The Teacher's Role in Selecting TAFL Authentic Materials

ENTA/2 MEETING

The American University in Cairo-AUC, 18th Dec. 2019

Letizia Lombezzi

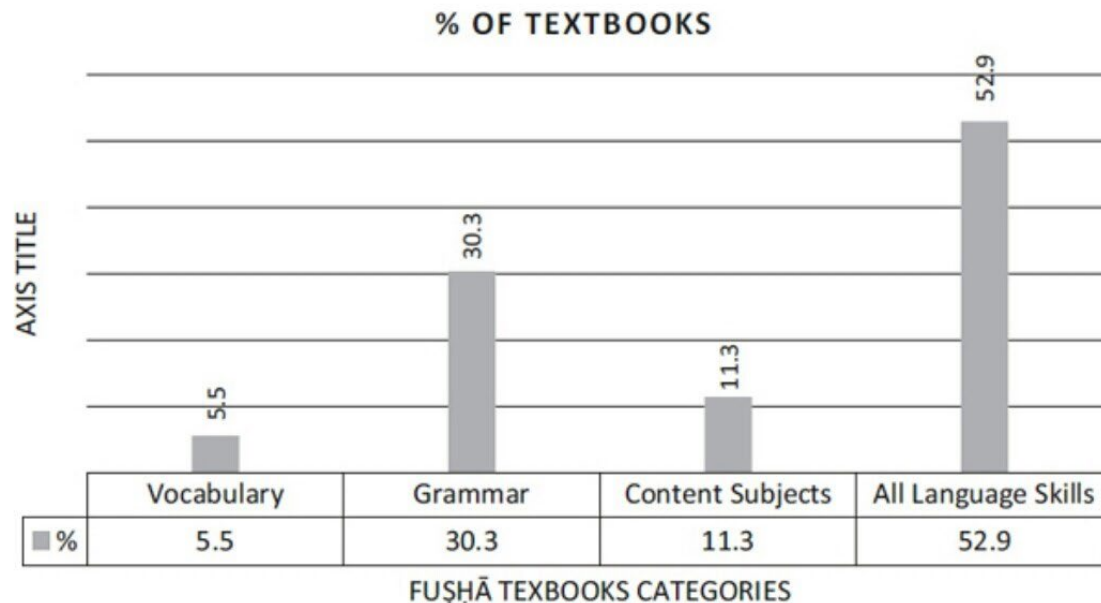Post-Doc Research Fellow

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Materials related issues

- The majority of teaching materials
  - fits more the course target than students' real needs
  - leaves out training in listening and speaking
- Most materials
  - do not integrate MSA+Spoken for beginners and intermediate levels

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Surveys and Data#1
Type of content and type of materials

% OF TEXTBOOKS

|	Vocabulary	Grammar	Content Subjects	All Language Skills
%	5.5	30.3	11.3	52.9

AXIS TITLE

FUṢḤĀ TEXBOOKS CATEGORIES

410 books analyzed
Source: Wahba in Wahba, Taha, England (2018)

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Surveys and Data#2
Kind of Arabic addressed

% FROM 410 TEXTBOOKS

■ %

75.9	21.7	2.4
Fuṣḥā/MSA	REGIONAL VARIETIES	INTEGRATED AND/OR SWITICHING
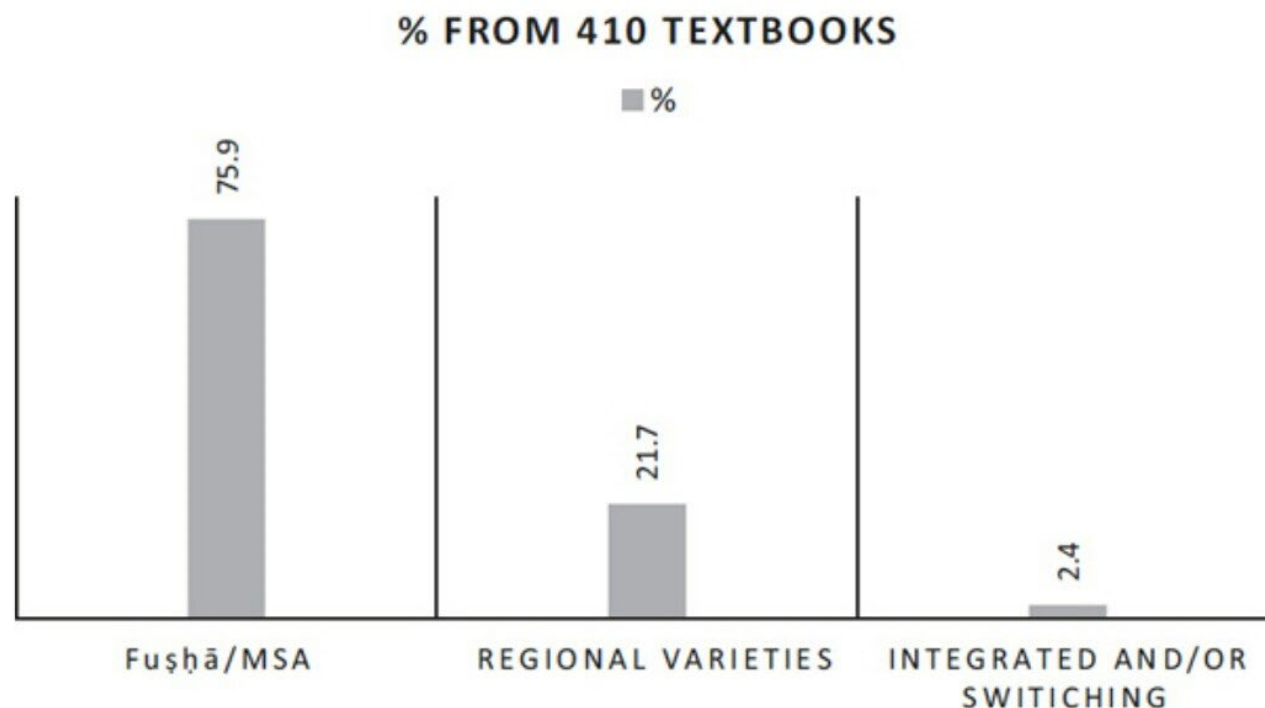
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Surveys and Data#3
Skills addressed

Table 17.6 Fuṣḥā /MSA: Combined language skills textbooks versus separate language skills

Variety-Skill/Level	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced	Total
MSA/Fuṣḥā (Combined Skills)	68	18	7	93
Reading	12	12	7	31
Writing	2	2	3	7
Speaking	6	–	1	7
Listening	1*	1*	1*	3
Total	89 (63.1%)	33 (23.4%)	19 (13.5%)	141

165 books analyzed
Source: Wahba in Wahba, Taha, England (2018)

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What are authentic materials (AMs)?#1

- "written by members of a language and culture group for members of the same language and culture group" (Galloway 1998: 133).

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What are authentic materials (AMs)? #2

- "a text that has *motivation*."

- a text that *"has an* apparent purpose, holds the attention and interest of the listener or reader, introduces a conflict of some sort, and is not dull or boring. [It] has the characteristics of a good story and connects meaningfully to our experience in the world"

  (Oller *apud* Shrum & Glisan, 2010:83,84)

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Characteristics of AMs

- Language+culture emerge together as a critical pairing

- AMs transfer input from real-world contexts to the class, ask for comprehension before production, and facilitate self-expression

- dealing with AMs does not require grammar perfection, but negotiation instead

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Kind of AMs

- Based on grammar/vocs/skills/topics
- Our choice needs time, and attention has to be paid on the age and level of our students

>>>authentic materials can be adapted and slightly modified, so to suit our class needs

>>>> they become then semiauthentic materials

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Why should we use AMs?

- Because they sample the language in use
- Because they link the text to the context
- Because they provide learners with something that daily life needs, well beyond the isolated academic setting. Using AMs we avoid the risk that "some common language forms turn out to be extremely rare in classroom language" (Lightbown and Spada 2006:190)

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Comments and suggestion for further discussion

- In general we observe a

  lack of proficiency based materials

as the majority is task-based, at most

Main issues:

- How may we chose materials from the net?

- Are corpora useful in the teaching field or they just overload the memory of our students?

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