

# METHODS OF INTRODUCING ENGLISH IRREGULAR WORD FORMS TO UZBEK STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** *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 words with irregular forms. We should use different types of methods during teaching classes. And we can use majority of modern techniques while teaching words with irregular forms, which will be further outlined.*

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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.

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 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 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.

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 in the UK.

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.

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. And another major, often overlooked consideration is that your material has to fit on the page so that students can actually see it!

Authors who are not teachers also have to compromise. While there are writing skills which not all teachers have - such as structuring a sequence of activities and balancing it with usable visuals - and there are skills which experienced writers have which teachers need if they are to write (see Waters 1994 for a light-hearted view) so there are teaching realities which authors long out of the classroom have to recognise if they are to produce materials that teachers want to teach with. In a lesson of 50 minutes the register still has to be taken, homework given back, announcements made and revision undertaken with students who have just come in tired from work and an irritating traffic jam. And that activity in your coursebook cannot work unless you allow an hour for it!

The process of materials writing.

The assumption was that teachers would have been trained to do things like set up communicative activities in the class, work with texts to develop reading and listening skills and be able to use course-books flexibly. However, the brief itself indicated a need for compromise:

The multilingual intensive UK situation and the monolingual far less intensive situation are, as we have already seen, not the same. What is needed in the context of 25 hours a week in the native speaker environment is not necessarily needed in the 1-3 hours a week in the non-native speaker environment. For example, the latter may need (but it has to be said, not necessarily want) a lot more focus on listening and speaking than the former. Monolingual situations differ. For example, can you write for both Europe and the Middle East when the shared knowledge and cultural assumptions are so different? All coursebook writers know the dangers of assuming that all students will know who the (usually Western) cultural icons are. The material was also likely to be used by less trained, untrained or differently-trained teachers. It cannot be assumed that a type of communication activity familiar to a trained teacher will be familiar to an untrained teacher. Things have to be spelt out to the inexperienced teacher without patronising the experienced teacher. It was likely that the materials would be used in some schools where the language syllabus and indeed the whole programme of study arc framed by the coursebook even though the aim was to try to produce materials which could be used flexibly. We decided on 2 key principles:

#### 1 Flexibility

We wanted an activity sequence that worked pedagogically. But it was important that teachers should feel they could move activities around, cut them out or supplement them according to need. In other words we wanted to produce a coursebook with a strong resource book element. Indeed we saw the Workbook as a potential extra classroom resource for the teacher as well as a self-study book for the learner.

#### 2 From text to language

Because of the needs of intermediate students, we wanted to provide authentic texts which contained examples of the focus language, rather than construct texts of our own. 'Language in a global context' we called it and we hoped we could draw language work out of the texts.

We wanted to provide a lot of practice activities at this level. We felt that where oral practice had to be mechanical (e.g. pattern repetition) it should as far as possible be personalised. So for example, when practising *if* structures for imaginary situations learners would draw on their own experience, as in the activity below.

Complete the following sentences:

- a) *I'd be very miserable if. . .*
- b) *I'd be terrified if. . .*
- c) *I'd leave the country if. . .*

Language use is a combined skill where everything depends on everything else - at the very least we listen and speak together, and read and write together. And we felt that, like playing tennis, communicating in language is something you only improve with practice. *Knowing* about the language can be helpful for adults in learning to use it but overemphasis on the *knowing about* - usually the grammar - is useful for traditional exams but less useful in real-life communicative situations. We believed that both language work and the productive skills should come out of work on listening and reading texts. We believed in the value of texts being slightly above the level of the students and in the possibility of acquisition of language whilst focusing on content.

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