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Production and adaptation of materials for teachers and students: understanding socio-cultural diversity in marginalised and disadvantaged contexts.

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Abstract

This paper will investigate how the development and adaptation of educational materials by teachers and students can promote an understanding of socio-cultural diversity in marginalised and underdeveloped communities. Textbooks cannot always address the diversity of teaching/learning situations in a classroom, nor can they always provide material suited to different educational contexts.

The paper will outline recent research on the representation of diversity in materials, including projects and initiatives dealing with the production of materials in marginalised communities.

We will begin by presenting a brief review of studies on the lack of cultural and linguistic diversity in textbooks and teaching materials. This will be followed by discussion of the advantages of teacher-developed didactic materials in supporting socio-cultural diversity in marginalised communities and contexts. Finally, we will suggest ways to encourage the production of these materials, together with case studies.

Teachers encounter many difficulties in producing materials: lack of time for production and trial; lack of teacher training in this area; limited institutional recognition of the process and lack of space to exhibit materials. This paper will look at the role of universities and other institutions in materials development; offer guidelines for the development and evaluation of these resources; and consider whether teacher-developed materials constitute an alternative or complement to textbooks.

Keywords: Textbooks, Socio-cultural diversity, Didactic materials, Marginalised contexts, Adaption of materials, Professional development