

THE SELECTION OF LEARNING MATERIALS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT:

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In this article, we will explore the criteria for selecting learning materials, different types of learning materials, as well as practical examples and considerations that should be taken into account when choosing materials for teaching.

KEYWORDS:

*learning material,
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Introduction. The selection of the right learning materials is one of the central tasks of a teacher, as learning materials not only determine the content of the lesson but also significantly influence the learning process. The success of learning depends largely on whether the material meets the needs and goals of the learners. It should foster learning motivation, effectively convey the learning content, and help learners develop their skills.

Learning materials are tools selected by the teacher to achieve learning objectives. They are the "bridge" between the learners and knowledge and skills, available in various forms—ranging from traditional textbooks to digital media to authentic materials from the real world. The choice of learning materials has a direct impact on the classroom and how learners engage with the subject matter.

The selection of materials should always be closely linked to the set learning objectives. Well-chosen learning materials not only support the content goals of the lesson but also consider the methodological and didactic goals. They should be chosen in such a way that they challenge the cognitive abilities of the learners while also promoting their motivation and interest. There are various criteria for selecting learning materials. These include:

• **Relevance and Goal Orientation:** The learning material must be closely connected to the learning objectives and the topic of the lesson. It should be chosen in a way that promotes the desired competencies of the learners, whether cognitive, social, or practical.

Example: In a foreign language class, a text about environmental protection from a current magazine could be chosen for a reading comprehension exercise. It is relevant because the topic is timely and at the same time conveys important linguistic structures and vocabulary related to the environment.

• **Appropriateness of Difficulty:** The material should correspond to the linguistic, cognitive, and emotional developmental level of the learners. Too difficult or too easy materials can demotivate or under-challenge learners. It is important that the material is challenging but not overwhelming.

Example: A language test for advanced learners should include more complex texts with academic language or complex grammatical structures, while beginner learners would be better suited with simple dialogues or short stories.

• **Versatility and Flexibility:** A good learning material can be used in a variety of ways. It should be chosen in such a way that it can be used in different contexts, whether for individual work, group work, or interactive exercises. Flexibility also means that the material can be used effectively in different social and didactic contexts.

Example: A video on a particular topic can be used both in a discussion and in a reading comprehension task, supporting different learning processes such as visual learning, text analysis, and collaborative reflection.

• **Motivation Enhancement:** The learning material should appeal to the learners and increase their motivation. Learners are often most motivated when the material is interesting, relevant, and entertaining. The use of modern and authentic materials—such as podcasts, videos, or articles—can boost interest and willingness to learn.

Example: In a class on social media, the teacher could use current Twitter or Instagram posts in the target language. Learners can receive an active real-world example and engage with the language they use daily.

• **Adaptability to Individual Needs:** Good learning materials should be adaptable to meet the different learning styles and paces of learners. Some learners prefer visual aids, others are auditory or kinesthetic. Flexibility in material selection also means it should allow for differentiation to accommodate different learning needs.

Example: A digital learning program that integrates both text and audio elements might allow learners to choose their preferred learning method while remaining open to different learning styles.

Learning materials can be traditional, digital, or authentic. Traditional learning materials include textbooks, worksheets, and exercise materials.

- **Textbooks:** A commonly used tool in teaching. They provide a structured approach and are particularly helpful in subjects like mathematics or foreign languages, offering foundational and systematic practice opportunities.

Example: In a German language class, a textbook might be used that includes exercises on grammar and vocabulary while also conveying cultural aspects of the German language.

- **Worksheets and Exercise Materials:** These are an important source of specific exercises that deepen and apply the learning process. They are especially useful for revising and consolidating content.

Example: Worksheets on verb conjugation or applying grammatical structures in a new context help learners practice language elements purposefully.

Digital Materials offer interactive opportunities to make the learning process diverse and multimedia-based. They are flexible and can be tailored to individual learning needs.

- **Apps and Online Platforms:** Programs like Duolingo, Quizlet, or Moodle offer a variety of interactive exercises and support learning in a playful way. They often provide immediate feedback and help learners track their progress.

Example: A learning platform like Kahoot! can be used to create interactive quizzes in the classroom, motivating learners to engage with the material in a playful and collaborative way.

- **Videos and Podcasts:** These media offer authentic materials and are especially valuable for listening and speaking in a foreign language. They can be used in the form of YouTube videos, TED Talks, or podcasts in the target language.

Example: A podcast on a current societal issue might be used in a foreign language class to practice listening comprehension while also conveying interesting content.

Authentic Materials are materials not produced for teaching but sourced from the real world. These materials provide a practical approach to the target language and are often particularly motivating, as they are used in a concrete cultural or social context.

- **Newspapers, Magazines, and Websites:** These materials are excellent for showing learners authentic language examples from the real world. They are also valuable tools for exploring the cultural and societal aspects of the target language.

Example: An article from a German newspaper about current events could not only teach language skills but also provide insights into cultural and political perspectives.

• **Movies and TV Series:** Movies or TV series in the target language are a valuable resource for giving learners authentic language use examples while promoting their intercultural understanding.

Example: A short clip from a Spanish film could serve as the basis for a listening comprehension exercise, encouraging learners to engage with topics of Spanish culture.

It is important to select learning materials that address different levels and learning needs. Differentiation can occur in the form of materials with varying levels of difficulty. While some learners may need a simple exercise with short sentences, others may work on more complex texts or advanced tasks.

Example: In an English class, learners at different levels might receive different tasks on the same topic: simple reading comprehension exercises for beginners and more complex tasks for analysis and discussion for advanced learners.

Individual Adjustments of Materials: Learners have different interests and needs. Choosing materials that align with their individual preferences or learning styles can boost their motivation and personalize the learning process.

Example: A learner interested in technology might work with an English article on new technological developments, while another learner might engage with a literary text or a cultural discussion.

The selection of learning materials is a key decision in the teaching process. It should be made thoughtfully and deliberately, as it significantly affects the success of the learning process.

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