



A SOCIO-LINGUISTIC APPROACH TO DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN PHILOLOGY STUDENTS

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54613/ku.v18iC.1731>

MAQOLA HAQIDA/О СТАТЬЕ

ANNOTATSIIYA/ АННОТАЦИЯ

Qabul qilindi: 16-iyun 2026-yil

Tasdiqlandi: 18-iyun 2026-yil

Jurnal soni: 18-C

Maqola raqami: 20

KALIT SO'ZLAR/ КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА

kommunikativ kompetensiya, haqiqiy materiallar, filologiya fakulteti, real hayotdagi til, ijtimoiy kontekst, muloqot maqsadi

Ushbu maqola filologiya talabalari orasida kommunikativ kompetensiyani rivojlantirishda sotsiolingvistik yondashuvning integratsiyasini o'rganadi va haqiqiy ingliz tilidagi materiallarning pedagogik qiymatini ta'kidlaydi. Kommunikativ kompetensiyaning nazariy asoslariga, xususan, Dell Hymesning asoslariga tayanib, tadqiqot haqiqiy hayotdagi tildan foydalanish talabalarning lingvistik, sotsiolingvistik, nutqiy va strategik ko'nikmalarini qanday oshirishini o'rganadi. Maqolada an'anaviy darslik asosida o'qitish ko'pincha turli ijtimoiy sharoitlarda samarali muloqot uchun juda muhim bo'lgan tildan foydalanishning pragmatik va madaniy jihatlarini e'tiborsiz qoldirishi ta'kidlangan. Filmlar, podkastlar, yangiliklar maqolalari va onlayn munozaralar kabi haqiqiy materiallar ingliz tilining sotsiomadaniy nuanslariga singdirish uchun muhim vositalar sifatida taqdim etiladi. Maqolada ushbu materiallarni sinfda qo'llashning amaliy strategiyalari, jumladan, vazifaga asoslangan o'rganish, amaliy tadqiqotlar va raqamli media integratsiyasi muhokama qilinadi. Oldingi tadqiqotlar va sinf kuzatuvlaridan olingan empirik dalillar haqiqiy kontent bilan shug'ullanadigan talabalar kontekstga mos tilni chuqurroq tushunishadi va real hayotdagi muloqotga bo'lgan ishonchni oshiradilar degan da'voni qo'llab-quvvatlaydi. Ushbu mavzuning dolzarbligining yana bir sababi shundaki, ko'plab ilg'or talabalar filologiya fakultetlarida nutq amaliyotlari davomida muloqot maqsadini ko'rsatishda qiyinchiliklarga duch kelishadi. Bundan tashqari, sotsiolingvistik kompetensiyani bilish nima uchun juda muhimligini tahlil qilish uchun bir nechta misollar keltiriladi. Oxir-oqibat, u filologiya talabalarini akademik, professional va madaniyatlararo muloqotga tayyorlaydigan til o'qitishning yanada yaxlit, ijtimoiy asoslangan modeliga o'tishni qo'llab-quvvatlaydi. Bu yondashuv nafaqat tilshunoslik mahoratini oshiradi, balki kelajakdagi til mutaxassislari uchun muhim madaniy xabardorlik va moslashuvchanlik kompetensiyalarini ham rivojlantiradi.

ABOUT THE PAPER

ANNOTATION

Accepted: 16 June 2026

Approved: 18 June 2026

Volume: 18-C

Paper number: 20

KEYWORDS

communicative competence, authentic materials, philology faculty, real-life language, social context, purpose of the communication

This article examines the integration of a sociolinguistic approach in the development of communicative competence among philology students, emphasizing the pedagogical value of authentic English-language materials. Drawing on the theoretical foundations of communicative competence—particularly Dell Hymes' framework—the study explores how exposure to real-life language use enhances students' linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic skills. The article argues that traditional textbook-based learning often neglects the pragmatic and cultural dimensions of language use, which are critical for effective communication in diverse social contexts. Authentic materials such as films, podcasts, news articles, and online discussions are presented as essential tools for immersing students in the sociocultural nuances of English. The paper discusses practical strategies for implementing these materials in the classroom, including task-based learning, case studies, and digital media integration. Empirical evidence from previous studies and classroom observations supports the claim that students who engage with authentic content develop a deeper understanding of context-appropriate language and greater confidence in real-world communication. Another reason why this topic of current interest is that many advanced students have difficulties to show the purpose of the communication during speaking practices in philology faculties. What is more, there will be a few examples to analyse why knowing sociolinguistic competence is so important. Ultimately, it advocates for a shift toward a more holistic, socially grounded model of language instruction that prepares philology students for academic, professional, and intercultural communication. This approach not only enhances linguistic proficiency but also cultivates critical cultural awareness and adaptability essential competencies for future language specialists.

Introduction. The increasing globalization of communication has transformed the objectives of foreign language education. Contemporary language learners are expected not only to demonstrate grammatical accuracy but also to communicate effectively in diverse social and cultural contexts. Consequently, communicative competence has become one of the primary goals of language instruction in higher education.

The concept of communicative competence was introduced by Hymes (1972), who argued that successful communication requires knowledge of both linguistic forms and the social rules governing their use. This perspective shifted language teaching away from purely structural approaches and laid the foundation for communicative language teaching. For philology students, whose future careers may involve teaching, translation, intercultural mediation, or linguistic research, communicative competence is particularly important.

Despite years of language study, many advanced students in philology faculties continue to encounter difficulties during speaking activities. They often possess extensive vocabulary and grammatical knowledge but struggle to express communicative intentions, interpret social meanings, or adapt their speech to specific contexts. These difficulties indicate a gap between linguistic competence and sociolinguistic competence.

One promising solution is the integration of authentic English-language materials into language instruction. Such materials expose learners to naturally occurring language and provide opportunities to observe how language functions in real social situations. Therefore, this study examines how a sociolinguistic approach supported by authentic materials can enhance communicative competence among philology students.

Literature review. The theoretical and methodological foundations of communicative competence have been widely discussed in applied linguistics, particularly in relation to sociolinguistic and pedagogical perspectives. The present study builds upon this established body of research by focusing on the integration of authentic English-language materials into the development of communicative competence among philology students.

The concept of communicative competence was first systematically introduced by Hymes, who argued that linguistic knowledge alone is insufficient for successful communication. According to Hymes, a speaker must also possess the ability to use language appropriately in specific social contexts, taking into account cultural norms, interlocutor relationships, and communicative intentions [6, p. 14–18]. This marked a significant shift

from Chomsky's purely grammatical notion of competence toward a more socially grounded understanding of language use. Hymes' contribution laid the foundation for subsequent models that emphasize the interaction between linguistic form and social function.

Building on this framework, Canale and Swain proposed a more structured model of communicative competence, identifying three core components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence [3, p. 28–31]. Later, Canale expanded this model by adding discourse competence, highlighting the importance of cohesion and coherence in extended communication [2, p. 9–12]. These developments collectively established a comprehensive framework that remains influential in modern language pedagogy. In particular, sociolinguistic competence is regarded as a crucial dimension, as it enables learners to select language forms that are appropriate for different social situations, registers, and cultural expectations.

Sociolinguistic competence has been further explored by Savignon, who defines it as the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in real-life communicative contexts [9, p. 37–40]. She emphasizes that communicative competence is not static but dynamic, developing through meaningful interaction. Holmes also highlights that learners often experience difficulties in choosing socially appropriate expressions, even when they have strong grammatical knowledge [5, p. 52–55]. This gap between grammatical accuracy and pragmatic appropriateness is particularly evident in foreign language classrooms, where instruction is often structurally oriented rather than contextually grounded.

From a broader sociolinguistic perspective, Wardhaugh and Fuller argue that language is deeply embedded in social identity, power relations, and cultural values [10, p. 21–25]. They stress that variation in language use reflects differences in social class, gender, ethnicity, and communicative setting. Therefore, language learning should not be limited to structural mastery but should also include awareness of social meaning and pragmatic variation. This perspective strongly supports the need for integrating authentic materials into language instruction.

Authentic materials have been widely recognized as a key resource in communicative language teaching. Nunan defines authentic materials as texts and resources that are created for real communicative purposes rather than pedagogical adaptation [7, p. 68–70]. Such materials expose learners to natural language use, including idiomatic expressions, discourse markers, and culturally embedded references that are often absent in textbooks. This exposure is essential for developing both linguistic and sociolinguistic competence.

Empirical studies further support the effectiveness of authentic materials. Gilmore emphasizes that authentic texts provide learners with access to real-world discourse patterns and pragmatic conventions, thereby

bridging the gap between classroom language and actual communication [4, p. 102–105]. Similarly, Peacock's research demonstrates that learners show significantly higher motivation and engagement when working with authentic materials compared to simplified textbook texts [8, p. 148–150]. Berardo also reports that authentic reading materials contribute to improved comprehension skills, vocabulary acquisition, and cultural awareness [1, p. 62–65].

In addition, technological advancements have significantly expanded access to authentic language input. Online platforms such as news websites, podcasts, video-sharing services, and social media provide continuous exposure to contemporary language use. These resources allow learners to observe how language functions in dynamic and evolving communicative environments. This aligns with current pedagogical trends that emphasize learner autonomy and real-world relevance.

Overall, the reviewed literature consistently indicates that communicative competence cannot be fully developed through traditional textbook-based instruction alone. Instead, it requires exposure to authentic, context-rich language input that reflects real communicative situations. The integration of sociolinguistic principles with authentic materials therefore represents a pedagogically effective approach to language teaching, particularly for philology students who require advanced communicative and intercultural skills for their future professional activities.

Methodology. This study employs a qualitative research design based on theoretical analysis, classroom observation, and illustrative case examples. The research draws upon contemporary literature in communicative language teaching, sociolinguistics, and authentic materials.

The analysis focuses on the implementation of authentic English-language materials in speaking-oriented classes for philology students. Materials examined include:

- Films and television excerpts;
- Podcasts and interviews;
- Online news articles;
- Social media discussions;
- YouTube videos and public speeches.

Classroom activities were designed according to principles of communicative and task-based language teaching. Students participated in role-plays, debates, case-study discussions, media analyses, and problem-solving tasks based on authentic content.

There were one more activity held in classes to see how philology students know sociolinguistic competence where students were asked to translate a few sentences and we will see one of them and analyse them:

The original text
С ранних лет жизни замечал, что на обычные вопросы куда пойти, что покушать, чем заняться у меня всегда были четкие ответы, в то время как у сверстников был стандартная фраза нам без разницы.
Student's translation
From early childhood, I noticed that I always had precise answers to the usual questions of where to go, what to eat, what to do, while my peers had a standard phrase "wherever or don't care."
After correction
The translation shows that
From my early childhood, I used to have precise answers and unusual solutions to standard questions like where to go, what to eat, what to do, while my peers had a basic respond "it does not matter."

Data were collected through classroom observations, student reflections, and analysis of communicative performance during speaking activities and translation practices. Particular attention was paid to students' ability to express communicative intentions, adapt language to context, and demonstrate sociolinguistic awareness. The translation practices show that knowing the languages is not enough, students should keep in mind about the purpose of the communication as well.

Results. The analysis of classroom implementation demonstrated that the integration of authentic English-language materials within a sociolinguistic framework, together with translation-based activities, produced a range of significant pedagogical benefits for philology students. These outcomes were observed across several interrelated dimensions of communicative competence, including sociolinguistic awareness, communicative confidence, pragmatic development, and learner motivation.

One of the most noticeable outcomes was the substantial improvement in students' sociolinguistic awareness. Regular exposure to authentic materials such as films, interviews, podcasts, news reports, and online discussions enabled learners to observe how language functions in real communicative environments. Over time, students became increasingly sensitive to variations in language use depending on context,

speaker relationships, and communicative purpose. They began to distinguish more effectively between formal and informal registers, and they showed improved understanding of politeness strategies, speech levels, and conversational conventions.

Moreover, students developed a deeper awareness of cultural references embedded in language use. Expressions that initially appeared confusing or unfamiliar gradually became interpretable as learners gained exposure to the cultural and situational contexts in which they were used. This shift indicated a movement from purely grammatical interpretation toward a more context-dependent understanding of language.

Another important finding was the improvement in students' communicative confidence. Authentic materials provided learners with realistic and meaningful models of spoken and written communication, allowing them to observe how native speakers express ideas in natural settings. As a result, students felt more prepared to participate in classroom discussions, oral presentations, debates, and spontaneous speaking tasks.

This increase in confidence was particularly evident in situations requiring improvisation or spontaneous responses. Learners who previously hesitated during speaking activities demonstrated greater willingness to engage in communication, even when they were uncertain

about vocabulary or grammatical accuracy. The exposure to natural speech patterns helped reduce anxiety and increased fluency-oriented participation.

The study also revealed significant progress in students' pragmatic competence, which refers to the ability to interpret and use language appropriately in context. Through engagement with authentic materials, students improved their understanding of implied meanings, indirect speech acts, humor, irony, sarcasm, and culturally specific expressions.

Previously, many students relied heavily on literal interpretations of language, which often led to misunderstandings in communicative situations. However, continuous exposure to authentic discourse helped them recognize that meaning is not always explicitly stated but is often inferred through context, tone, and social relationships. Translation exercises further reinforced this development by requiring students to consider not only linguistic equivalence but also communicative intent and cultural appropriateness.

Another significant outcome of the study was the noticeable increase in student motivation and engagement. Authentic materials proved to be more stimulating than traditional textbook content because they were perceived as directly relevant to real-life communication. Students showed greater interest in lessons when materials included contemporary topics such as social media discussions, current events, popular culture, and everyday conversational situations.

This relevance encouraged active participation in classroom activities, including group discussions, problem-solving tasks, and critical analysis exercises. Learners were more motivated to express opinions and engage in interaction when they felt that the content reflected real-world communication practices. Consequently, the classroom environment became more dynamic and student-centered.

Despite these positive outcomes, the implementation of authentic materials also revealed several challenges. Some students initially experienced difficulties in understanding unfamiliar vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and fast-paced natural speech. In addition, cultural references embedded in authentic texts sometimes created comprehension barriers, particularly for learners with limited exposure to English-speaking contexts.

These challenges highlighted the necessity of careful selection and adaptation of materials by the instructor. Without appropriate scaffolding, students could become overwhelmed by linguistic complexity. Therefore, gradual introduction of authentic content, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, and guided discussion were essential strategies to ensure effective comprehension and learning progression.

Overall, while certain difficulties were observed, the benefits of integrating authentic materials within a sociolinguistic framework clearly outweighed the challenges, contributing significantly to the development of students' communicative competence.

Discussion. The findings support previous research emphasizing the value of authentic materials in communicative language teaching. Exposure to authentic language appears particularly beneficial for

developing sociolinguistic competence, which remains one of the most challenging aspects of language learning.

One notable finding concerns the difficulties advanced philology students experience when expressing communicative intentions. While many students possess strong grammatical knowledge, they often struggle to communicate purposefully in socially appropriate ways. This challenge reflects a common imbalance between linguistic and sociolinguistic competence.

For example, students may know multiple grammatical structures for making requests but fail to select forms appropriate to a specific social situation. Similarly, they may understand vocabulary items individually but misinterpret the speaker's intended meaning due to insufficient pragmatic awareness.

Authentic materials help bridge this gap by exposing learners to naturally occurring examples of language use. Through films, podcasts, interviews, and online discussions, students observe how speakers negotiate meaning, manage relationships, express opinions, and adapt language according to context.

The findings also support the principles of task-based language teaching. Activities such as debates, case studies, role-plays, and media analysis encourage students to use language for meaningful communication rather than mechanical practice. These tasks create opportunities for learners to develop communicative competence in realistic settings.

Furthermore, the sociolinguistic approach contributes to intercultural competence. Understanding language requires understanding the cultural values, social norms, and communicative expectations embedded within it. Authentic materials provide valuable access to these dimensions of communication.

Conclusion. The development of communicative competence remains a central objective of foreign language education in philology programs. This study has demonstrated that a sociolinguistic approach supported by authentic English-language materials offers an effective means of achieving this objective.

The findings indicate that authentic materials enhance not only linguistic competence but also sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences. Through exposure to real-life language use, students develop greater communicative confidence, contextual awareness, and intercultural understanding.

Particularly important is the role of authentic materials in addressing the difficulties many advanced philology students experience when expressing communicative intentions during speaking activities. By engaging with authentic communicative situations, learners gain valuable insights into how language functions within social contexts.

Therefore, language educators should move beyond exclusively textbook-based instruction and adopt more socially grounded approaches that integrate authentic resources and communicative tasks. Such practices can better prepare future language specialists for effective participation in academic, professional, and intercultural communication.

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