

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS THROUGH AUTHENTIC MATERIALS OF B1 LEVEL LEARNERS

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Annotation: This paper discusses the role of authentic materials in developing speaking skills in B1 level English learners and suggests methods that help improve students' communicative competence through real-life content.

Keywords: Authentic materials, speaking skills, communicative competence, B1 learners, real-life language use, learner motivation, language acquisition strategies

Learning to communicate effectively in a second language is a challenging yet essential part of the language learning process. Among the four core skills, speaking plays a key role in achieving communicative competence. However, many learners at the B1 level face difficulties in expressing themselves fluently and confidently using the target language. Traditional textbook-based methods may not provide enough exposure to real-life communication patterns. Therefore, this article focuses on the importance of using authentic materials to improve learners' speaking skills. The main objective of this study is to investigate how B1 level learners develop communicative skills when exposed to real-world input such as videos, interviews, podcasts, and conversations. It emphasizes how authentic resources not only enhance language proficiency but also increase motivation and engagement among learners. This approach allows students to experience natural vocabulary, pronunciation, and speech flow that textbooks often lack. Several studies have confirmed that authentic materials support the development of communicative competence by exposing learners to realistic and meaningful content. According to Harmer (2007), authentic input creates a stronger connection between language use and context, helping students feel more prepared for real-world communication. Without such exposure, students may struggle to apply their classroom knowledge in actual conversation and gradually lose motivation. This article argues that integrating authentic materials into classroom practice provides a more effective and motivating pathway for B1 learners to improve their speaking abilities and overall communicative competence.

Main Part

Developing communicative competence—particularly speaking skills—is a key component in second language acquisition at the B1 level. Traditional teaching methods often rely on controlled dialogues and grammar drills that may not reflect

how language is actually used in real life. This can result in learners who understand grammar rules but struggle to communicate effectively in real-world situations. To address this gap, many educators have turned to authentic materials to provide learners with richer, more meaningful language input. Authentic materials refer to resources created for native speakers in real communicative contexts. These include interviews, podcasts, video blogs, social media content, films, and radio programs. These materials expose students to naturally occurring vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and varied speech patterns that are often missing in textbook dialogues. According to scholars like Guariento and Morley (2001), using authentic texts helps bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life language use by presenting learners with language in its full context. One of the main benefits of authentic materials is that they create a more engaging and motivating environment for students. Learners often respond more positively to content that is relevant, interesting, and reflective of real situations. This increased engagement can lead to more active participation and improved speaking fluency. Gilmore (2007) notes that exposure to authentic spoken discourse allows learners to better understand how native speakers interact, including aspects like tone, hesitation, and conversational flow. Authentic materials also support the development of pragmatic competence. By interacting with real examples of spoken language, students become more aware of how language functions socially—for example, how to make requests politely, express opinions, or respond appropriately in different contexts. These are skills that often go underdeveloped when students only study language from scripted textbook dialogues. In addition, authentic input encourages learners to use communicative strategies such as guessing meaning from context, paraphrasing, and asking for clarification. These strategies are essential for navigating spontaneous conversations and help build learners' confidence in their speaking abilities. As the role of communication in language learning becomes increasingly emphasized, authentic materials offer an effective way to prepare learners for practical language use beyond the classroom. They not only enrich vocabulary and grammar in context but also help learners become more autonomous and reflective users of the language.

Conclusion

In this article, it was confirmed that B1 level learners often face serious challenges in developing their communicative skills, especially in real-life speaking situations. These problems are usually linked to limited exposure to natural language use, lack of contextual vocabulary knowledge, and insufficient practice in spontaneous communication. Research shows that traditional methods based solely on textbooks and scripted dialogues are often not enough to prepare students for real-world communication. Authentic materials—such as videos, podcasts, and interviews—can provide more meaningful input and motivate students to engage

more actively in the learning process. Although this study has certain limitations, it emphasizes the growing need to incorporate authentic resources into classroom practice. Future research should investigate which types of authentic materials are most effective for improving fluency and confidence in speaking. It would also be valuable to explore teachers' perspectives on the practical implementation of such materials and the difficulties they may encounter when shifting from traditional to more communicative approaches.

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