

DEVELOPING AN EXERCISE SYSTEM BASED ON AUTHENTIC MATERIALS TO REDUCE LEXICAL INTERFERENCE

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Abstract: *This paper presents findings from a doctoral research project investigating how authentic materials can be systematically integrated into an exercise-based framework to reduce lexical interference among Uzbek EFL learners. Lexical interference, manifested through literal translation, calquing, and inappropriate lexical transfer, remains one of the most persistent communicative barriers in language learning. Based on theoretical insights in communicative competence development, task-based learning, and vocabulary acquisition, the research proposes a staged exercise system grounded in authentic input sources. Initial findings demonstrate improved lexical awareness, strengthened collocational competence, and reduced reliance on native-language transfer. The model contributes a replicable pedagogical framework for language teachers and curriculum designers.*

Keywords: *Lexical interference; authentic materials; task-based learning; Uzbek EFL context; communicative competence; lexical acquisition.*

Introduction

Lexical interference represents a significant challenge in foreign language acquisition, particularly in contexts where English instruction relies heavily on translation-based strategies. Learners tend to translate directly from

their native language, resulting in unnatural phrasing and communicative breakdown. Conventional textbook input often lacks contextual richness, limiting learners' exposure to native-like discourse patterns. Authentic materials—news reports, interviews, podcasts, documentaries, and conversational texts—offer naturally occurring lexical environments that help internalise correct usage.

This research builds on the dissertation topic entitled “Using Authentic Materials to Reduce Lexical Interference”, specifically focusing on Section 2.3 of the thesis, which proposes a practical exercise system. The aim is to demonstrate how authentic materials can be pedagogically transformed into exercises fostering lexical precision, natural expression, and meaningful communicative output.

Methodology

A mixed-method instructional design was employed. Authentic materials were selected according to thematic relevance, lexical density, and learner accessibility. The exercise system was structured in three progressive phases:

1. Recognition Stage

Learners analysed authentic texts, identified lexical patterns, and detected interference-based errors (literal translation, false friends, inappropriate collocations).

2. Transformation Stage

Incorrect expressions were reformulated through guided tasks, contrastive analysis with authentic usage, and scaffolded meaning-making activities.

3. Production Stage

Learners produced extended spoken and written output based on authentic prompts, integrating newly acquired lexical items.

Data sources included classroom observation, written task samples, interview feedback, and error frequency analysis. The design aligns with task-based methodology and lexically-oriented language teaching principles.

Results

Intervention results revealed notable minimisation of lexical interference:

- reduced frequency of literal translation errors;
- more appropriate use of collocations and discourse markers;
- increased awareness of lexical alternatives and semantic precision;
- improved confidence in independent production.

Quantitative analysis showed declining error counts in post-test writing and speaking output. Qualitative improvements were reflected in richer vocabulary choice, pragmatic adequacy, and more fluent integration of target expressions.

Discussion

The findings validate theories supporting high-quality input and learner noticing mechanisms. Authentic materials serve as cognitively rich input that triggers awareness and restructuring of lexical knowledge. The staged exercise sequence enables controlled practice leading to autonomous internalisation.

Nevertheless, teacher guidance was critical. Without scaffolding, learners struggled to interpret authentic content. Material selection also proved time-consuming and required expertise in alignment with proficiency levels. However, peer-learning strategies, reflection tasks, and feedback loops enhanced long-term retention and accuracy.

Conclusion

The research confirms that an exercise system based on authentic materials can effectively mitigate lexical interference among Uzbek EFL

learners. The model provides a theoretically grounded and practically applicable framework suitable for curriculum development, teacher training modules, and supplementary language instruction. Ongoing research aims to refine assessment indicators and explore long-term retention effects.

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