

## AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN FRENCH LANGUAGE LEARNING AS A PRACTICE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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***Abstract.** The theoretical aspects of the use of authentic materials in the study of foreign languages are mainly focused on the problem of forming the language and speech competence of the methodological provision of separate components of intercultural students' education. However, the context of intercultural communication actualises the question of the functional filling of authentic educational materials for the implementation of linguocultural and socio-cultural aspects in the study of a foreign language.*

*The purpose of the article is to study the effectiveness of authentic educational materials in the formation of foreign communicative competence, which has a complex structure and acts as interaction and interpenetration of linguistic, sociocultural and communicative competences, the level of formation of which allows a student or a future specialist to effectively implement a foreign language, and, therefore, interlingual, intercultural and interpersonal communication.*

*The study uses a wide range of theoretical methods, including discursive analysis, intercultural studies, pragmatic and sociolinguistics approaches, systematisation of scientific research that studies this issue, as well as a survey method, including observation, conversion analysis and a statistical method during the calculation of results. The effectiveness of authentic materials such as authentic textbooks, written and oral texts from the media, video and audio materials, and the advantages of the IT network in the teaching of the French language have been analysed. It has been found that authentic materials in the teaching of French language promote the implementation of intercultural communication.*

***Keywords:** French language, authentic materials, foreign language communicative competence, intercultural communication.*

### **Introduction**

The modern concept of teaching a foreign language requires a communicative orientation, first of all, the ability to communicate with native speakers. The study of a foreign language includes applied components of communicative competence: to read what is written; to understand aurally what is spoken at the usual pace; to speak and to write so that the native speakers can understand it. It is difficult enough to master the communicative competence in French without being in the French speaking country.

Therefore, one of the most important tasks of the teacher is the creation of real and imaginary situations of communication at practical classes in the French language using various authentic materials that involve students to the cultural values of the native speakers. In the learning process, which is based on the use of authentic materials, the issue of intercultural communication arises, since “every lesson of a foreign language is a crossroads of cultures, it is a practice of intercultural communication, because every foreign word reflects the foreign world and foreign culture: each word stands for the notion of the world conditioned by national consciousness” (Ter-Minasova, 2000: 48).

### **Literature Review**

Theoretical aspects of the use of authentic materials in the study of foreign languages are mainly concentrated around the problem of forming language and speech competences (Bacon, 1990; Berardo, 2006; Bihun, 2017), linguocultural and sociolinguistic competences (Bigych, 2019; Mishenina, 2017; Papizhuk, 2014), methodological provision of separate components of students’ intercultural education (Roberts, 2008; Rusnak, 2017). However, the context of intercultural communication actualises the question of the functional filling of authentic educational materials for the implementation of linguocultural and sociocultural aspects in the study of a foreign language.

### **Research method**

The purpose of the article is to study the effectiveness of authentic educational materials in the formation of foreign communicative competence, which has a complex structure and acts as interaction and interpenetration of linguistic, socio-cultural and communicative competences, the level of formation of which allows a student or a future specialist to effectively implement a foreign language, and therefore interlingual, intercultural and interpersonal communication. Theoretical basis of research is the Theory of Intercultural Communication (Smith, 1999; Ter-Minasova, 2000; Samovar, 2001; Zarate, 1986), Sociocultural Language Learning Theory (Byram, 1997; Woodbine, 2018) and Mass Media and Culture Communication Theories (Pocheptsov, 2001; Moles, 1973; Trudgill, 1992). We used a wide variety of theoretical methods including discourse analysis, the approaches in the domain of pragmatics, cross-cultural studies, sociolinguistics.

### **Results**

To study the advantages of using authentic educational materials for teaching French, a survey method was used for the 1st-4th year students of the Foreign Languages Department of the Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian national University with a specialization in French language and literature (78 people). The survey consisted of three blocks of questions related to:

- (a) the feasibility of using authentic materials in the learning process;
- (b) qualitative content of authentic materials;
- (c) the influence of authentic materials on the communicative and sociocultural competence of students.

The analysis of the survey showed that 89% of students expressed a positive attitude towards the use of authentic materials in the process of studying French language. Regarding qualitative content of teaching materials, 57% of students expressed support for studying in authentic French textbooks; 10% of respondents are interested in authentic texts (6% prefer fiction and 4% - French journalism, including advertising), 7% prefer French films and video products, 5% believe that IT sources encourage students to engage in real audience which consists of those who study the same foreign language or are the native speaker of this language.

### **Discussion**

Intercultural Communication as a component of teaching intercultural communication is considered by researchers as a general didactic principle of education and upbringing. The researchers are focused on the concepts of the formation and development of intercultural communicative competence as the ultimate practical goal of teaching a foreign language within a social, cultural and humanistic-oriented education. Despite the current achievements in solving the problem of intercultural education, the issue of effective education of intercultural communication remains unsolved. As a foreign language is considered as a means of intercultural and multicultural communication, modern pedagogical science raises the question of the need for a productive reevaluation of existing teaching strategies and methods of organising the learning process.

Thus, the main approach to teaching foreign language communication in universities is a communicative, or rather, communicative-activity approach. Its essence lies in the creation of models of the communication process, close to the real. Communication here serves the purpose, way and means of teaching a foreign language. The approach has a profound psycholinguistic precondition: it is based on the interrelation of speech and speech activity, the psychology of the formulation and understanding of statements, and is concentrated in language as a system and in speech as an activity. The purpose of communicative language learning is the orientation of the educational process to the development of practical skills of language proficiency as a means of communication in various life situations, depending on the purpose of communication, that is, on the formation of a communicative competence of a certain level. The development of foreign language communication competence takes place in the totality of all its components, namely: the speech component (development of communicative skills in the four main types of speech activity – speaking, listening, reading and writing); linguistic component (mastering of new linguistic means – phonetic, spelling, lexical, grammatical – in accordance with the themes, spheres and situations of communication); the sociocultural component (students' acquaintance with the culture, traditions and realities of the country whose language is studied, within the themes, areas and situations of communication that correspond to the psychological characteristics of students, the formation of the ability to represent their country under the conditions of foreign language intercultural communication); compensatory component (development of students ability to find out the solution under the conditions of linguistic means lack in the process of transmitting or obtaining information); educational-cognitive component (further development of general and special knowledge, skills and abilities, use of accessible ways of independent study of a foreign language).

The close connection and interdependence of teaching foreign languages and intercultural communication are evident. Languages must be studied in an inextricable unity with the world and culture of the peoples who speak these languages. Learning to communicate (aurally and in writing), learning how to create, and not only to understand a foreign language is a difficult task. Moreover, it is complicated by the fact that communication is not just a verbal process. Its effectiveness depends on many factors: the conditions and culture of communication, the rules of etiquette, knowledge of non-verbal forms of expression (facial expressions, gestures), and much more.

The maximum development of communicative abilities is the main perspective, but it is also a very difficult task which faces the teachers of foreign languages. To solve it, it is necessary to learn new teaching methods aimed at the development of all four types of language proficiency, and fundamentally new teaching materials, through which students can learn the ability to communicate. In this case, of course, it would be wrong to rush from one extreme to another and abandon all the old methods: we must carefully select all the best and useful, which has been tested by the practice of teaching (Ter-Minasova, 2000: 68-69).

Authentic materials teachers could actually use in their lessons can be divided into four main categories, namely:

- paper-based materials;
- audio-video materials;
- the Internet;
- others.

Authentic materials can provide resources for teachers of modern French language and offer them the opportunity to expose learners to materials produced for real life and for out-of-classroom context. By authentic material we understand materials with 'real' language, produced by real speakers for a real audience. The focus is on the message, and means other than language such as format, design, style and context are often used to help communicate it. If teachers use authentic texts sensibly, they can provide learners with secure bridges into the real world of authentic, native-like use of the language in question. One way of reaching communicative goals is to base classroom activities on authentic materials as often as possible. Authenticity means that the important factor is not the text itself, but the learner and whether she/he has the necessary knowledge to interpret it correctly, that is be capable of the appropriate response.

The use of authentic materials in foreign language classes has certain arguments:

- the use of artificial, simplified texts in the future may cause difficulties in understanding texts that reflect the realities of life;
- prepared (processed in a certain way) educational works lose the characteristic features of the text as a special feature of communication, deprived of the author's individuality, national identity and its peculiarities;
- authentic texts are different in their stylistic and thematic planes, the work on such texts provokes students' considerable interest;
- illustrate the language functioning in the form adopted by native speakers as well as in the natural social context;
- the specified type of the text material is the most optimal means of teaching the culture of the country, the language of which is studied;
- authentic texts illustrate the language functioning in the form adopted by native speakers, and in the natural social context;
- authentic materials motivate students as they seem more interesting and they are a great stimulus to the educational activity rather than 'artificial' materials.

It is necessary to start teaching students as soon as possible to understand a regular, everyday foreign language. It is known that the more native speakers (men, women, children) will be heard by the student, the easier he or she will adapt to the individual manner of speech. For these purposes students of our University are actively using authentic materials from textbooks "*Version originale A1, A2*" by Monique Denyer, Augustin Garmendia, Corine Royer, Marie-Louise Lions-Olivieri; "*Version originale B1*" by Monique Denyer, Christian Ollivier, Émilie Perrichon; "*Version originale B2*" by Fabrice Barthélémy, Christine Kleszewski, Émilie Perrichon, Sylvie Wuattier. Additionally, authentic textbooks "*Génération A1, A2, B1, B2*" edited by Marie-Noelle Cocton of Didier FLE publishing house; "*Vocabulaire Progressif du Français*" are used for different levels of authorship of Claire Miguel and Anne Goliot-Lété publishing house CLE International. The use of additional audio and video materials to these textbooks promotes the development of speech hearing, which includes not only the recognition of the whole in the context, but also the recognition of lexical and grammatical forms. Although students have some difficulties at the first stage of working with such texts (dialogues), the use of lexical supports (printed scripts), the students learn to understand the natural language of the native speakers, which makes the learning process effective.

The source of current information is also the media, whose influence on all citizens is indisputable. There are many examples and practices of using the media for educational purposes. They include special editions of newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, video and other materials for practical classes. Through the use of media materials, students gain access to a wide range of information resources, their motivation for learning increases,

stimulation of cognitive activity develops as well as their creative abilities, individualisation and differentiation in mastering foreign languages are taken place, particular the French language.

One of the effective authentic sources is considered to be French periodicals. They produce and distribute such texts that can stimulate students' activity, increase their motivation to learn, immersing them into the realities of life and giving them the opportunity to join the solution of urgent problems of French society and young people. The materials of the printed publications serve as inexhaustible authentic sources. From the experience of teaching a foreign language, it is known that they are one of the most important means of learning the culture of the French people.

Printed media publications have a didactic potential for teaching a foreign language and culture in the context of anthropological and sociological approaches. There you can find answers to the following questions: which French cities are the best to live in? ([https://www.lexpress.fr/emploi/le-palmares-2018-des-villes-ou-il-fait-bon-vivre-ettravailler\\_1984924.html](https://www.lexpress.fr/emploi/le-palmares-2018-des-villes-ou-il-fait-bon-vivre-ettravailler_1984924.html)); do you have to pay a tip in France and how much? (<http://www.magazineavantages.fr/pourboires-je-donne-combien,2300114,23065.asp>); which tourists are considered the worst in the world (according to a survey of hotel and restaurant employees)? (<http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2009/07/08/01011-20090708FILWWW00371-les-francais-pires-touristes-au-monde.php>); what are French food preferences? ([http://www.francetvinfo.fr/france/sante-leshabitudes-alimentaires-des-francais-ont-elles-change\\_1082365.html](http://www.francetvinfo.fr/france/sante-leshabitudes-alimentaires-des-francais-ont-elles-change_1082365.html)); what is the teacher's salary in France? (<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/education/20150828.OBS4902/combien-sont-vraimentpayes-les-profs.html>); what do the French think about the Ukraine? (<https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/ailleurs/ailleurs-07-juillet-2016>) etc. (Bigych, 2019: 169).

French language authentic materials of periodicals have many advantages, notably, they create a foreign language environment on classes; they provide rich lexical material, not limited to literary language (neologisms, borrowing, jargons, etc.); they encourage students to do searching work by themselves, they promote the development of self-dependent work skills and, the most important is that they provide the development of professional skills. More various French editions can be found at the link: <http://www.revue2presse.fr/home.php?cat=1>, where the most famous French daily newspapers like "Le Figaro", "Le Monde", "Libération", "Le Parisien", "La Tribune", "La Croix", "L'Equipe" are published ([https://french.hku.hk/dcmScreen/lang3033/lang3033\\_portraits\\_de\\_presse.htm](https://french.hku.hk/dcmScreen/lang3033/lang3033_portraits_de_presse.htm)) and magazines "ELLE", "Vogue", "Marie-Claire" (<http://www.revue2presse.fr/presse/feminin-masculin>).

Authentic printed publications have many drawings or photographs. Furthermore the characters on the pictures, their clothes, color scheme, text processing, all so-called extralinguistic factors are bearers of information and act as means of emotional coloring of periodical press materials. The processing of the illustrated material is of a great importance in the transmission of cultural information to students. Almost all French teaching materials, saturated with extralinguistic elements that not only have artistic value and allow students to immerse themselves in the sociocultural environment without difficulty, but also increase the emotional influence of educational materials. The use of photos, pictures and paintings increases the motivation for learning and, as a rule, causes the students' sincere interest.

Feature films are a rich source of linguistic and sociocultural information. It is known that films are a source of different knowledge as components of the content of intercultural communication: about lifestyle, facial expressions, gestures, behavior, religion and values of the film's characters, social problems in society and more. The only disadvantage of feature films is their long duration, so it is not recommended to use them in full for viewing in the classroom. Students can watch the film in extracurricular time, and

in the audience to think on its individual fragments and discuss problematic issues. Unlike feature films, short films and TV series (the duration of the series is not more than 15 minutes) easily fit into the classroom. Plots are selected in a way that can be retold by students in the end. Students may be asked to answer questions or record a series of transcripts as homework.

In French language practical classes the French educational video course “*Extr@Français*” (<https://ru.pinterest.com/rafaelmedeiros/extr-language-learning-sitcom>) is actively being used. The plot of 13 episodes of the film includes the stories which happen to young people, one of whom is a foreigner who does not understand French well. The presence of regular characters combines the story lines and contributes to concentration of the students’ attention. Drilling exercises at the end of each part are designated for assimilating linguistic examples, phonetic, lexical and grammar materials together with intercultural information. Each episode is relatively independent in terms of its content. It gives the teacher an opportunity to choose how to explain material, an opportunity for gradually adding a fragment to the teaching process and for the use of the separate fragment depending on a communicative situation.

TV series “*Un gars, une fille*” (“*A boy and a girl*” <https://www.france.tv/france-4/un-gars-une-fille/>) deserves special attention, which represents various situations of everyday life: in a restaurant, at breakfast, on vacation, in a travel agency, in the gym, New Year, Christmas, birthday, etc. One series lasts 5–6 minutes, but allows you to follow the French lifestyle in a humorous way.

In the methodological literature there is a high degree of didactic adaptability of advertising material, which is determined by its characteristics such as accessibility, which is achieved by duplicating the same information by different means (text, images), clarity and simplicity of the plot, as well as linguistic originality, conciseness of texts. and connotative connections (Karamysheva, 2001: 98–99). In the context of an intercultural approach to foreign language teaching, the processing of advertising media texts includes two components:

- (1) formation of foreign language communicative competence;
- (2) formation of intercultural competence.

Advertising texts can be used in different ways in classes: as illustrated material for a better understanding of the studied information, as a basis for composing tasks, exercises, as material for communicative language practice, etc. The use of advertising messages is an effective tool in learning the syntax of the French language. The syntactic structure of texts should correspond to the main communicative purpose. Because ad text syntax is fast-paced, it usually consists of simple sentences that are easy to understand and remember. The great advantage of using authentic advertising is that it is possible to differentiate tasks depending on the purpose of the lesson and the desired level (A1-C2). Addressed to the mass consumer, it is focused on living spoken language and reflects the most relevant language processes. Thus, students' acquaintance with advertising texts helps them to study the current state of the language and be aware of the latest changes in the language.

A feature of the use of advertising as an authentic material is the formation of intercultural competence based on the development of other types of speech activity. In particular, D. Rusnak offers three forms of work with media advertising:

- (1) receptive, on which foreign language audio-visual skills and abilities are formed;
- (2) receptive-reproductive, which involves the development of speech skills and abilities and the acquisition of socio-cultural knowledge;
- (3) productive, in which we included exercises in comparing different types of stereotypes of French and Ukrainian cultures and tasks in creating media advertising using national stereotypes (Rusnak, 2017: 29).

During classes the use of articles or advertising texts of periodicals in France allows students to develop their creative potential, to facilitate understanding of modern language and to focus students' attention on the peculiarities of the use of linguistic units, which

indirectly contribute to the expansion of international contacts. The production of printed publications provides an opportunity to study the 'living' French language used by modern French youth. Gaining new linguistic units allows students to communicate without difficulties with French peers and get acquainted with the language typical for representatives of different strata of French citizens. In addition, the successful use of printed materials greatly increases the motivation to learn a foreign language.

For the effective implementation of mass media in the educational process the use of a fundamentally new educational Internet environment is very important and it provides extensive opportunities for learning activities, in particular for the studying of foreign languages, which is a powerful tool for individual, group and collective communication and learning. A positive step in pedagogical practice is the integration of elements of IT sources into educational materials, as well as use of IT technologies as a source of knowledge. Over the past decades, the Internet has become more widespread in the field of studying foreign languages in Ukraine as a means of finding information and access to knowledge (databases), a new form of communication in foreign languages, an instrument for organising distance learning. O. Bihun makes a few arguments to confirm this:

- the Internet is a rich and diverse source of authentic information for those learning foreign languages, and its use is considered as an incentive to master them. Such material forces students to apply their knowledge of the world, speech and the system of languages;
- the authentic material from the Internet provides information about the culture of the people language of whom being studied and which can often not be found in regular textbooks. Modern pedagogical theories on the importance of integrating a culture of language that is mastered during classes of a foreign language, since understanding the language culture being studied can deepen the understanding of the language itself, and, consequently, increase the motivation of students to study it;
- the Internet resources encourage students to engage in authentic projects and write to real audiences consisting of those who study the same foreign language or are the native speakers, which differ from performing a written task for a teacher. A lot of students studying foreign languages like to work on the Internet. Most of them grew up in the 'computer age' and do not feel any inconveniences and have a very high motivation to use the Internet in the process of learning foreign languages;
- the Internet has enormous amounts of visual material, which serves as an auxiliary means for a conscious and successful studying. Many students are stimulated by the attractive visual presentation, and the Internet is a valuable learning tool that presents information in the form of texts, sounds and visual images. The research shows that students are ready to spend more time while reading and listening long audio streams from the Internet resources than from other sources (Bihun, 2017: 85).

Authentic materials are plentiful on the internet and teachers can use the internet to include pieces of true and meaningful communication in the lesson. In this way, the traditional teaching of grammar, vocabulary, writing, etc. will become enriched with strategies for developing the four language skills (speaking, listening, writing and reading) and the fifth – culture skills and intercultural competition. The Internet is not only a vast pool of information but also is a place to communicate with remote people.

Authentic materials or didactically designed so-called quasi-authentic materials that can be presented as cook books, recipes and menus are a good idea when teaching, for example, certain forms of the verb, the direct object or vocabulary related with food. Maps could be an example of material for raising the learners' awareness about the country in question, introducing names of places or vocabulary related to travelling. The other things that could be linked to teaching: entrance tickets, labels, pamphlets, medical prospects, postcards, calendars, etc. As already mentioned, finding authentic material for teaching vocabulary not only does it not represent a problem, especially now, when we can use the

Internet, but it also increases the chances of finding material that meets the students' interests and preoccupations, and thus of being relevant.

### **Conclusions**

Intercultural motivation is an adequate social interaction of two or more participants of the communicative act - representatives of various linguistic ethnocultures, who are aware of their 'otherness', 'foreignness'. In the process of learning French, the student broadens his individual knowledge of the world by getting to know the language of the French people, their spiritual heritage, and national-specific ways of achieving intercultural understanding. At the same time in the student's mind, a synthesis of knowledge about the specifics of the native culture, the language of which is being studied, and about the common knowledge about cultures and communication is carried out. Due to the critical comprehension of another's way of life the process of enriching the student's knowledge of the world is realised.

To sum up, the most effective form of authentic materials are authentic textbooks that actively use models of authentic materials or didactically designed so-called quasi-authentic materials that can be presented as advertising leaflets, transport and theater tickets, bills, CVs, letters of various types, etc. Another effective form of authentic materials is written and aural mass media. The most important point is the use of audiovisual equipment by the teacher at the present stage, when the technical support of language learning is very rich, diverse and easily accessible. Video and audio materials downloaded from the international websites enable to enrich almost every adapted topic by audio or video materials.

Based on authentic materials, we can track changes in 'savoir-vivre' cultural paradigm. The use of authentic materials in the teaching of French allows to broaden the traditional subject, to relate a certain layer of vocabulary and phrases within the real situation, where this information can be used. These things contribute to the implementation of linguocultural and sociocultural aspects in the study of a foreign language.

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