



# Advantages and Disadvantages of Text-Based Language Teaching to Future Pedagogues

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**ABSTRACT**

The use of text-based communication for English language teaching has become increasingly popular in recent years. This approach offers several advantages, including greater flexibility, convenience, and accessibility. However, it also has some disadvantages, such as the potential for misinterpretation and the lack of opportunity for real-time interaction and feedback. This paper explores the advantages and disadvantages of text-based English language teaching, drawing on existing research and professional experience.

**Keywords:**

Flexibility, accessibility, cost-effectiveness, synchronous learning, asynchronous learning, social interaction, nonverbal cues

We live in a world of texts, surrounded with texts everywhere, spoken, written, offline, online. It is language in texts that people produce for communication in their real life, not as isolated sentences (Thornbury, 2005). In communicating, communicators exchange meaning. When people communicate with each other meaningfully, they create a text together. And when people write meaningfully for others, they also create a text (Agustin, 2020)

The ability to understand a text written in their target language and to extract the key information from it is an important learning objective for many second language learners. Whether it's deciphering a menu, a travel timetable or completing a residency form, language learners must have a wide experience of handling all types of text.

The text-based language teaching methodology is therefore widely used to build overall communication skills and fluency in a second language. *Advantages of text-based language teaching*

- **Exposure to authentic language:** When students are taught a foreign language through written texts, they are exposed to authentic language use. This can help them develop a better understanding of how the language is used in context and improve their ability to use the language themselves.
- **Development of reading skills:** Using texts to teach foreign languages can help students develop their reading skills. This is because reading requires students to focus on the words, sentence structure, and overall meaning of the text.
- **Increased vocabulary:** Texts often contain a rich variety of vocabulary, which can help students expand their vocabulary and improve their understanding of the language.
- **Flexibility:** Texts can be used to teach a wide range of language skills, including grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension. This makes them a flexible tool that can be used to meet a variety of language learning needs.

### *Disadvantages of text-based language teaching*

- Limited exposure to spoken language: Text-based teaching methods may not provide students with sufficient exposure to spoken language, which is an essential aspect of language learning. This can make it difficult for students to develop their listening and speaking skills.

- Lack of interaction: Texts do not provide opportunities for interaction and communication, which are important for developing language skills. This can make it difficult for students to practice using the language in a meaningful way.

- Lack of cultural context: Texts may not always provide a clear cultural context for the language being taught. This can make it difficult for students to understand the cultural nuances of the language.

- Difficulty with motivation: Some students may find text-based teaching methods boring or unengaging. This can make it difficult for them to stay motivated and focused on learning the language.

**Materials and method of research:** When researching the topic, method of experiment, as well as empirical method were used.

### **Research results and their discussion**

Teaching English by text to future pedagogues has been the subject of numerous research studies, which have yielded a variety of results and discussions. In this response, we will discuss some of the key findings and debates related to this topic. One of the primary advantages of teaching English by text is that it can be an effective way to develop students' reading and comprehension skills. By engaging with a range of written texts, students can improve their ability to analyze, interpret, and evaluate information. Additionally, exposure to a variety of genres and styles of writing can help students build their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. The term text-based teaching used in this paper refers to teaching using a genre/text-based approach. The genre-based approach (GBA) derives from Halliday's theory of language as social semiotic, ... language as a resource for

making meaning (Hasan, 2014) The genre theorists opine those teachers are responsible for intervening in the learning process, and they should teach how genres are typically constructed (Emilia, 2005).

Another benefit of teaching English by text is that it can provide a rich source of cultural and historical context. By studying works of literature, students can gain insights into the social, political, and cultural contexts in which they were produced. This can help students develop a more nuanced understanding of the English language and its role in global communication. However, there are also challenges associated with teaching English by text. One of the main challenges is that texts can be difficult to interpret and comprehend, especially for students who are not native speakers of English. This can be particularly challenging for pedagogues who are not proficient in English themselves, as they may struggle to effectively guide students through complex texts. GBA has pedagogical and political aims. It is a pedagogical project motivated by a political project, ie, to teach and facilitate someone to have skills and knowledge enabling them to participate effectively in a literate, technologically developed society, to be successful in school and beyond (Kress, 1993. Derewianka, 2015). It encourages reading and writing various text types or genres (Feez & Joyce, 1998). A model of GBA commonly used is the model of Feez and Joyce, which has five stages as follows: (1) Building the context, (2) Modeling and deconstructing the text. (3) Joint construction of the text. (4) Independent construction of the text, (5) Linking related texts (Feez & Joyce, 1998).

Another challenge is that texts can be relatively static, and may not provide opportunities for students to practice speaking and listening skills. This can be particularly problematic for students who are learning English as a second language, as they may struggle to apply the knowledge they gain from reading texts to real-world situations.

According to Feez and Joyce's 1998 work on the teaching and learning cycle, text-based instruction is directly based on a

language teaching model which focuses on 4 key elements.

Teaching explicitly about the structures and grammatical features of spoken and written texts.

Linking spoken and written texts to the cultural context of their use.

Designing units of work which focus on developing skills in relation to whole texts.

Providing students with guided practice as they develop language skills for meaningful communication through whole texts.

The Methods In ELT blog actually identifies 8 different types of texts. They are:

1) Procedures (e.g. instructions to build a piece of furniture or a recipe to cook a dish)

2) Explanations (e.g. text that explains how and why things work / occur)

3) Expositions (e.g. magazine / newspaper features or reviews, views and debate pieces)

4) Factual recounts (e.g. newspaper reports in print or online)

5) Personal recounts (e.g. diary/blog entries, interviews, biographies, autobiographies)

6) Information reports (e.g. fact sheets)

7) Narratives (e.g. stories and fiction writing)

8) Conversations and short functional texts (e.g. text and SMS messages, formal/informal letters, e-mail)

Text-based teaching provides a powerful mixed curriculum for students combining a variety of components of text such as grammar, vocabulary, topics and functions. It can be used to integrate oral communication with reading and writing and teaches key concepts through the mastery of different text forms rather than in isolation.

However, critics have argued that text-based teaching is primarily focused on the products of learning (i.e. outputs) rather than the processes involved. They have also identified that the approach is heavily dependent on the repetitive review of model texts and that the creation of new text is solely based on those models. Educators do therefore need to ensure that opportunities for individual creativity and personal expression

are maximised when using this approach to their language teaching.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, text-based instruction can be a useful approach for teaching a foreign language to future pedagogues. However, it is important to consider the advantages and disadvantages of this approach and to balance it with other methods that emphasize interactive, communicative, and cultural aspects of language learning. By combining various methods, teachers can provide a more comprehensive and effective language learning experience for their students.

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