

USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN AUTONOMOUS LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The use of authentic materials in autonomous learning of a foreign language has become increasingly popular due to its numerous benefits. Authentic materials refer to real-life language materials, i.e., materials that are designed for language use in real situations outside the classroom. This article argues that learners who are exposed to authentic language materials can develop their language skills more effectively and efficiently than traditional classroom learning. Furthermore, this paper will examine some of the challenges associated with using authentic materials and explore strategies that can be employed to overcome these challenges.

Key words: *authentic materials, autonomous learning, target language, language proficiency, cultural competence.*

АННОТАЦИЯ

Использование аутентичных материалов при автономном изучении иностранного языка становится все более популярным благодаря своим многочисленным преимуществам. Аутентичные материалы относятся к реальным языковым материалам, т.е. материалам, которые предназначены для использования языка в реальных ситуациях вне класса. В этой статье утверждается, что учащиеся, знакомящиеся с аутентичными языковыми материалами, могут развивать свои языковые навыки более эффективно, чем

традиционное обучение в классе. Кроме того, в этом документе будут рассмотрены некоторые проблемы, связанные с использованием аутентичных материалов, и рассмотрены стратегии, которые могут быть использованы для преодоления этих проблем.

Ключевые слова: аутентичные материалы, автономное обучение, изучаемый язык, владение языком, культурная компетентность.

ANNOTATSIYA

Chet tilini avtonom o'rganishda haqiqiy (realistik) materiallardan foydalanish ko'plab afzalliklari tufayli tobora ommalashib bormoqda. Haqiqiy realistik materiallar o'rganilayotgan tildagi real materiallari, ya'ni sinfdan tashqaridagi real vaziyatlarda tildan foydalanish uchun mo'ljallangan materiallar hisoblanadi. Ushbu maqolada haqiqiy til materiallaridan foydalangan til o'rganuvchilar o'zlarining til ko'nikmalarini an'anaviy sinf mashg'ulotlariga qaraganda samaraliroq rivojlantirishlari mumkinligi ta'kidlanadi. Bundan tashqari, ushbu maqolada haqiqiy materiallardan foydalanish bilan bog'liq ba'zi muammolarni ko'rib chiqiladi va ushbu muammolarni bartaraf etish uchun ishlatilishi mumkin bo'lgan strategiyalarni tahlil qilinadi.

Kalit so'zlar: haqiqiy materiallar, avtonom ta'lim, o'rganilayotgan til, tilni bilish, madaniy kompetentsiya.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in autonomous learning in foreign language education. Autonomous learners are individuals who take control over their own learning, without relying solely on teachers and textbooks. One way that autonomous learners can enhance their language learning experience is by using authentic materials. Authentic materials have become an essential component of autonomous learning in a foreign language. These materials have been described as language resources that are not specifically designed for language teaching purposes but can be used for developing language skills for effective language use in real-life situations. Authentic materials are materials that are created for and used by native speakers of the language being learned, some examples of these materials include newspapers, magazines, TV series, movies, videos, podcasts, and social media contents, among others. Studies have shown that incorporating authentic materials into

a language curriculum can enhance autonomous learning, enabling learners to develop their language skills beyond the classroom walls.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Benefits of using authentic materials

Improving Language Proficiency

One of the significant benefits of using authentic materials in autonomous learning is that it provides learners with exposure to natural and meaningful language contexts and structures. Authentic materials provide learners with exposure to the language as it is truly used in real life, which can help improve their understanding and use of the language. Language textbooks and other materials often present language in an artificial, simplified form that may differ significantly from the way it is actually used by native speakers. By using authentic materials, learners can improve their ability to understand and use the language in real-world situations.

According to Lee and VanPatten (2003), learners who are exposed to authentic materials are more likely to get a better grasp of how the language is used in real situations than those who learn in a classroom context where language is artificially created and formalized.

Enhancing Cultural Competence

Another advantage of using authentic materials in autonomous learning is that the materials often provide exposure to cultural aspects that are essential for language learning. Language and culture are intertwined, and using authentic materials can help learners gain a deeper understanding of the culture associated with the language they are learning. Exposure to authentic materials such as movies, TV shows, and news can provide learners with a window into the target culture, enabling them to better understand the customs, values, and beliefs of the people who speak the language they are learning.

Fostering Motivation and Engagement

Autonomous learners are often self-motivated and interested in the language they are learning, and authentic materials can provide them with a sense of engagement

and ownership over their learning. Using materials that are interesting and relevant to learners can increase their motivation to continue learning and help them develop a lifelong love for the language.

Evolving critical thinking skills

Using authentic materials also helps learners to develop their critical thinking skills. When learners engage with authentic materials such as news content, they have the opportunity to analyze and interpret the information provided. In turn, this helps them to develop their language proficiency, as well as their analytical skills.

Some challenges associated with using authentic materials in autonomous learning

While authentic materials offer numerous benefits, there are also some challenges associated with their use in autonomous learning of a foreign language. For instance, learners may find it hard to understand the language used in authentic materials. This may be due to the presence of colloquial expressions, slang, and idiomatic phrases, among others.

Additionally, there may be difficulties in identifying appropriate authentic materials that meet the learners' level and interests. Some materials may be too challenging for learners, while others may not be stimulating enough, resulting in disengagement.

Strategies for overcoming challenges associated with authentic materials' use

To overcome the challenges associated with the use of authentic materials in autonomous learning of a foreign language, there are certain strategies that learners and educators can employ. Firstly, learners can use a variety of materials that match their interests and level. A tailored selection of materials can help learners to stay engaged and motivated throughout the learning process.

Secondly, educators can provide scaffolded support for learners with materials that are challenging to comprehend. This can be in the form of pre-learning activities such as vocabulary exercises, which enhance understanding. As learners advance in their language proficiency, the level of support can be reduced gradually.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Numerous studies have been conducted on the use of authentic materials in foreign language learning. A study by Worrall and Lloyd (1998) found that learners who used authentic materials showed significant improvement in their listening comprehension compared to those who did not use authentic materials. Another study by Bland and Altamimi (2015) found that using authentic materials enhanced learners' cultural awareness and helped them develop an appreciation for the target culture. It is clear from these studies that using authentic materials results in language improvement, cultural awareness, and appreciation for the target culture. Therefore, teachers and learners should incorporate authentic materials into their language learning activities to optimize the learning experience and increase language proficiency.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, incorporating authentic materials in autonomous learning of a foreign language provides several benefits such as exposure to natural language, cultural immersion, enhancement of critical thinking ability, and development of analytical skills, among others. Conversely, the use of authentic materials presents some challenges such as comprehension difficulties; however, with effective strategies like tailored selection and scaffolded support, learners can overcome these challenges. Overall, authentic materials are an effective and essential tool in autonomous language learning.

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