teaching Materials: Theory and Practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

usability in developing strengths and weaknesses concerning teaching materials[4]. It is underlined that textbooks should be evaluated according to how closely they stick to communicative and task-based methodologies now widely recognized as effective with advanced learners.

In 1995, Alan Cunningsworth put forward an idea in his book "Choosing Your Coursebook". He suggested creating a diagnostic tool to check textbooks. This tool would make sure the book gives enough support to students who need more help. It would also check if the book offers chances for better students to learn even more. He further stated how formative assessments and reflective tasks can make textbooks quite lively and learner-centered, which is so crucial in tailoring materials for diverse classrooms.

Design Issues with Effective Textbooks

Despite their central role in foreign language instruction, textbooks tend to be lacking when it comes to addressing specific upper-grade classroom needs. Brian Tomlinson opines, in "Materials Development in Language Teaching" (2011), on the publisher's penchant for marketability over pedagogical efficacy. The end product tends to be an attractive textbook devoid of much substance that may barely acquaint students with more intricate linguistic structures or with a taste for authentic texts.

Mark Warschauer and Deborah Healey, in their paper "Computers and Language Learning: An Overview", argue to include digital content in textbooks. They believe this will make the books more interesting for students, which should improve how well they learn. They indicated that features like online exercises and multimedia capability would greatly enhance the learning experience. However, too often, this does not really translate into active classroom implementation because of the absence of teacher training and institutional support for such innovations.

Recommendations for Future Textbook Development

In response to the weaknesses of the present textbooks, this article proposes an approach using a needs diagnosis framework that ensures cultural relevance and pedagogical creativity. In "The Project-Based Second and Foreign Language Classroom: Past, Present, and Future"(2024) , Gulbahar H. Beckett and Tammy Slater suggest that if textbook authors and publishers want project-based learning activities to be better integrated into classroom instruction, they need to add them to the text books to promote collaboration and real-word language use[5]. Kathleen Graves, in "Designing Language Courses: A Guide for Teachers", also emphasizes the necessity of teachers being involved in textbook development so that they meet classroom and curricular needs.

Michael Byram, in "Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence"[6], states that textbooks should be culturally inclusive. He says that resources should go beyond linguistic teaching to include cultural narratives and scenarios that will better prepare the students to operate in various environments. Besides, embedding diagnostic tools, such as self-assessment checklists and progress trackers, would allow students to become more aware of and autonomous in their learning process, as several researchers have suggested.

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[4] Littlejohn, A. (2011). The Analysis of Language Teaching Materials: Inside the Trojan Horse. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), Materials Development in Language Teaching (2nd ed., pp. 179-211).

[5] Beckett, G.; Pae, H. 2024. Language Teacher Education on Project-Based Learning and Teaching. In: 10th International Conference on Higher Education Advances (HEAd'24). Valencia, 18-21 June 2024. https://doi.org/10.4995/HEAd24.2024.17188

[6] Byram, Michael. (2020). Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence. 10.21832/BYRAM0244.

Teaching English Writing in Uzbek High Classes: Coping with Linguistic Contrasts

Teaching English writing in Uzbek high classes demands the inherent contrasts between the systems of the two languages-English and Uzbek. Uzbek as an agglutinative language uses heavy suffixation to indicate grammatical relations, whereas English is highly reliant on word order and auxiliary verbs. This basic difference very often presents a problem for Uzbek students in an attempt at grammatically well-constructed sentences. According to Azizkhojaev in "Fundamentals of Uzbek Grammar in Education" (2010), the usual word order is SOV in Uzbek; however, in English, it is SVO. For instance, an Uzbek student may say "She to the store went", rather than the correct English construction, "She went to the store." English writing textbooks for teaching in Uzbek schools should clearly bring this out and also include exercises to help students internalize such syntactic differences.

Another major challenge could be to master the rhetorical and organizational conventions in English, often in great contrast to Uzbek conventions. According to S. Khamidova, "Cultural Contexts in Language Teaching" in 2017, writing in Uzbek contains an extremely elaborated and even circular way of presenting the idea with great emphases on detail and adornment. On the contrary, the tradition of English writing is aimed at clarity, directness, and brevity. This may lead to the writing of irrelevantly complicated or off-topic essays in English by Uzbek students. Hence, model essays and guided writing activities in the textbooks should lead students to create topic sentences, supporting ideas, and coherent conclusions in harmony with the rhetorical conventions of the English language. These materials would be very effective if they were supported by comparative exercises which point out the differences between English and Uzbek writing styles.

In summary, a mix of thoughtfully crafted textbooks and educational assessments can potentially revolutionize FLL in upper classes. The teacher can only progress toward a dynamic, adaptable learning atmosphere by combining textbook material with learner-specific information. The incorporation of diagnostics into the utilization of textbooks will continue to be central to effective language instruction as it progresses towards data-driven educational approaches.

Examples of Diagnostic-Friendly Textbooks:

Some modern foreign language textbooks are designed to embody diagnostic approaches:

"English File" by Oxford University Press - contains placement tests and progress checks regularly.

"Studio" by Pearson - a series of French textbooks that offers assessments and activities for upper-grade learners online.

"Deutsch Aktuell" by EMC Publishing - traditional textbook exercises have accompanying online diagnostic tools.

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