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About Some Features of Authentic Text Materials in Teaching a Foreign Language

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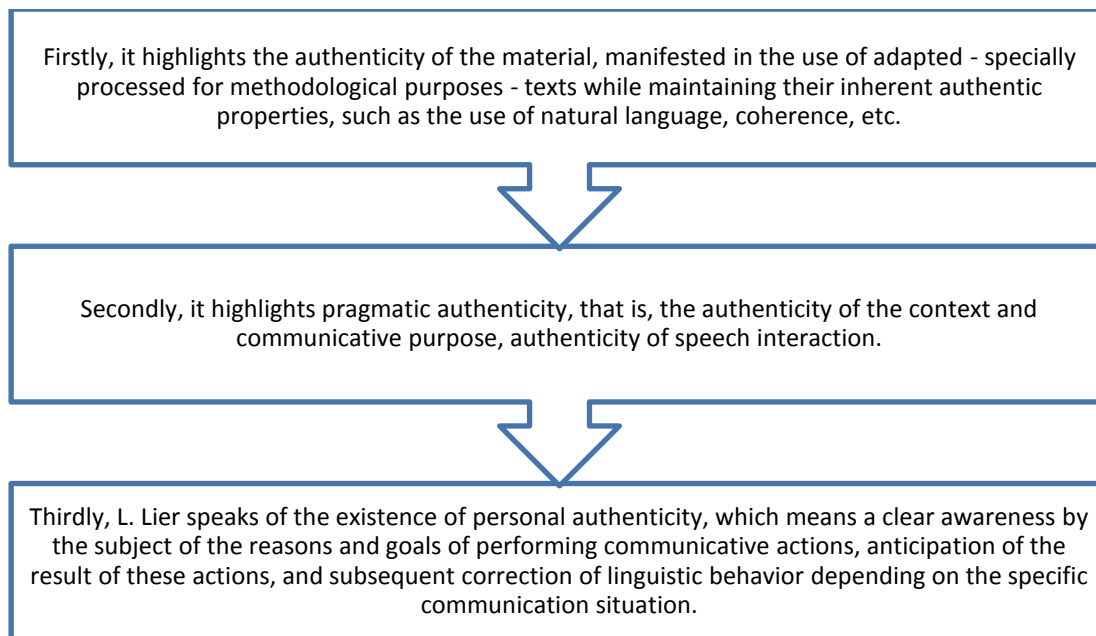
Abstract

This article examines the features of the use of authentic materials in teaching a foreign language, gives a definition of the concept of “authenticity” and “authentic materials”, provides a classification of authenticity and authentic texts, examines aspects of the use of authentic text materials and reveals the stages of organizing reading for each type of text.

Key words: authentic material, authentic text material, authenticity, communicative competence, foreign language.

The formation of communicative competence is one of the central problems of modern linguodidactics. Along with mastery of the basic means of language, communicative competence includes the ability to work with information: its transformation in accordance with one’s own understanding for the subsequent expression of a personal opinion on the perceived information when transmitting it to the interlocutor. At the same time, one more goal of mastering the main educational program in a foreign language should be indicated, namely, the formation of an active personal position in the perception of the world, including the development of national self-awareness through familiarization with the main features of life in the country of the language being studied and examples of foreign literature in their genre diversity. First of all, it is worth noting that achieving the goal of developing communicative competence in foreign language lessons is impossible without observing a number of fundamental principles. Among them is the principle of individualization, which involves taking into account the individual characteristics, interests and needs of students when teaching all types of speech during class and extracurricular learning activities; the principle of authentic situationality, that is, the requirement to create a real communication situation; the principle of speech-mental activity, manifested in the use of speech simultaneously as a means and goal of learning, and in the speech nature of the exercises used, in the presence of the communicative value of speech material (problematicity). Quite important are the principle of functionality, expressed in the predominance of the function of a speech unit over the linguistic form, and the principle of novelty, considered, on the one hand, as the use of various forms and methods of organizing the educational space, and on the other hand, as the development of new methods and ways of organizing educational activities. One of the ways to develop communicative competence while observing these principles may be the use of authentic materials, however, the concept of “authentic materials”, due to the novelty of considering this issue in modern linguodidactics, has not yet acquired a clear definition [1]. First of all, it is worth considering the concept of authenticity as such. Unfortunately, turning to

the consideration of this concept leads to terminological confusion. In modern both domestic and foreign methodological science, a clear definition of authenticity is not given, and at the same time, the terminological boundary between the concepts of “authentic”, “original” and “genuine” is not traced. Because of this, let’s try to define authenticity and find out the relationship of this concept with related ones. Let’s start with the fact that translated from Greek, authentic means genuine, which correlates with English - natural.



In comparison with L. Lier, M. Brin identifies not 3, but 4 types of authenticity: authenticity of texts used in the learning process; authenticity of perception of these texts; authenticity of educational tasks, as well as authenticity of the social situation in the lesson [5]. At the same time, the authenticity of M. Brin’s texts comes to the fore.

Domestic methodologists give preference to the consideration of authentic texts and highlight a number of aspects of the authenticity of educational texts, including [4]:

- 1) Culturological authenticity - the use of texts that form ideas about the main features of the life of native speakers of the language being studied in all spheres of the functioning of this language;
- 2) Informative authenticity - the use of texts containing relevant, significant information that corresponds to the age characteristics of students;
- 3) Situational authenticity - the creation of a natural communication situation, proposed, for example, in the form of an educational illustration, the declared topic being of interest to native speakers, the naturalness of discussion on the specified topic;
- 4) Authenticity of the national mentality - clarification of the appropriateness or lack thereof in the use of a particular phrase in a foreign language.
- 5) Reactive authenticity - the ability of a text to evoke an authentic emotional, mental and verbal response in students;
- 6) Authenticity of design - correspondence between the design of the text in the textbook and its design in the original, which has the consequence of attracting the attention of students and facilitating understanding of the communicative task of the text;

7) Authenticity of educational tasks for texts - the ability of tasks to stimulate students' interaction with the text, in particular, they should be based on operations performed outside of class time when working with various sources of information.

Based on the above classifications of authenticity, it seems possible to conclude that authenticity within the framework of linguodidactics and methods of teaching a foreign language can be defined as the correspondence of the content, organizational and individual aspects of teaching a foreign language to the natural way of functioning of a foreign language in a foreign language society.

The use of authentic materials when teaching a foreign language is fully consistent with the above-described principles of developing communicative competence. They meet the principles of authentic situational speech-mental activity, being a means of creating real communication situations and achieving authenticity of communication goals, which is manifested in students' awareness of the functionality of the language. Moreover, the diversity of sources and forms of authentic materials corresponds to the principles of individualization and novelty. In this regard, this type of training materials can be considered as an excellent basis for the formation of all components of communicative competence, primarily sociolinguistic, sociocultural, strategic and discursive competence. In the field of linguodidactics, however, there is no consensus on the effectiveness of using authentic materials. The positive effect of using authentic materials is confirmed by many researchers, for example, A. Martinez highlights a number of advantages of these materials [4]. He asserts that through the use of authentic materials, students acquire linguistic and cultural knowledge, acquire and improve language skills within the framework of an authentic communication situation. In addition, authentic materials provide variability in the types of educational activities due to their genre and style diversity. At the same time, he lists the main shortcomings usually attributed to authentic materials. Particular attention is paid to the difficulty of authentic texts for understanding, associated with the difference in cultures, the discrepancy between the level of language proficiency and the authentic language units used, the rapid obsolescence of information, and as a result, the need for careful selection of material and the development of a process for working on it. The complexity of organizing work with a number of authentic materials, mainly audio and audiovisual materials, is explained by the existence of different accents and dialects. The listed advantages and disadvantages of using authentic materials raise the question of choosing the most effective authentic materials. Authentic materials, as noted, may include audio, video materials and texts in a foreign language, created not to achieve an educational goal, but for real communication.

Let us further consider the prerequisites for the effectiveness of using authentic text materials. According to Breen M. P, functional and informative texts stand out among authentic texts [3]. Functional texts are understood as texts that perform the function of explanation, instruction, warning or advertising (road signs and signs, signs, diagrams, diagrams, advertising brochures, theater programs, etc.). As for informative texts, they are represented by news notes, articles, interviews, surveys, announcements, comments, reports, etc. Lier L. V., speaking about authentic texts, also includes literary texts among them [6]. Based on the above, we determine that functional, informative and artistic authentic texts are distinguished. One of the above advantages of using authentic materials, namely the possibility of creating an authentic situation along with the authenticity of educational tasks, is completely inherent in the use of functional and informative texts. The latter, performing a pragmatic function and serving the everyday side of society, are characterized by relevance (they change with society), genre diversity of sources (which follows the principle of individualization), situational dependence and contain the basic units of language necessary for everyday communication. When considering authentic literary texts from the point of view of relevance, content and the possibility of defining an authentic communication situation in this way, we can conclude that authentic

literary texts not only present uninteresting information divorced from the conditions of real communication, have difficult linguistic content, but also in most cases situationally not conditional.

Speaking about the problem of difficult linguistic content of all the mentioned types of authentic texts, we should consider ways to organize work with the text. First of all, the selection of authentic texts should be carried out according to the mentioned aspects of the authenticity of educational texts. In addition, different types of reading correspond to different types of authentic texts. Let's start with the fact that there are several types of reading - viewing and introductory, which has the task of finding the necessary information and getting a general impression of the content of the text, and studying, which involves one hundred percent understanding of the text. Scanning reading aims to obtain a general idea of the topic of the text or search for specific information. Achieving this goal can be accomplished by reading headlines, individual paragraphs, or sentences. This type of reading is typical for authentic functional texts. In turn, introductory reading assumes a complete understanding of the text of at least 70%, and the secondary information of the text must be understood without distortion. This type of reading is the most common in real communication conditions and is carried out within the framework of authentic informative texts containing information reflecting the peculiarities of everyday life, life and culture of the country of the language being studied. During introductory reading, a number of skills are formed, including the ability to determine the topic and content of a text by title, highlight the main idea, and establish a logical sequence of the main facts of the text read.

Authentic literary texts are characterized by studying reading, which aims to fully understand the content for its subsequent critical understanding. This type of reading is characterized by a longer time duration, the presence of stops and re-reading of individual text fragments. A complete understanding of the content of the text implies an understanding of its lexical, grammatical and syntactic content. Most authors share the opinion that when working with any text, there are three main stages - pre-text, text and post-text. At the pre-text stage, students' motivation to work with the text is stimulated, personal experience is updated by attracting knowledge from other areas of the subjects being studied, the content of the text is predicted based on headings and pictures. An obligatory element of the pre-text stage will be the formulation of an authentic communicative task (For example, you and your friends are celebrating a birthday in a cafe, study the menu and place an order). Considering the pre-text stage when working with an authentic text, it is worth noting that the main activity will be the removal of language and content difficulties through the determination by title, text structure, illustrations of the type of text (for example, a culinary recipe or an advertisement in a newspaper, in other words, functional, informative or artistic text); recognition of unknown vocabulary in a text with subsequent updating by translation and non-translation methods depending on the level of language proficiency of students with subsequent prediction of the content of the text according to unknown words. At the same time, you should not reveal the topic of the text completely, by updating most of the words contained in it, as this can have a critical impact on students' motivation to read. In conditions of observing the individualization aspect, when supplemented by taking into account not only age characteristics, but also the degree of language proficiency, such a situation seems almost impossible. The next text stage consists of reading the text or its individual parts in order to solve a specific communicative task posed at the pre-text stage. The object of reading control is the level of understanding of the text, and control of the understanding of the text read is associated with both communicative tasks and the type of reading. The time and depth of work on the text depends on the type of authentic text. Speaking about pragmatic texts, it is worth saying that a number of them are advisable to use for exploratory reading (city map), informational texts - for learning reading (recipes, instructions), if they are presented as informative texts, then for introductory reading (signs, advertisements). Difficulties of a linguistic and content nature should not be a problem when reading these texts, since due to their small volume and formal expression, they are completely removed at the pre-text stage.

In contrast to those indicated, authentic literary texts (when selecting texts for students with a high level of language proficiency) are considered sufficiently complex to remove all language difficulties. In this regard, reading can occur in several stages. So, for example, the first reading of an authentic literary text may be associated with understanding the basic information, identifying an idea, topic, problem, searching for main information, as well as establishing logical and semantic connections by drawing up a plan, tables or diagrams. Repeated reading draws students' attention to details followed by evaluation (content component), as well as to a detailed analysis of grammatical and lexical difficulties (language component). At this stage, the aspect of situational authenticity becomes of primary importance, since repeated reading of the same material takes away the communicative meaning from the reading. Repeated reading of non-fiction texts is advisable only in the case of searching for additional, clarifying information, for example, while simultaneously filling out various tables, diagrams, etc.

The last post-text stage of work with all types of authentic text materials is characterized by communicativeness, so exercises of the reproductive-productive and productive type predominate here, and the organization of post-text activity can be presented in oral (of a debatable nature, expression of personal opinion) and written form (for example, writing personal letter, letter of complaint or formal request). Thus, we can come to the conclusion that consistent prepared work with an authentic text at all stages of reading guarantees not only the provision of the necessary level of motivation, reduction of the level of possible language and speech difficulties and the formation of skills in this type of speech activity, but also contributes to the comprehensive development communicative competence [2].

Based on the generalization of their provisions, authenticity as a property of the educational process is understood as the correspondence of the organization of teaching a foreign language in all its aspects to the natural way of functioning of a foreign language in society. And authentic materials, which are materials produced by native speakers for native speakers and presented in the native language in text, video and audio format, as well as in the form of illustrations, represent the result of the process of using a foreign language by representatives of the corresponding society, and can be used as the main means of creating an authentic learning situation when teaching a language. According to the classification of authentic text materials, functional, informative and artistic authentic texts are distinguished. The use of authentic text materials fully satisfies the methodological concept of communicative foreign language education and is an effective means of developing communicative competence, subject to the principles of developing communicative competence (individualization, authentic situationality, verbal and mental activity, functionality, novelty), aspects of text authenticity, as well as the stages of organizing consistent work on authentic text in accordance with its type.

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