The Creation of Pedagogical Materials from Scratch

Two different perspectives

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Teachers of widely taught languages enjoy many perks in the teaching of FL.

Teachers of LCTLs often find themselves with one and one choice only: create their own materials.

Whether we belong to one end of the spectrum or the other, we often find ourselves creating materials for two principal reasons:

We love it!
It is the only way to get exactly what we want.

Outline

I. Creating Basic Materials
   A. What to teach at what level: Course content
   B. What to use: Creating, finding and choosing materials
   E. How to teach with it: Exploiting materials
Outline

II. Creating Supplementary Materials

A. Tying it all together
B. Tailoring materials to our students’ needs and interests
C. Bringing the level up
D. Staying current – and sometimes up to the minute

Creating Basic Materials

Mariame Sy
Course Content

- Outline a plan for each semester
- Decide how you want to organize materials: theme vs. grammar.
- Integrated approach: materials should integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing in classroom activities
- Think about continuity

Creating authentic materials

- Use information on the social, cultural, and historical context.
- Topics should be specific, not general.
- Look at content and meaning first, form (e.g. grammar and vocabulary) later.
Creating authentic materials

Wolof video-based course

(1) a range of cultural content as well as vocabulary and grammatical constructions presented through video segments

(2) classroom and individual study exercises that emphasize not only grammatical accuracy, but also development of communicative skills through the use of graphics and interactive activities.

- Intermediate level

Authentic video materials are less constrained, this allows for better exploitation.

Pulaar Videos

- Luncheon Scene

- Tea Making

- Participants experiences in their involvement in the Pulaar human rights struggle in Mauritania and their lives abroad

- Griot Scene: typical traditional guitar music (historical narrative lyrics)
**Tales**

Great source for materials on social organization and social issues

Fari - short movie based on a tale
- Script and images (used for reading and writing activities)
- Clips (used for speaking and listening)

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**Finding and Chosing Materials**

Finding Authentic Materials

- Anything can be used as material
  - Comics, Film, Videos, Songs, Games
  - Can provide concise glimpses of a particular grammatical feature or cultural value.
- Don’t let language stop you! Texts are not sacred—they can be altered or played with.
Finding and Choosing Materials

Góórgóórlu - Mohiss - Wolof Monopoly game

Boorom Saret: Take 1

Pascale - Dewenati Ousmane
• Use student’s interests to find supplementary materials (tales, narration, book excerpts)

• Look into related languages for images and cultural content that can be adapted to the target language

_Hausa drawings used to generate both image supported audio Wolof story and text-based material._

_Swahili stories by J. Mtumbez Innis_

• Images can serve various purposes

  - to clarify or provide context for textual material.

  - as a starting point for free written or oral expression for both students and teacher

  ➢ where teacher uses them as inspiration for written or oral materials

  ➢ where the student is directed to describe the images or use them as the basis of a narrative.
- as a starting point for question and answer practice in pairs or small groups.

- as grounding and point of reference for teacher-led discussions.

Exploiting Materials

- Take an integrated approach in exploiting the materials

Materials should integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing in classroom activities.

*Exploit the content and linguistic structures of what you find (or create) to produce activities that will allow students to work toward both communicative and cultural competence.*
Exploiting Materials

• Get the most out of what you create or find

Some materials can be used for different purposes and/or at different levels

  * Borom Saret movie - Take 2
  * Góórgóórlu cartoons
  * Mohiss pictures

  used for 4 skills: reading, speaking, listening, and writing

• Look into ways of creating tasks using various materials

(See handout)

Creating Supplementary Materials

Pascale Hubert -Leibler
Not only do teachers of commonly taught languages enjoy the luxury of having good ready-made textbooks at their disposal, publishers are falling over themselves to fulfill our every need. They now supply us with ancillary materials of all kinds:

- websites
- instructors’ manuals
- tutorials
- lesson plans
- videos
- podcasts
- grade books
- self-correcting exercises
- etc.

AND

we can find an overabundance of authentic materials readily available on the web or in print, high-quality websites offering ready-made and constantly updated activities based on video and audio documents: BBC Languages, Deutsche Welle, RFI, TV5 etc.
Our greatest difficulty, then, would seem to be how to select the best materials among the many that are available. In view of this abundance of riches, why should we still want to create materials from scratch?

... tie it all together
tailor materials to our students’ needs
bring the level up
stay current
Tying it all together

Creating a final activity that weaves together all the strands of a unit (grammar, vocabulary, culture)

Tailoring materials to our student’s needs and interests

Activities that make use of their specific interests, levels of proficiency, diversity, and talents. Also activities that foster a sense of community in the classroom, by helping students to know each other better.
Bringing the level up

Because they are written for the broadest possible audience, textbooks cannot be very adventurous or risk appearing elitist. Our students are sophisticated, and sometimes resent what they see as childish activities. It is often up to us to offer them, even at the elementary level, activities that (attempt to) stimulate their intellect as well as teach them grammar and vocabulary.

Staying current and sometimes up to the minute

Our students are interested in the here and now, and they are primarily learning today’s language and today’s culture. They want to discuss current events, songs, and films, and give their opinions on today’s issues.