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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

"My boat, but I'm the captain": How EFL teachers in Cyprus view and adapt the global coursebook

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| ABSTRACT
This paper provides the first large-scale investigation of Cypriot EFL teachers' beliefs about the global coursebook and their reported materials adaptation practices. Based on questionnaire data from one hundred and fifteen in-service EFL teachers, the study shows a strong reliance on the coursebook as a structural guide and an equally strong view of the coursebook as a resource which needs adaptation given its acknowledged limitations. Nearly all teachers reported adapting coursebook materials, employing a range of strategies such as addition, modification, resequencing and omission. More challenging and time-consuming strategies, such as rewriting or repurposing materials, are also mentioned but are reportedly employed less frequently. As the teachers claim, their choices seem to be driven by their professional and pedagogical judgement, their learners' needs, their own teaching style and beliefs and the realities of the Cypriot educational system. The study further reveals a strong demand for continuous professional development in materials design and adaptation practices despite a considerable proportion of the teachers claiming to have already completed such training. Overall, the findings portray EFL teachers in Cyprus as active and agentive users of published materials, who clearly value the coursebook but also adapt it to respond to their own and their students' needs, as well as local classroom realities and constraints.

| KEYWORDS
Cyprus, English as a Foreign Language, teacher beliefs, materials adaptation, global coursebook.

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1. Introduction

Worldwide, coursebooks remain central in EFL education settings (Tomlinson & Hitomi, 2017) despite the old and contentious discussion surrounding their pedagogical use and usefulness (Allwright, 1981; Hughes, 2019; Jordan, 2019; Jordan & Gray, 2019; Masuhara, 2011; Norton & Buchanan, 2022; O'Neill, 1982). This makes studies on teacher cognition and reported practices with regard to coursebooks and other published materials important in their own right. It is widely accepted that studying teacher cognition, which involves examining teachers' knowledge and beliefs and how these are interconnected with their actions (Borg, 2003; Borg & Burns, 2008), is important. Understanding how teachers perceive, work with and adapt published materials is essential for gaining important insights into their pedagogical judgements and beliefs, which ultimately guide their teaching (Borg, 2003; Nazari et al., 2022). There is also broad consensus that using a coursebook offers clear practical benefits. For the busy teacher, coursebooks are an easy, time-saving and (at least on the surface) organized and sensible way of finding and using materials; for the learner, their use provides a sense of order, organization, security and progress as well as a valuable resource and reference point; for school owners and administrators, they offer face validity and some type of standardization (McGrath, 2013; Mishan & Timmis, 2015; Norton & Buchanan, 2022; Tomlinson & Hitomi, 2017). Contemporary coursebooks also provide systematic recycling and revision of linguistic items, themes and topics as part of their package materials, which are considered essential for effective learning (Hughes, 2019). At the same time, using a coursebook has its disadvantages. To start with, global ELT coursebooks, i.e., coursebooks that are typically designed and produced in English-speaking countries, may appear inauthentic, irrelevant and, as a result, disengaging to both learners and teachers in other settings since they do not usually adequately reflect local realities, sociocultural conventions, sociolinguistic practices, or the educational realities of a given setting (Pinner, 2018, cited in Rathert &

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Cabaroğlu, 2024; McGrath, 2013). That is why the idea of localization has gained prominence in recent years (Emeklioğlu & Bayraktar Balkır, 2025). Further, many argue that coursebook-led practice risks deskilling teachers, given that they just follow materials designed by others (Gray, 2016; Thornbury, 2013). Moreover, the sense of order, organization, security and progress learners (and teachers) may feel when a coursebook is being adopted may just be an illusion (Tomlinson & Hitomi, 2017). More importantly, this seemingly organized way of learning is not really how learning actually takes place: interlanguage development is not linear and does not happen one "item" at a time (Jordan & Gray, 2019). Students' learning trajectories resemble complex, emergent and sometimes "messy" systems rather than a series of tidy, incremental steps. Using a coursebook may create a false impression of coherence and developmental sequencing and can inadvertently encourage teachers to teach the next "item" in the coursebook instead of responding to their learners' actual needs. Despite these critiques, the practical realities of EFL teaching mean that coursebooks remain indispensable. As Hughes (2019, p. 452) rightly points out, "teaching without a coursebook would most likely lead to burn-out before the end of the year." For this reason, perhaps the right question to ask is not whether coursebooks should be adopted, but how they should be used. In other words, the challenge faced by ELT educators around the world lies in adopting principled, pedagogically informed adaptation practices that allow us to take advantage of coursebooks while mitigating their limitations.

Across diverse EFL contexts worldwide, research consistently shows that teachers approach the coursebook and other published materials in different ways (Hanifa et al., 2024; Mede & Yalçın, 2019; Mishan & Timmis, 2015; Rathert & Cabaroğlu, 2024; Shawer, 2010; Tomlinson & Hitomi, 2017; Zhang et al., 2024). Shawer (2010) offers one of the most influential categorizations for understanding how teachers approach the curriculum at the classroom level. In their study, they identify three kinds of teachers: the *curriculum developers*, who use the coursebook as a resource and adapt it, the *curriculum transmitters*, who accept it as is and use it prescriptively, and the *curriculum makers*, who engage in curriculum enactment wherein teachers and students co-create the curriculum through their daily classroom interactions, using external materials as flexible resources, and learning together in a socially constructed, growth-oriented process. Given that even within the same educational context all these kinds of teachers can co-exist, Shawer (2010) argues that training in all these different approaches may be needed.

Shawer (2010) also argues that we need to understand why teachers approach the curriculum in different ways, even when working within the same setting. One may hypothesise that it is either their teaching experience, as shown in Mede & Yalçın (2019), training (Zhang et al., 2024) or both (Latham & Vogt, 2007, cited in Shawer, 2010) that influence how one approaches the classroom curriculum. However, that was not the case with the teachers in Shawer (2010), given that the curriculum transmitters in their study were both trained and experienced. This suggests that the *underlying* reasons behind teachers' beliefs and choices remain an open empirical question. What is clear, however, from existing research is that teachers report a variety of factors that supposedly influence their decision to adapt the materials, such as the structure of the coursebook itself, time constraints, students' needs, institutional pressures and constraints, their own beliefs and personal teaching style, among others (Mede & Yalçın, 2019; Rathert & Cabaroğlu, 2024; Tomlinson & Hitomi, 2017; Zhang et al., 2024).

Another important question that emerges from the literature concerns the effectiveness of materials adaptations: whether they are sufficient and indeed benefit the learners also remains an open empirical question. For example, Hanifa et al. (2024) conducted a qualitative case study and examined how one senior high school EFL teacher in Indonesia adapted EFL materials. Using document analysis, classroom observations and interviews, they concluded that the teacher mainly added and modified materials to support their students' learning while deletion, simplification and rearrangement took place less often. Despite the best intentions and the teacher's engagement with adaptation, the authors note that problems persisted, such as mismatches between learners' proficiency and the cognitive demands of the materials. These findings suggest that adaptation alone is insufficient: without a principled understanding of how to adapt materials to fit learners' linguistic, cognitive and cultural backgrounds and meet their needs, even well-intentioned changes may fail to achieve what is intended. The study highlights the need for stronger, more targeted professional development in materials adaptation that can help teachers move beyond intuitive ad hoc modifications towards evidence-based and principled changes.

In a similar vein but a different context, Mede & Yalçın (2019) used reflective essays, lesson plans, and semi-structured interviews to examine how both novice and experienced instructors in a Turkish university engage in coursebook adaptation. The teachers claimed their adaptations were driven by the students' needs, time constraints, institutional pressures and their own beliefs. Interestingly, novice teachers employed more additions as a form of materials adaptation while experienced teachers used more deletions, replacements, and reordering. As with Hanifa et al. (2024), the authors highlight the need for more targeted professional development and training. In another study in the same setting (i.e., Turkish tertiary education), Rathert & Cabaroğlu (2024) provide an in-depth study of how two EFL teachers use the coursebook in their daily teaching practice. While Mede & Yalçın (2019) examined instructors' actual materials adaptation practices by asking the teachers to design just one lesson plan, Rathert &

Cabaroğlu (2024) used a much richer and more varied data set which included metaphor elicitation, pre- and post-study interviews, many video-recorded lessons, stimulated recall sessions, reflective conversations, and teacher journals. This study has shown that both teachers were what Shawer (2010) would call curriculum transmitters and mainly viewed the coursebook prescriptively. They engaged only slightly in materials adaptation and, when they did, their decision to do so was shaped by institutional constraints, personal teaching preferences, attempts to make tasks accessible, lack of planning, and the highly structured nature of the coursebook itself. It is important to note that the teachers rarely engaged in principled adaptation that aimed at improving learning outcomes. Echoing other studies in the international literature (e.g., Hanifa et al., 2024; Mede & Yalçın, 2019), Rathert & Cabaroğlu (2024) also make a call for more targeted professional development opportunities for EFL teachers.

Finally, Zhang et al. (2024) conducted one of the largest empirical studies to date on EFL teachers' beliefs about coursebooks and their reported materials adaptation practices, surveying 3,654 Chinese EFL university instructors. The study used a Latent Profile Analysis and identified four adaptation profiles: highly active, moderately active, lowly active and adding-deleting oriented. Overall, the teachers reported regularly adapting their materials and viewed the coursebook as a resource, not a script. Reported adaptation strategies included adding, deleting, reordering, rewriting exercises and rewriting input materials, with the last two more demanding strategies used the least frequently, especially amongst the lowly active and adding-deleting oriented groups of teachers. Crucially, the study also shows that training is important: those instructors that attended training on coursebook writing or use were more likely to belong to the highly active group of teachers, in contrast to the teachers examined by Shawer (2010). Teaching experience, on the other hand, did not significantly predict reported adaptation practices.

All the studies reviewed here illustrate how diverse materials adaptation is worldwide and how it is shaped by a variety of factors, such as students' needs, teachers' beliefs, time constraints and other contextual factors. Further, all studies highlight the importance and need for targeted professional development and training in materials development and adaptation. The present study adds to this body of literature and offers insight from an understudied setting, namely Cyprus. It also focuses on teachers who work in a variety of settings, rather than primarily in tertiary ones, which seem to dominate existing research. More particularly, this study investigates Cypriot EFL teachers' beliefs about coursebooks and other published materials, their degree of agency in selecting them, the ways they report adapting coursebook materials and the reasons that guide their decisions and (reported) practices. The study employs a questionnaire, the responses to which are analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively so as to offer a comprehensive picture of the teachers' beliefs and reported practices.

In particular, this study sets out to answer the following questions:

(1) What degree of agency do EFL teachers in Cyprus have over the coursebooks they use?
(2) How do EFL teachers in Cyprus perceive the global coursebook and what meanings do they assign to it?
(3) What adaptation practices do they report implementing when working with the global coursebook and other published materials?
(4) Why do teachers adapt the global coursebook and other published materials?

In what follows, we present the setting of this study (section 2) before we outline the methodology followed in this study (section 3), present the results (section 4) and finally offer concluding remarks (section 5).

2. Setting the scene

This paper focuses on the beliefs of EFL teachers working in the Republic of Cyprus. Cyprus is an island in the Mediterranean Sea and a former British colony (1925 – 1959) where English is the most popular and widely taught foreign language (Fotiou, 2022; Tsiplakou, 2025). Even though English does not enjoy the status of an official language on the island, its presence in several domains is quite prominent, such as the private workplace (Theophanous, 2020), the island's linguistic landscape (Karoulla-Vrikki, 2016; Karpava, 2022), the media (Fotiou, 2017b), and everyday communication amongst locals, where it can take the form of codeswitching (Fotiou, 2018, 2019, 2020; Goutsos, 2001) and it is also the source of many recent borrowings (Armostis & Terkourafi, 2019; Fotiou, 2015, 2017a; Papapavlou, 1994).

Learning English in Cyprus is generally school-based, but many young people nowadays also acquire English through their exposure to it on social networking sites, video games, the media and so on (Dimoragka, 2026; Drymiotou, 2026). When it comes to formal education, in public schools English is introduced in the first year of primary school and continues to be offered as a school subject throughout secondary and higher education. Alongside formal schooling, many – if not most – children also attend afternoon language institutes (mainly private ones, but public ones also exist), which operate as a form of shadow education (Tsagari & Giannikas, 2021), where teaching is mainly exam oriented (ibid., and studies cited therein). This exam-oriented teaching

is also evident within public education in Cyprus, where teachers are often compelled to prioritize exam preparation (both final-year exams, and university-entrance examinations which take place at the end of the third year of higher secondary education) due to the weight placed on examination results for academic progression and admission to university (Tsagari & Armostis, 2025). Even though it has not been shown in any study so far, one may hypothesize that exam preparation is part of what teachers may understand as *students' needs* when they cite those as reasons for materials adaptation. Within the private education sector, English-medium nursery, primary and secondary schools and universities are widespread on the island. Historically, the English "grammar school" model proved effective for supporting upward social mobility during and after the colonial period which has led to its expansion in the decades following independence (Persianis, 2006). Today, this English-medium education, which extends even to early childhood, has further consolidated the status of English in Cyprus and strengthened its role as a key linguistic resource for academic advancement, international mobility, and access to global opportunities (Fotiou, 2022).

As shown in Fotiou (2026), while EFL research in Cyprus is active, it is highly fragmented, with many areas (including materials development and adaptation) still largely unexplored. The only study we are aware of that is relevant to what we are studying here is a small-scale undergraduate research project conducted by Rotsi (2026). Ten in-service EFL teachers working in Cyprus completed an online survey on their use of AI for lesson planning, materials design and assessment in the EFL Classroom. Rotsi has shown that while teachers do report using AI tools for materials development, they only moderately agree with the idea that AI can support efficiency, level-appropriateness, differentiation and creativity in materials design. They also overwhelmingly acknowledge that AI-generated materials require substantial adaptation before they are ready for use. Teachers also reported occasional or moderate use of AI for generating pictures, handouts, tasks, and revision materials, with revision materials showing the highest regular use. This is evidence of using AI for additional materials to supplement the coursebook. In contrast, AI tools were rarely used for more complex or multimodal products such as educational videos, podcasts, or songs. The latter trend likely reflects limited awareness of AI's broader affordances for materials development.

3. Methodology

A questionnaire was developed specifically for the purposes of this study. It should be noted that the instrument was originally designed as a two-part questionnaire, with the second part intended for use in a separate study (see Fotiou, 2025). As explained in Fotiou (2025), the initial version of the questionnaire was piloted with five EFL teachers known to the researcher. The pilot aimed to ensure clarity of the items, appropriateness of wording, and ease of completion. Feedback from the pilot group informed minor revisions to item phrasing, resulting in a final version that was comprehensible and suitable for distribution to the other EFL teachers. The questionnaire was anonymous and required at most 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaire targeted only in-service EFL teachers working in Cyprus. Respondents who indicated that they were not currently teaching EFL in Cyprus were prevented from completing the questionnaire. Recruitment of participants was conducted through the researcher's social media profile on Facebook and direct sharing with colleagues, followed by snowball sampling to increase participation.

The final sample of participants consists of 115 in-service EFL teachers working in both the public and private sectors in Cyprus. The sample is predominantly young, with 33% aged 22–30, 39% aged 31–40, 23% aged 41–50, and 4% aged 51–65. The reported gender distribution reflected typical trends in the EFL profession: 90% of participants reported being female, and 10% male. The participants are also highly qualified: 90% hold a BA in English studies/Language (& Literature), 63% an MA in TESOL, Education or a language-related field, 12% the CELTA or TESOL certificate, 9% a PhD and 1% the DELTA. Most were employed at the time of completing the questionnaire in the private sector (69%), while 34% were employed in the public sector—the overlap of the percentages is likely due to some working in both sectors. In terms of the levels they teach, most teach A1 to B2, with 62.6% teaching A1, 70.4% A2, 79.1% B1, and 74.8% B2 levels (CEFR). Fewer teachers overall report teaching higher-level courses, with 42.6% teaching C1 and 24.3% teaching C2 students. The participants taught a wide range of age groups: 86% taught teenagers, 61% young learners, and 37% adults. Their teaching experience varied, with 31% having 1–5 years, 17% having 6–10 years, 37% having 11–20 years, and 16% having 21–35 years of experience. The average teaching experience was 11.8 years (SD = 8.46).

4. Results

The first question to be discussed so as to answer RQ1 addressed teachers' agency over which coursebook they use in their teaching. As the bar chart below illustrates, more than half of the teachers do not choose the coursebook they are supposed to use; they have no agency at all (N=75, 65%). A quarter of the teachers (N=29, 25%) have full autonomy over which coursebook they use, while a minority (N=11, 10%) have partial or conditional involvement in the decision-making process. This refers to situations in which teachers are consulted but the final decision is made by someone else, cases where decisions are made collaboratively, and cases where teachers choose their coursebooks for some courses but not for others.

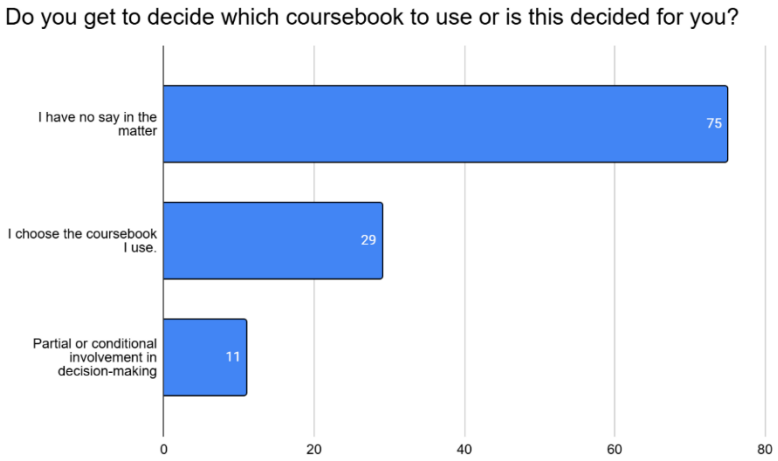


Figure 1: Teachers' agency over coursebook selection

To answer RQ2 of this study, two questions were added to the questionnaire. The first was an open-ended question. The participants were asked to complete the sentence, "The coursebook and what it means to me" and were free to write whatever they wanted. They were not allowed to view the question that followed. The latter followed a metaphor-based, multiple-choice format. Teachers were presented with four metaphors about what the coursebook means to them (supported by visual prompts) representing different conceptualizations of the coursebook and were asked to select all options that reflected their views. This question aimed to elicit teachers' underlying beliefs in a user-friendly and interpretively rich manner and was added for triangulation purposes. Its format and the use of metaphors were inspired by the work of McGrath (2006, 2013), who argued, along with other scholars cited in their work, that the use of metaphors is a window to one's thinking and beliefs. The metaphors chosen are the ones that McGrath elicited in their work from mainly secondary school EFL teachers in Hong Kong (McGrath, 2006).

A thematic analysis of the responses to the open-ended question, "The coursebook and what it means to me", reveals a nuanced understanding of what the coursebook means to the EFL teachers in our study. All in all, five themes emerge from the analysis. The strongest one is the view of the coursebook as a guide and a reference point for the teachers. The teachers repeatedly describe the coursebook as a "guide", their "foundation on which to build", "the bible of the course", and their "compass". In other words, for these teachers the coursebook provides a basis, structure, sequence and a sense of direction. Another strong theme views the coursebook as useful but also as an insufficient tool when used only on its own. Examples of responses that fall under this theme include "Helpful but not the only thing we can count on" and "It is very helpful material which sometimes needs some more supportive material" as well as the response "necessary evil". In other words, teachers value the coursebook, consider it helpful but also understand that it has its limitations. A third theme sees the coursebook as a resource and highlights the flexibility it affords and teachers' agency when using it with answers such as the following: "a flexible tool", "can be used in different ways", "I choose what to use", and "my boat, but I am the captain". By highlighting their agency and their ability to flexibly use the coursebook, teachers suggest that it is not a prescriptive tool but a resource they can adapt according to their students' needs, the class dynamics and level as well as their own personal beliefs and teaching style, as we see later on. Related to this theme is a smaller one which views the coursebook as a source of ideas and inspiration, essentially acting as a creative springboard with answers such as "great for getting ideas" and "a tool that inspires learners and provides useful material. It promotes critical thinking and fosters understanding of different registers." Finally, only a few teachers expressed a more negative view, describing the coursebook as restrictive, inadequate, insufficiently engaging, or not particularly interesting. Overall, the participants in this study view the coursebook as the backbone of instruction, offering stability in planning and delivery. At the same time, the coursebook is treated as a malleable resource and the teachers are aware of its limitations. This aligns well with the following noted trend emerging from the analysis of the questionnaire used in this study: regardless of whether they choose the coursebook or other ready-made materials provided to them, the overwhelming majority of the teachers report that they adapt those materials (N=114, 99%).

The teachers' responses to the open-ended question "The coursebook and what it means to me" align with their choices in the metaphor-based, multiple-response format question that followed. The following chart summarizes these responses and essentially confirms the thematic analysis of the answers to the previous question.

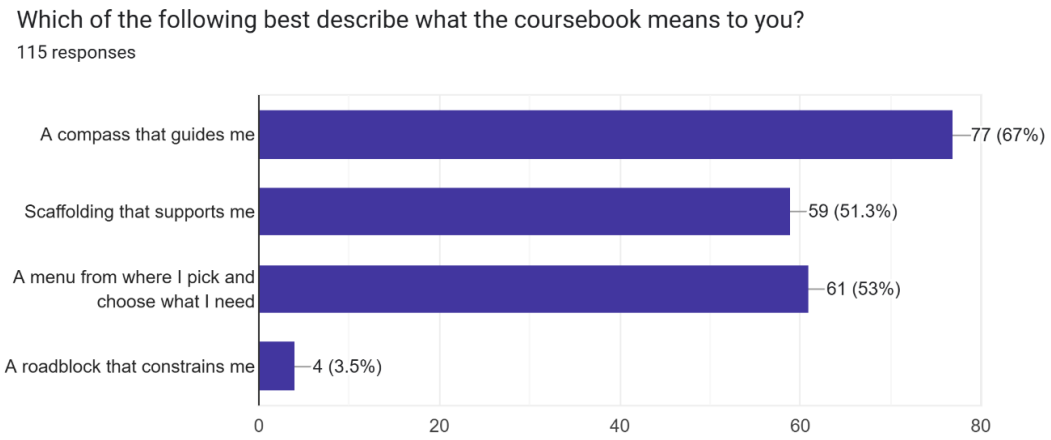


Figure 2: Responses to the metaphor-based, multiple-choice question on what the coursebook means

Overall, the bar chart shows that teachers generally view the coursebook in a positive light given that only four of them (3.5%) view it as a roadblock that constrains them. The majority (67%) see it as a compass that guides them, echoing the first theme of the previous analysis where the coursebook is seen as a guide and a reference point. Just over half of them (51.3%) describe it as scaffolding that supports them, which is partly consistent with the second theme in the analysis of the previously discussed question, which views the coursebook as helpful but also insufficient on its own. A similar proportion (53%) view it as a menu from which they choose what they need, which directly aligns with the third theme discussed above which views the coursebook as a resource and highlights the flexibility it affords and teachers' agency when using it.

The next question addresses RQ3 of this study and concerns the teachers' reported adaptation practices. Their answers are depicted in the bar chart below.

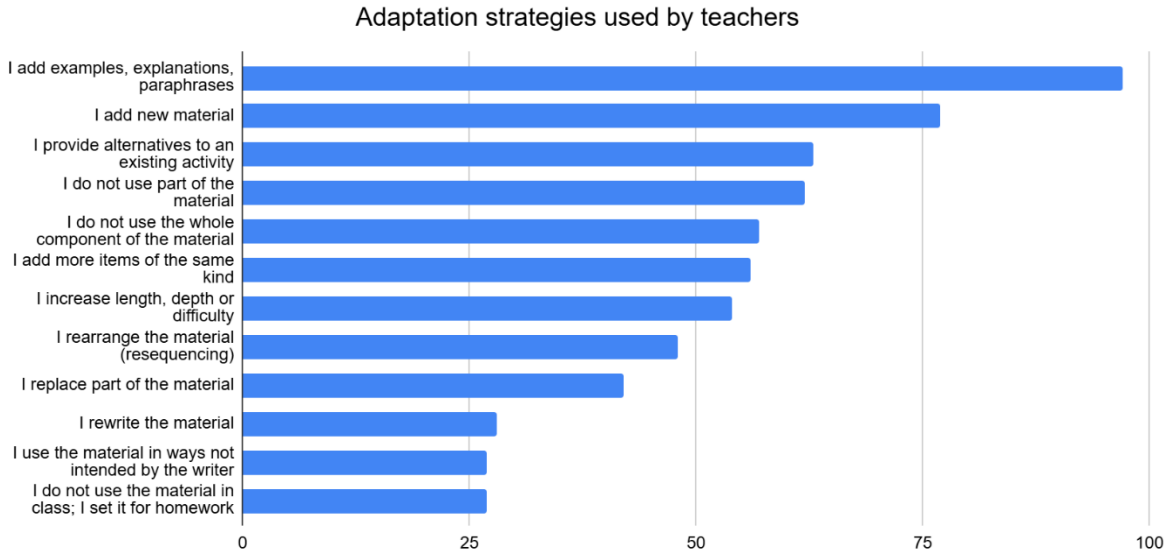


Figure 3: Reported adaptation practices employed by teachers

A closer look at the teachers' responses reveals that they engage extensively in adapting, supplementing, and modifying coursebook materials. Their most common adaptation strategies are essentially adding supportive input/materials (N=97), adding new material (N= 77) and adding more items of the same kind (N=56), which suggests that they tend to enrich the coursebook content in order to meet their aims. The second group of practices involves providing alternatives (N =63), adjusting the activities of the existing materials (N=54) and resequencing (N=48). This suggests that teachers do not simply add content; they also modify existing materials' pedagogical design. They adjust difficulty, extend tasks, or change the sequence to improve flow or match

learner profiles, needs and current cognitive demands. This reflects active pedagogical decision making rather than passive use of materials. The third group of practices comprises selective use (N=62), omission of materials (N=57) and setting material for homework (N=27), which shows that teachers select what they consider pedagogically valuable. Such adaptation practices may also relate to time constraints, which have been reported elsewhere for this setting (Fotiou & Grohmann, 2025). Less frequent but still noteworthy practices involve replacement (N= 42) and rewriting of materials (N=28), as also practised by the teachers studied in Zhang et al. (2024). These strategies are pedagogically more demanding and time-consuming, which may be why they are not that frequently reported to be practised. The least frequently reported practice involves an even more demanding approach in terms of pedagogical creativity and expertise: using the material in ways not intended by the writer (N=27). Such adaptations involve repurposing materials to serve new and perhaps more pressing pedagogical aims.

Overall, aligning with their responses to the previously discussed questions, the teachers do not seem to be passive implementers of published materials. The predominance of additive adaptations (adding examples, explanations, paraphrases, new material, or additional items) supports their view that the coursebook is insufficiently rich or inadequate on its own. The second cluster of adaptation practices encompasses providing alternatives, adjusting difficulty and resequencing. These kinds of practices show that the teachers do not just enrich the materials provided to them; they also modify them by altering their pedagogical design in terms of structure, choices available to students for purposes of differentiation, and cognitive demand. Such adaptation strategies, if materialized in a principled manner, demand a higher level of pedagogical literacy and expertise in materials design/adaptation. The third cluster of adaptation practices involves selective use and omission of materials. Again, if this is not done ad hoc and is instead grounded in clear pedagogical reasoning, it requires pedagogical literacy to exercise one's judgement on what to keep and what to discard. The less frequently reported practices, i.e., replacement and rewriting, as well as the least frequently reported ones, i.e., using the materials in ways not intended by the writer, are definitely more demanding in terms of expertise and much more time-consuming to implement. Their lower frequency may reflect the practical constraints of teachers' workloads (Elias & Ravago, 2025), lack of willingness to go the extra mile or inability to do so in terms of expertise. Finally, not using the materials in class but setting them for homework is most likely due to time constraints.

In addressing RQ4, which concerns why teachers adapt the materials, their answers reveal clear patterns aligning with the international literature. As the bar chart below illustrates, the vast majority of teachers (N=107, 93%) cite learners as their prime reason for adapting, highlighting the centrality of learner needs. This is followed by teacher-related factors (N=85, 74%) – their personality, teaching styles, and their beliefs about teaching and learning. Time constraints (N=72, 63%) also play a significant role (see also Fotiou and Grohmann, 2025) while curricular mismatches (N=38, 33%) and sociocultural or ideologically sensitive topics or content (N=32, 28%) are mentioned less frequently, yet still by (nearly) one third of the participants. Overall, it is clear that adaptation is reported by the teachers to be driven by a variety of factors: a complex interplay of learner-centered, teacher-centered, and contextual considerations, confirming the multifactorial nature of materials adaptation rationale documented in the broader ELT literature (Hanifa et al., 2024; Mede & Yalçın, 2019; Mishan & Timmis, 2015; Rathert & Cabaroğlu, 2024; Tomlinson & Hitomi, 2017; Zhang et al., 2024).

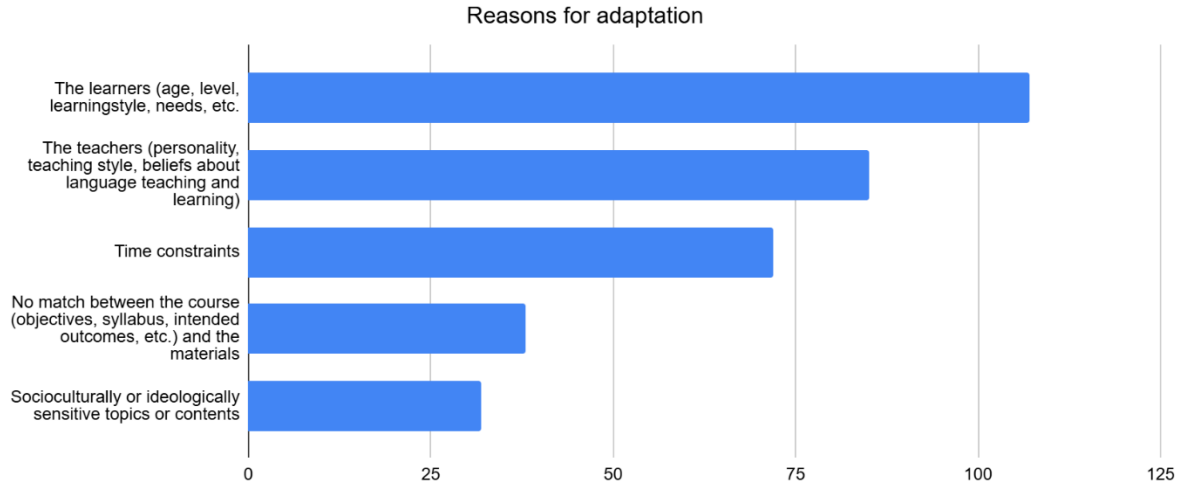


Figure 4: Reported reasons for materials adaptation

Before we conclude this paper, it is worth noting that teachers were also asked whether they had ever attended a training session that particularly focused on materials development, evaluation and adaptation and whether they believed they would benefit from (further) training on how to adapt materials. Interestingly, while more than half (63.5%) of the teachers stated that they had

attended such training, the overwhelming majority of them (96%) believe they would benefit from (additional) training. The latter finding supports the various calls in the international literature for more targeted training in materials design and adaptation (see section 1).

5. Conclusion

This study provides the first systematic examination of Cypriot EFL teachers' beliefs, agency, and practices regarding coursebook use. While most teachers have limited agency in selecting their coursebooks, they report extensive agency in adapting them. Overall, they place great value on the global coursebook and rely on it as a guide, a resource and a springboard for ideas; they also acknowledge its limitations and claim not to use it prescriptively. Instead, they report engaging in a variety of adaptation practices to ensure they meet their learners' needs, align the material with their own beliefs and practices, and ensure that the materials fit the local educational context and practical constraints. The most common adaptation practices are additive in nature, followed by providing alternatives, adjusting cognitive demand and resequencing. Less frequently reported adaptation strategies such as replacement, rewriting and repurposing are also the most demanding ones in terms of expertise, creativity and time.

Limitations of this study include its questionnaire-only design and its reliance on teachers' self-reported data. Future research should include semi-structured interviews for more in-depth insights, as well as classroom observations and examinations of classroom materials and lesson plans to triangulate teachers' self-reported practices, given that there may be mismatches between how teachers think they use coursebooks and what they actually do (Tasseron, 2017, cited in Zhang et al., 2024). Moreover, because data collection for this study began in mid-2022 and was completed in early 2023, just as generative AI tools were becoming widely accessible to the general public, we may assume that the responses of the participants were not influenced by their use of AI for materials development and adaptation. This timing arguably makes this study especially valuable because it captures teachers' reported practices before the widespread adoption of AI-generated materials, thus providing a baseline against which future studies can compare what teachers do now and in the future. As such, future research can examine how teachers' perceptions, beliefs and (reported) practices have now evolved as Gen-AI tools become more popular, familiar, embedded and, to an extent, normalized in EFL educational contexts.

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