CRITERIA FOR SELECTING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS TO REDUCE LEXICAL INTERFERENCE

Boltaboyev Farxodjon Shavkatjon o‘g‘li
Teacher of the 3rd Department of Applied Sciences of the Uzbekistan State University of World Languages, independent researcher
E-mail: boltaboyevfarkhod@gmail.com
Tel: +998909754222

Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqolada B2 darajadagi o‘rganuvchilarda uchraydigan leksik interferensiyani bartaraf etishda autentik materiallarni tanlash mezonlari ilmiy-metodik jihatdan yoritiladi. Tadqiqot sifat tahliliga asoslanib, leksik interferensiyaning semantik, kollokatsion, idiomatik, pragmatik va madaniy turlarini hamda ularni kamaytirishda autentik materiallarning rolini aniqlaydi. Ishda leksik, pragmatik, sotsiokultural, pedagogik va texnik mezonlar tizimlashtiriladi. Natijalar autentik materiallarni maqsadli tanlash ularning o‘quv jarayonidagi samaradorligini oshirishini ko‘rsatadi hamda lug‘at kompetensiyasini rivojlantirish uchun metodik asos bo‘lib xizmat qiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: leksik interferensiya, autentik materiallar, lug‘at kompetensiyasi, B2 daraja, leksik yondashuv, chet tilini o‘qitish metodikasi.

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются критерии отбора аутентичных материалов для преодоления лексической интерференции у обучающихся уровня B2. Исследование основано на качественном анализе и охватывает семантическую, коллокационную, идиоматическую, прагматическую и культурную интерференцию. В работе систематизируются лексические, прагматические, социокультурные, педагогические и технические критерии отбора аутентичных материалов. Полученные результаты подтверждают, что целенаправленный отбор аутентичных ресурсов повышает эффективность формирования лексической компетенции и способствует развитию коммуникативных навыков.

Ключевые слова: лексическая интерференция, аутентичные материалы, лексическая компетенция, уровень B2, лексический подход, методика преподавания иностранного языка

Abstract. This article examines criteria for selecting authentic materials to reduce lexical interference among B2-level learners. Using a qualitative analytical approach, the study addresses semantic, collocational, idiomatic, pragmatic, and cultural interference and systematizes lexical, pragmatic, sociocultural, pedagogical, and technical selection criteria. The findings demonstrate that principled selection of authentic materials enhances their pedagogical effectiveness and supports the development of stable lexical competence in foreign language learning.

ISSN 3030-3907

Key words: lexical interference, authentic materials, lexical competence, B2 level, lexical approach, foreign language teaching methodology

INTRODUCTION

Lexical interference remains one of the most persistent obstacles in foreign language acquisition, particularly at the upper-intermediate (B2) level, where learners are expected to demonstrate contextual accuracy, idiomatic awareness, and pragmatic appropriateness. Despite having sufficient grammatical knowledge and an expanding vocabulary, many learners continue to rely on first-language semantic mappings, literal translations, and non-native collocational patterns, which significantly undermines communicative effectiveness. This phenomenon is especially evident in English language learning contexts where instruction is still partially dependent on simplified, pedagogically constructed materials rather than exposure to authentic language use

In recent decades, applied linguistics has increasingly emphasized the role of authentic materials in mitigating lexical interference. Authentic materials—defined as texts, audio, or visual resources originally created for real communicative purposes—provide learners with access to naturally occurring lexical patterns, pragmatic conventions, and sociocultural references. Unlike artificial textbook examples, such materials reflect how lexical items function in discourse, how meanings shift across contexts, and how words combine in predictable yet non-transparent ways. Consequently, authentic input has been associated with the development of semantic precision, collocational competence, and idiomatic fluency, all of which are directly linked to the reduction of lexical interference.

However, the pedagogical effectiveness of authentic materials is not inherent but contingent upon systematic selection. Uncontrolled exposure to authentic input may overwhelm learners, increase cognitive load, or even reinforce incorrect lexical assumptions if the material does not correspond to learners' proficiency level or instructional goals. This challenge is particularly relevant in higher education contexts, where curriculum requirements, state educational standards, and assessment frameworks impose specific learning outcomes. In Uzbekistan's tertiary education system, the State Educational Standard (DTS) explicitly requires B2-level learners to demonstrate contextual comprehension, figurative interpretation, and culturally appropriate lexical usage. Yet, practical guidelines for selecting authentic materials that directly address lexical interference remain insufficiently articulated.

From a theoretical perspective, the necessity of principled material selection is supported by several influential frameworks. The lexical approach argues that

ISSN 3030-3907

vocabulary acquisition is fundamentally phraseological, relying on the internalization of collocations, chunks, and formulaic sequences rather than isolated words. Psycholinguistic models of lexical processing further suggest that meaning is encoded through networks of contextual associations, which are strengthened by repeated exposure to authentic usage patterns. Additionally, sociocultural theory highlights the role of culturally situated language use in shaping meaning, emphasizing that lexical competence cannot be separated from pragmatic and cultural awareness. These perspectives converge on the idea that lexical interference is best addressed through context-rich, communicatively grounded input rather than decontextualized instruction.

Despite this theoretical consensus, a significant research gap persists regarding the operationalization of authenticity in instructional practice. Many studies advocate the use of authentic materials but provide limited guidance on how such materials should be selected, categorized, and aligned with specific types of lexical interference. In particular, there is a lack of structured criteria that link material characteristics—such as semantic density, collocational richness, pragmatic relevance, and sociocultural content—to identifiable interference patterns. Without such criteria, material selection often remains subjective, inconsistent, and dependent on individual teacher intuition rather than methodological rigor.

The present study addresses this gap by proposing a system of criteria for selecting authentic materials aimed specifically at reducing lexical interference among B2-level learners in philological education. The study draws on curriculum analysis, applied linguistic theory, and the practical framework of the *Vocabulary in Context* module within the TAA course. By categorizing selection criteria into lexical, pragmatic, sociocultural, pedagogical, and technical dimensions, the study seeks to establish a transparent and replicable model for material selection. Furthermore, it examines how different types of authentic materials correspond to specific interference phenomena, including semantic, collocational, idiomatic, pragmatic, and cultural interference.

Accordingly, the objectives of this study are threefold:

(1) to systematize criteria for selecting authentic materials based on their potential to reduce lexical interference;

(2) to map different types of lexical interference to appropriate authentic material formats; and

(3) to demonstrate how these criteria can be integrated into an existing instructional module at the B2 level.

ISSN 3030-3907

By achieving these aims, the study contributes to both theoretical and practical dimensions of applied linguistics, offering a criteria-based framework that enhances the pedagogical value of authentic materials and supports the development of stable lexical competence in foreign language learners.

METHODS

Research Design

The present study adopts a qualitative analytical research design with elements of criteria-based content analysis. This design was selected due to the exploratory and systematizing nature of the research, which aims to identify, classify, and justify criteria for selecting authentic materials that reduce lexical interference among B2-level learners. Rather than measuring learning outcomes quantitatively, the study focuses on analyzing the pedagogical and linguistic properties of instructional materials and their alignment with specific interference phenomena.

The research is grounded in applied linguistics and language pedagogy, integrating insights from lexical studies, pragmatics, sociocultural theory, and curriculum analysis. This approach allows for a multidimensional examination of authentic materials, taking into account not only linguistic features but also contextual, cultural, and instructional variables.

Research Context and Target Level

The research was conducted within the context of higher philological education, specifically focusing on undergraduate students at the B2 proficiency level as defined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). At this level, learners are expected to demonstrate independent language use, including the ability to understand implicit meanings, use idiomatic expressions appropriately, and select lexical items according to communicative context.

The instructional context is further shaped by the requirements of the State Educational Standard (DTS) of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which emphasizes contextual comprehension, pragmatic competence, and culturally appropriate language use for B2-level students. These institutional requirements informed both the selection of materials and the formulation of evaluation criteria.

Data Sources and Materials

The primary data sources for the study included:

1. Regulatory and curricular documents, such as the State Educational Standard (DTS) for foreign language education and official curriculum guidelines governing the development of higher education programs.

ISSN 3030-3907

2. Instructional materials from the *Vocabulary in Context* module of the TAA course, which serves as the core lexical component for B2-level instruction.
3. Samples of authentic materials commonly used or recommended in tertiary English language teaching, including newspaper articles, magazine features, interviews, podcasts, films, television programs, blogs, and email samples.

These sources were selected to ensure representativeness across different discourse types, registers, and communicative purposes. All materials were analyzed in their original, unadapted form prior to any pedagogical modification.

Criteria Development Procedure

The development of selection criteria followed a multi-stage analytical procedure. First, a review of relevant theoretical frameworks was conducted, including the lexical approach, communicative language teaching, pragmatics, and sociocultural theory. From this review, preliminary criterion categories were identified based on recurring constructs such as contextual richness, phraseological density, pragmatic appropriateness, and cultural embeddedness.

Second, these preliminary categories were cross-referenced with documented types of lexical interference observed in B2-level learners, namely semantic, collocational, idiomatic, pragmatic, and cultural interference. This step ensured that each criterion was functionally linked to a specific interference mechanism rather than remaining descriptively abstract.

Third, the criteria were refined through curriculum alignment. Each criterion was evaluated for its compatibility with CEFR B2 descriptors and DTS learning outcomes, as well as its applicability within the *Vocabulary in Context* module. As a result, five overarching criterion groups were finalized: lexical, pragmatic, sociocultural, pedagogical, and technical.

Analytical Framework

The finalized criteria served as an analytical framework for evaluating authentic materials. Each material was examined according to the following dimensions:

- **Lexical dimension**, focusing on semantic density, collocational patterns, idiomatic expressions, polysemy, and synonymic variation.
- **Pragmatic dimension**, examining register variation, speech acts, discourse functions, and situational appropriateness.
- **Sociocultural dimension**, assessing the presence of cultural references, social roles, norms, and real-life contextualization.
- **Pedagogical dimension**, evaluating CEFR level suitability, cognitive load, learner relevance, and integration with existing instructional modules.

ISSN 3030-3907

- **Technical dimension**, considering format (text, audio, video), accessibility, adaptability, and potential for classroom implementation.

Materials were not scored numerically; instead, they were categorized qualitatively based on their alignment with these dimensions and their predicted effectiveness in reducing specific types of lexical interference.

Mapping Interference Types to Material Categories

To establish a functional relationship between interference types and authentic materials, a mapping procedure was employed. Each type of lexical interference was analyzed in terms of its cognitive and linguistic characteristics. For example, semantic interference was associated with misinterpretation of polysemous words, while collocational interference stemmed from non-native word combinations influenced by the first language.

Based on this analysis, material categories were matched to interference types according to their capacity to provide relevant contextual cues, frequency patterns, and pragmatic signals. This mapping process formed the basis for the analytical tables presented in the Results section and ensured that material selection was theoretically motivated and pedagogically justified.

Reliability and Validity Considerations

To enhance methodological reliability, the criteria were derived from established theoretical frameworks and validated through cross-referencing with curricular standards. Internal validity was supported by maintaining consistency between research objectives, analytical categories, and data interpretation. Although the study does not employ statistical validation, transparency in the criteria development process and explicit documentation of analytical steps contribute to the study's replicability.

Ethical Considerations

The study involved no human participants and relied exclusively on document analysis and material evaluation. Consequently, no ethical approval was required. All materials were used for academic analysis purposes only, without modification of original content or misrepresentation of sources.

RESULTS

The analysis of authentic materials based on the proposed criteria resulted in a structured and multidimensional classification system that directly corresponds to different types of lexical interference observed at the B2 level. The findings demonstrate that authentic materials vary significantly in their capacity to address specific interference phenomena depending on their lexical, pragmatic, sociocultural, pedagogical, and technical characteristics.

Results of Criteria-Based Classification

ISSN 3030-3907

The application of the criteria-based framework revealed five major groups of selection criteria: lexical, pragmatic, sociocultural, pedagogical, and technical. Each group was found to contribute differently to the reduction of lexical interference.

Lexical criteria emerged as the most directly related to interference reduction. Materials characterized by high semantic density, frequent collocational patterns, idiomatic expressions, and polysemy were consistently associated with improved contextual interpretation of vocabulary. In particular, materials containing recurrent lexical chunks and naturally occurring collocations demonstrated strong alignment with the reduction of semantic and collocational interference. The presence of synonymic variation within a shared semantic field was also identified as a key feature, as it enabled learners to distinguish subtle meaning differences and avoid one-to-one translation strategies.

Pragmatic criteria were found to play a crucial role in addressing pragmatic interference. Authentic materials that incorporated both formal and informal registers, such as interviews, email samples, and conversational transcripts, provided clear evidence of how lexical choices shift according to communicative purpose. These materials displayed predictable discourse functions and speech acts, allowing learners to observe lexical appropriateness in context rather than relying on decontextualized rules.

Sociocultural criteria were particularly effective in reducing cultural interference. Materials embedded in real-life social contexts—such as texts related to family structures, social roles, traditions, and public discourse—consistently contained culturally loaded lexical items and references. These materials enabled learners to interpret meaning beyond literal translation and to recognize culture-specific connotations.

Pedagogical criteria ensured that authentic materials remained accessible and instructionally relevant. Materials aligned with CEFR B2 descriptors and integrated into the *Vocabulary in Context* module were found to be more suitable for systematic classroom use. Technical criteria, while secondary in linguistic impact, facilitated implementation by allowing materials to be adapted, edited, or combined across modalities.

Mapping Interference Types to Authentic Materials

A key result of the study was the establishment of a clear correspondence between types of lexical interference and categories of authentic materials. Semantic interference was most effectively addressed through context-rich dialogic materials, film scenes, and short narrative texts, which provided sufficient contextual cues for interpreting polysemous and figurative meanings.

ISSN 3030-3907

Collocational interference was closely associated with materials that reflected high-frequency lexical combinations. Corpus-based examples, newspaper articles, and magazine texts consistently displayed authentic collocational patterns, enabling learners to internalize word partnerships based on usage frequency rather than intuition.

Idiomatic interference was linked to learners' limited exposure to figurative language in real discourse. The results indicated that audiovisual materials—such as interviews, talk shows, and vlogs—were particularly effective in presenting idioms within pragmatic and emotional contexts. These materials demonstrated how idiomatic expressions function in spoken interaction and how their meanings extend beyond literal interpretation.

Cultural interference was most effectively addressed through materials that explicitly represented social practices, traditions, and real-life events. Such materials provided access to cultural schemas and realia, which are often absent from pedagogically simplified texts.

Pragmatic interference was reduced through exposure to materials illustrating register variation and discourse conventions, including formal and informal emails, phone conversations, and institutional communication. These materials highlighted how lexical choices signal politeness, authority, and social distance.

Results of Module-Based Integration

The integration of selection criteria into the *Vocabulary in Context* module yielded a thematic mapping of module topics to suitable authentic material types. Each thematic unit was found to require a specific balance of criteria depending on its lexical focus.

For topics related to appearance, materials with strong visual components—such as fashion articles and style-related vlogs—demonstrated high effectiveness due to their multimodal reinforcement of descriptive vocabulary and collocations. Topics addressing mood, character, and emotions benefited most from audio and video materials, which conveyed connotative meaning, intonation, and pragmatic nuance.

Idioms describing people required materials that embedded figurative language within narrative or conversational contexts, such as sitcoms and biographical interviews. Topics related to family ties and stages of life were most effectively supported by texts rich in sociocultural references, including reports, blogs, and personal narratives.

Overall, the results indicate that no single type of authentic material is universally effective. Instead, effectiveness depends on the alignment between

ISSN 3030-3907

material characteristics, interference type, and instructional focus. The criteria-based framework enabled a systematic matching process that reduced subjectivity in material selection and ensured pedagogical relevance.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study confirm and extend existing theoretical assumptions regarding the role of authentic materials in reducing lexical interference, while also addressing a notable methodological gap in applied linguistics. Previous research has consistently emphasized the value of authentic input; however, it has often treated authenticity as a general pedagogical principle rather than an operational construct. The criteria-based framework proposed in this study advances the field by demonstrating that the effectiveness of authentic materials is contingent upon systematic alignment between material characteristics and specific types of lexical interference.

From the perspective of the lexical approach, the results strongly support the view that vocabulary competence is fundamentally phraseological rather than atomistic. The prominence of lexical criteria—such as collocational density, idiomatic expressions, and synonymic variation—corroborates Nation's and Schmitt's argument that repeated exposure to naturally occurring lexical patterns facilitates deeper lexical processing. In contrast to decontextualized vocabulary lists, authentic materials enable learners to form stable lexical networks, thereby reducing the tendency to rely on first-language equivalence. The observed reduction of semantic and collocational interference through context-rich materials aligns with psycholinguistic models of lexical storage, which posit that meaning is encoded through associative links strengthened by contextual frequency.

The role of pragmatic criteria in mitigating pragmatic interference further reinforces the relevance of communicative language teaching principles. Materials that incorporate register variation and real discourse functions allow learners to observe how lexical choices are shaped by communicative intent, social distance, and situational constraints. This finding is consistent with pragmatic theory, which emphasizes that lexical meaning cannot be separated from use. Importantly, the results suggest that pragmatic competence develops not through explicit explanation alone but through exposure to authentic communicative events where lexical appropriateness is implicitly modeled.

The effectiveness of sociocultural criteria in reducing cultural interference highlights the limitations of pedagogically simplified texts that strip language of its cultural grounding. Drawing on sociocultural theory, the study demonstrates that lexical meaning is inseparable from cultural context, social roles, and shared knowledge. Authentic materials rich in cultural referents enable learners to access

ISSN 3030-3907

these dimensions, fostering interpretive competence beyond literal translation. This finding is particularly significant in philological education, where learners are expected to engage critically with language as a cultural phenomenon rather than a purely formal system.

Pedagogical and technical criteria, while less directly linked to interference mechanisms, play a crucial mediating role in instructional feasibility. Alignment with CEFR B2 descriptors ensures that authentic materials remain within learners' cognitive and linguistic capacity, preventing overload and disengagement. This addresses a common critique of authenticity in language teaching, namely that authentic materials may be linguistically inaccessible. The study demonstrates that accessibility is not an inherent property of the material itself but a function of informed selection and integration.

One of the most important contributions of this study lies in the explicit mapping of interference types to material categories. By linking semantic interference to narrative and dialogic contexts, collocational interference to corpus-based and journalistic texts, idiomatic interference to audiovisual discourse, and cultural interference to socially embedded texts, the study provides a functional model that moves beyond generalized recommendations. This mapping reduces subjectivity in material selection and offers a replicable procedure that can be adapted to different instructional contexts.

The integration of the criteria-based framework into the *Vocabulary in Context* module further demonstrates its practical applicability. Rather than treating authenticity as an external supplement, the study shows how authentic materials can be systematically embedded within an existing curriculum structure. This integration enhances the module's instructional coherence and strengthens the connection between lexical input and communicative competence.

Despite these contributions, the study has certain limitations. The analysis is qualitative in nature and does not include empirical measurement of learner outcomes. While the criteria are theoretically grounded and methodologically transparent, future research could complement this approach with experimental or longitudinal designs to quantify the impact of criteria-based material selection on lexical development. Additionally, the framework was developed within a specific educational and cultural context, which may influence its direct transferability to other settings.

Nevertheless, the findings offer important implications for both theory and practice. The study underscores the necessity of reconceptualizing authentic materials not merely as realistic input but as pedagogically curated resources whose value depends on systematic selection. In doing so, it contributes to the ongoing

ISSN 3030-3907

discourse on lexical competence development and provides a methodological foundation for subsequent research on exercise systems and instructional design.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to systematize criteria for selecting authentic materials aimed at reducing lexical interference among B2-level learners in philological education. The findings demonstrate that lexical interference—manifested in semantic, collocational, idiomatic, pragmatic, and cultural forms—cannot be effectively addressed through unsystematic exposure to authentic input. Instead, the pedagogical value of authenticity depends on principled, criteria-based selection aligned with learners' proficiency level, instructional objectives, and interference mechanisms.

The study confirms that lexical criteria play a central role in mitigating interference, particularly when materials exhibit semantic richness, collocational density, idiomatic usage, and synonymic variation. Such characteristics facilitate contextualized lexical processing and reduce learners' reliance on first-language equivalence. Pragmatic criteria were shown to be essential for addressing register-related and situational misuse of vocabulary, while sociocultural criteria enabled learners to interpret meaning within culturally embedded contexts, thereby reducing cultural interference. Pedagogical and technical criteria functioned as mediating factors, ensuring instructional accessibility and feasibility without compromising authenticity.

One of the principal contributions of this study lies in the explicit mapping of lexical interference types to corresponding categories of authentic materials. By demonstrating that different interference phenomena require different forms of authentic input, the study moves beyond generalized advocacy of authenticity and provides a functional model for material selection. This mapping offers a replicable framework that can be adapted across curricula and instructional contexts, reducing subjectivity in pedagogical decision-making.

The integration of the criteria-based framework into the *Vocabulary in Context* module further highlights its practical relevance. Embedding authentic materials within an existing curricular structure not only enhances lexical competence but also strengthens the link between vocabulary development and communicative performance. This approach aligns with CEFR B2 requirements and national educational standards, reinforcing the role of authentic materials as a core instructional component rather than a supplementary resource.

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to applied linguistics by operationalizing authenticity through clearly defined selection criteria. It bridges lexical theory, pragmatics, and sociocultural perspectives, demonstrating that

ISSN 3030-3907

lexical competence emerges from sustained engagement with contextually and culturally grounded language use. Methodologically, the study provides a foundation for subsequent research on instructional design, particularly the development of exercise systems based on authentic materials.

Future research may extend the present framework through empirical validation, including experimental or longitudinal studies measuring learner outcomes. Additionally, the proposed criteria can serve as a basis for designing task-based activities and assessment tools aimed at reinforcing context-driven lexical acquisition. In this regard, the findings of the present study constitute a theoretical and methodological precursor to the development of an exercise system for reducing lexical interference, which represents a logical next stage of investigation.

REFERENCES

1. Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. (1998). *Corpus linguistics: Investigating language structure and use*. Cambridge University Press.
2. Council of Europe. (2020). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume*. Council of Europe Publishing.
3. Ellis, N. C. (2002). Frequency effects in language processing: A review with implications for theories of implicit and explicit language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 24*(2), 143–188.
4. Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1989). *Language, context, and text: Aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
5. Laufer, B. (1997). The lexical plight in second language reading. *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition*, 20–34.
6. Lewis, M. (1993). *The lexical approach: The state of ELT and a way forward*. Language Teaching Publications.
7. Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge University Press.
8. Nation, I. S. P., & Webb, S. (2011). *Researching and analyzing vocabulary*. Heinle Cengage Learning.
9. Odlin, T. (1989). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning*. Cambridge University Press.
10. Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
11. Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

ISSN 3030-3907

12. Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching vocabulary: A vocabulary research manual*. Palgrave Macmillan.
13. Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to teach vocabulary*. Longman.
14. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
15. Widdowson, H. G. (1990). *Aspects of language teaching*. Oxford University Press.
16. Widdowson, H. G. (1998). Context, community, and authentic language. *TESOL Quarterly, 32*(4), 705–716.
17. Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. Edward Arnold.
18. O‘zbekiston Respublikasi Oliy ta’lim, fan va innovatsiyalar vazirligi. (2021). *Chet tillarni o‘qitish bo‘yicha Davlat ta’lim standarti*. Toshkent.

ISSN 3030-3907