

## **AUTHENTIC TEXTS AS TOOL FOR DEVELOPING LEXICAL COMPETENCE**

**M.M.Alimbetova**

*PhD student of NSPI named  
after Ajiniyaz*

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14407721>

**Abstract:** *Developing lexical competence is a key objective in language teaching, particularly for philology students, who are expected to demonstrate advanced language skills. This article explores the benefits of using authentic texts to improve the lexical competence of philology students. The article highlights the importance of contextualized learning and the role that real-world materials play in vocabulary acquisition. The article also discusses practical strategies for integrating authentic texts into curricula and provides insights from various studies conducted by both local and international researchers.*

**Key words:** *lexical competence, authentic texts, contextualized learning, real-world materials, vocabulary acquisition*

Lexical competence is a crucial component of language proficiency, particularly for philology students, who are preparing for careers in language, literature, and cultural studies. According to Nation, vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to all aspects of language use, from reading comprehension to expressive writing and speaking. However, traditional approaches to vocabulary instruction often focus on isolated word lists, which fail to provide the context needed for students to fully grasp and apply new words [7].

A growing body of research suggests that using authentic texts—texts not specifically designed for language learners but taken from real-life sources—can significantly enhance lexical competence [3]. Authentic texts provide students with exposure to natural language use, including idiomatic expressions, collocations, and word usage in context. This article explores how authentic materials can be used effectively to develop the lexical competence of philology students and reviews existing research from English, Russian, and Uzbek scholars.

Lexical competence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and use words appropriately in different contexts. It encompasses both receptive knowledge (the ability to understand words when reading or listening) and productive knowledge (the ability to use words correctly in speech and writing). As Schmitt argues, lexical competence is a dynamic process that involves "knowing a word's form, meaning, and use in different contexts" [9].

In the context of philology students, lexical competence is particularly important because it underpins their ability to analyze texts critically, engage in academic

discourse, and produce sophisticated written work. Given the breadth of vocabulary required in philological studies, it is essential that students are exposed to a wide range of authentic language materials that reflect the complexities of real-world communication [4].

Authentic texts are materials derived from real-life sources, such as newspapers, literature, film scripts, and academic articles, which are not simplified or altered for educational purposes [5]. These texts offer learners the opportunity to encounter language in a rich, contextualized environment that mirrors how native speakers use the language in everyday situations.

One of the primary benefits of using authentic texts is that they expose students to natural language patterns and contextualized vocabulary. This exposure allows learners to see how words function in different genres and contexts, which enhances both their receptive and productive lexical abilities. Studies by Gilmore and Nation have shown that authentic texts can improve vocabulary retention by providing multiple encounters with words in meaningful contexts [3;7].

Another benefit is that authentic texts often include collocations (common word pairings) and idiomatic expressions that are not typically found in textbooks. For philology students, understanding these aspects of language is critical, as they are expected to engage with complex literary and academic texts. Authentic texts also help learners develop an intuitive sense of register and tone, which are crucial in advanced language use.

Despite the benefits, there are challenges to using authentic texts, particularly for lower-level learners. According to Widdowson, authentic texts can be too complex for students who lack the necessary language proficiency, leading to frustration and disengagement [11]. This challenge can be mitigated by carefully selecting texts that are appropriate for the students' level and by providing scaffolding, such as pre-teaching vocabulary or offering guided reading questions.

Selecting the right authentic texts is essential for maximizing their effectiveness in developing lexical competence. For philology students, texts should be chosen based on their relevance to the students' field of study and their language level. According to Mishan, literary works, academic articles, and journalistic writing are particularly beneficial for philology students, as they provide exposure to both formal and informal registers [5].

Texts can be integrated into the curriculum in various ways, including extensive reading programs, thematic units, and project-based learning. Extensive reading allows students to engage with authentic texts over an extended period, which has

been shown to improve vocabulary acquisition [2]. Thematic units can focus on specific topics, such as media or literature, and use authentic texts to introduce relevant vocabulary in context.

Classroom activities should encourage students to actively engage with the vocabulary they encounter in authentic texts. Some effective strategies include:

- **Vocabulary Journals:** Students can keep a journal where they note down new words, their meanings, collocations, and example sentences from the texts. This encourages them to reflect on how words are used in context.
- **Contextual Guessing:** Students can practice inferring the meaning of unknown words based on the surrounding context, which is a valuable skill in real-world language use [7].
- **Discussion and Debate:** Engaging students in discussions or debates based on the content of the texts can enhance their productive use of new vocabulary.

Research from English-speaking countries has long supported the use of authentic texts in language learning. Gilmore found that students exposed to authentic texts showed significant improvements in both vocabulary retention and overall language proficiency when compared to those using traditional textbooks [3].

Developing lexical competence is a critical goal for philology students, and the use of authentic texts provides a powerful tool for achieving this objective. By offering rich, contextualized exposure to vocabulary, authentic texts help students acquire not only new words but also an understanding of how to use them appropriately in various contexts. While there are challenges to using authentic texts, such as their complexity for lower-level learners, these can be addressed through careful text selection and scaffolding.

#### References

1. Borasheva A. The Crucial Role of Teacher Support in Enhancing Willingness to Communicate, Professional, Communicative and Lexical Competences //Pubmedia Jurnal Penelitian Tindakan Kelas Indonesia. – 2024. – T. 1. – №. 4. – С. 9-9.
2. Day, R. R., & Bamford, J. (1998). *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Gilmore, A. (2007). Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, 40(2), 97-118.
4. Laufer, B., & Nation, I. S. P. (1995). Vocabulary size and use: Lexical richness in L2 written production. *Applied Linguistics*, 16(3), 307-322.
5. Mishan, F. (2005). *Designing Authenticity into Language Learning Materials*. Intellect Books.
6. M. Alimbetova ENHANCING LEXICAL COMPETENCE THROUGH AUTHENTIC TEXTS // SAI. 2024. №C7. URL: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/enhancing-lexical-competence-through-authentic-texts>.

7. Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*. Cambridge University Press.
8. Nuratdinova J. Developing professional communication skills in English of agricultural education students // *Science and innovation*. – 2024. – Т. 3. – №. В7. – С. 60-63.
9. Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
10. Tadjimova, S. . (2024). STUDENTS' DEVELOPMENT OF LEXICAL SKILLS THROUGHOUT ENGLISH SESSIONS. *Наука и технология в современном мире*, 3(5), 26–27.
11. Widdowson, H. G. (1998). Context, community, and authentic language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(4), 705-716.