

METHODS OF INTRODUCING RUSSIAN VERBS FORMS TO UZBEK STUDENTS

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Abstract:

We should use different types of methods during teaching classes. And we can use majority of modern techniques while teaching **verbs**. With international materials it is obvious that the needs of individual students and teachers, as well as the expectations of particular schools in particular countries, can never be fully met by the materials themselves while studying **verbs**. Indeed, most users seem to accept that what they choose will in many ways be a compromise and that they will have to adapt the materials to their situation.

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Introduction

This is a reasonable approach - indeed it prevents the illusion that, situation-specific materials can do the job without the teacher having to adapt the materials to a particular group of individual students at a particular time. In other words, contrary to many current arguments about the inhibiting role of coursebooks, international course materials can actually encourage individual teacher creativity rather than the opposite. It all depends on the relationship that a user, in particular a teacher, has or is allowed to have with the material. Coursebooks are tools which only have life and meaning when there is a teacher present. They are never intended to be a straitjacket for a teaching programme in which the teacher makes no decisions to supplement, to animate or to delete. The fact that course materials are sometimes treated too narrowly - for example, because of the lack of teacher preparation time, the excesses of ministry or institution power, the demands of examinations, or the lack of professional training - should not be used as a reason to write off global coursebooks.

Obviously no publisher is going to make a substantial investment unless there is a prospect of substantial sales. Material has to be usable by teachers and students alike or publishers lose their investment - hype can encourage a teacher or school to try a course once but no amount of hype can encourage the same course to be readopted. It has to work, at least in the eyes of the school. In order to work, the material up to a point has to be targeted - targeted to a particular type of student, in a particular type of teaching situation, and a particular type of teacher with a particular range of teaching skills and who has assumptions about methodology which he/she shares with his/her colleagues.

There is no point in writing a course for teachers of adult students and expect it to be used by primary teachers. These teaching contexts are different anywhere in the world. And yet adult teaching in most countries has a lot in common - particularly these days with far greater

professional integration than ever before (thanks to conferences, courses, professional magazines etc.). We felt that many of the situations around the world in which teachers would want to use our materials *did* have a lot in common: for example, teachers used to organizing group work and aiming for improved communicative competence in the classroom and young adult students very similar to the ones we were used to.

It may also be true that materials in which designers have too great an influence are also weakened commercially in the long-run. In our experience what is good design for a designer is not necessarily a good design for a teacher. We ourselves have heard designers severely criticize the design of successful books that teachers seem to regard as well-designed books and praise the design of books that are not thought by teachers to be well-designed. Does it matter to a teacher whether there are one, two or three columns on a page and whether a unit is uniform length in its number of pages? In our experience, what matters to teachers is that it is absolutely clear on the page where things are and what their purpose is and that the balance (and tone) of visuals and text is right for their students. While publishers would undoubtedly agree with this in principle and argue that the number of columns and pages per unit affects usability there is sometimes a worrying gap between the aesthetic principles of a designer and the pedagogic principles of the writers.

Main part

Also there are real and necessary pedagogic constraints which designers have to accept as well as design constraints that authors have to accept. Sometimes it is necessary pedagogically to sacrifice illustration for words (texts, rubrics etc.) in order to make a series of activities work in the classroom just as it is sometimes necessary to cut back a practice activity to make it fit in with an adequately-spaced visual»; This is not to decry the role of designers. They have an essential (and integral) function in making sure that the authors' ideas are properly and attractively presented. They also need to make the students and teachers feel they are using materials with an up-to-date but usable look. Compromise has to be a benefit combined with what works for them in the classroom. This is hardly surprising if a publisher who has done little real research of their own (with their only input coming from the hunches of marketing managers and conventional publishing wisdom) relies on the authors' own experience and then later tells them they cannot put their ideas into practice.

But teachers who are authors also have to compromise. Their teaching experience is often different from that of many intended users and their ideas might not work in a majority of classrooms. They have to beware of being too much the teacher trainer and look also at what students want rather than concentrate on new ideas for teachers. It is very tempting to try and impose your views about what *should* happen in a classroom when the learning experience for different learners is so diverse. This is a common problem in coursebooks (possibly our

own included) where the writers are used to working in a privileged learning environment with videos, study centres, small motivated classes etc.

It is not for nothing that most global coursebooks aim to be eclectic in their approach. Also what may work in the context of a particular lesson for the writer - or work in a skills and supplementary book -does not necessarily work in a coursebook where a range of syllabuses are operating, where balance of activity and skill is necessary and where there is often one eye on recycling and revision.

A lot was made by the publishers of the fact that the main book had to be the right length, there had to be so many units, so many pages per unit - linked to so many hours of work, the syllabus had to include this and that grammatical item, there had to be tests. And yet when it came to it our instincts told us that there was a lot more freedom in our market to do what we liked in terms of overall structure, providing our material was usable and motivating for the level of students. This was confirmed when we talked to teachers informally. Indeed many teachers seemed not to notice how many pages there were in a unit or what was in the syllabus!

Institutional needs nevertheless imposed perfectly proper constraints on our writing: the material should not be inappropriate to the context, the topics should be interesting to their students, the material should not date, it should be 'user-friendly', it should be usable alongside and sometimes integrated with other materials and should enable students to make rapid progress. On the production side it should be good quality but cheap and all components - coursebook, workbook, tapes, teacher's book - should be available locally on launch!

Teachers We felt teachers wanted a book they could sympathise with in terms of its pedagogic principles. It would need to have a fresh and original feel to it and yet be reassuringly familiar. At the same time teachers are very busy and they naturally wanted an easy life: not too much preparation, usable and motivating materials, fun activities that worked in terms of improving the students' communicative skills, transparent methodology, up-front grammar and a flexible approach which allowed teachers to use the materials more as a resource than a prescriptive course.

Students Students would want material that they could enjoy and in which they could find things they could identify with and learn from. Language needed to be comprehensible but there did need to be 'new' language there on the page. They needed a lot of revision, a lot of material they could use to study on their own. They needed supplementary material-such as workbooks.

Principles compromised With all these factors at work it is not surprising that the issue of compromise was central to our work. Having said that it is surprising how many of our grand principles above more or less survived. The main areas of compromise were these:

Overall structure

It was clear that the idea of a flexible coursebook was not (at that time) fully understood by our potential users. We were aware from initial feedback that some teachers felt they had to cover everything in the book in the order presented. Our idea of using the Workbook as part of the classroom resource was not universally accepted since many students did not have access to the Workbook. In other words the material ended up being less flexibly organised than we would have liked. However, at that time it is true that we were not sufficiently aware of the potential of the Teacher's Book to go beyond declaring intentions and suggesting ideas to providing its own resources in terms of extra photocopiable practice activities - a situation we remedied in later editions. This facility very visibly puts into practice the principle of aiming to supply teachers with a resource to help them build up *their* programme.

Originally we wanted to start the book with a 'deep-end' approach and so we flagged our first four units as review units - to activate language students had already been presented with and do remedial work on it if necessary. But many markets did not like or understand this approach and wanted straightforward presentation of the main language items. Should we have compromised and provided this presentation?

Lack of space caused us great frustration at the editing stage when we saw many of our practice activities disappear or get pruned. We had to make a decision whether to cut whole activities or cut back on the number of items within an activity. The fault was probably ours for having too great an ambition for too few pages. So the compromises that were made met with some complaints from users and we have had to provide extra material in the Teacher's Book in later editions.

Conclusion

We did manage to get away from a traditional approach in terms of Unit structure since we started each unit with a skills activity rather than a language presentation but our original ambition to draw target language out of authentic texts failed at the intermediate level, partly because of the difficulty of finding texts which contained clear examples of the focus language together with interesting content. We got nearer to our ambition at the upper-intermediate level.

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