

**MODERN WAYS TO INCREASE MOTIVATION IN TEACHING  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE READING AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL**

*Shamsiyeva Xolida Sharobiddin qizi*

*Teacher of the Department of English Language*

*Teaching Methodology in SamSIFL*

**Abstract:** The article analyzes modern methods and strategies that can be employed to increase motivation in teaching foreign language reading at the secondary level. Also, it identifies effective, research-based approaches that engage students in the reading process, enhance their language acquisition, and foster a long-term interest in foreign language learning.

**Key words:** Authentic Materials, Personalizing Reading Materials, digital or traditional, podcasts, blog posts, short stories.

In the context of foreign language learning, particularly at the secondary level, the use of authentic materials is crucial for creating a more immersive and engaging experience for students. Authentic materials are texts or resources that were not created specifically for language learners, but are used in the everyday life of native speakers. These materials, whether digital or traditional, offer students direct access to the culture, vocabulary, and structures of the target language, and are instrumental in helping students see the real-world application of their language skills. One of the most powerful ways to expose students to authentic language use is by incorporating online newspapers and magazines. These sources offer a wealth of real-world vocabulary and current topics, making them highly relevant to students' lives. Reading articles from sources like 'Le Monde' (French), 'El País' (Spanish), 'Die Zeit' (German), or 'Corriere della Sera' (Italian) introduces students to the structure and vocabulary of journalistic writing. By reading about contemporary events, cultural trends, or global issues, students not only improve their reading comprehension but also develop an understanding of the culture behind the language. Many online newspapers have built-in dictionaries or translation tools (e.g., 'Google Translate' or 'Linguee') that allow students to quickly look up unknown words or phrases. Some newspapers even have multimedia features such as video clips, podcasts, or infographics that enhance comprehension and offer a more engaging, multimodal experience. Teachers can design assignments that involve students analyzing articles on current topics that interest them, such as technology, sports, or pop culture. After reading an article, students can present summaries, write reviews, or even create news reports in the target language. In today's digital landscape, blogs and social media provide another invaluable source of authentic language material

This personalized approach can encourage them to read more and deepen their understanding of the language. Following social media influencers (e.g., YouTubers, Instagram personalities, or TikTok creators) who produce content in the target language is another great way to immerse students in authentic, informal language. These creators often use current slang, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references that textbooks may overlook. Teachers can encourage students to follow accounts that match their interests and ask them to summarize posts or interact with the content in the target language. Platforms like “Medium” or “WordPress” allow students to explore blog posts written by other learners or language enthusiasts. These can serve as accessible, relatable models for students who are still developing their language skills [2,55]. Digital platforms now offer a wide variety of short stories, novels, and literary works in foreign languages. Many of these are available for free or at a low cost, making them accessible to both teachers and students. With services like Kindle, Audible, or Google Books, students can access a wealth of authentic literary materials.

Audiobooks paired with digital texts can help struggling readers improve their pronunciation, fluency, and listening comprehension while following along with the written words. Audiobooks also give students access to different genres, dialects, and accents, enriching their language exposure. This platform provides free access to thousands of public domain books in many different languages. Teachers can select classic literature in the target language, from French novels to German plays, and introduce students to the cultural and historical context of these texts. Some digital platforms offer interactive e-books, where readers can click on unfamiliar words for immediate definitions, explore hyperlinks for background information, or engage with multimedia elements such as video clips and soundtracks. This can provide a deeper understanding of the text and keep students engaged. While traditional reading materials are vital for language development, listening and reading are often intertwined. Many podcasts offer transcripts, allowing students to read along while listening. This practice can improve both listening and reading skills simultaneously. After listening, students can be asked to summarize the content, discuss the themes, or answer comprehension questions, helping them engage critically with the material [5,103]. YouTube is a powerful tool for integrating authentic materials into language learning. Videos in the target language offer visual and contextual clues that can greatly enhance comprehension. Watching native speakers in real-world contexts can expose students to the natural flow of speech, informal language, and cultural nuances that books may not provide. For example, students can watch travel vlogs, cooking tutorials, or daily life vlogs in the target language to experience a mix of formal and informal registers. Many YouTube videos offer subtitles in the target language, and some videos even allow for interactive captions. Teachers can use these videos in class to focus on vocabulary, pronunciation, or even cultural aspects discussed in the video.

Students can also work in pairs or groups to create summaries or discussions based on the video content. These can serve as a bridge between the real world and classroom instruction, helping students stay motivated and engaged. Several interactive platforms and digital libraries offer curated collections of authentic reading materials, allowing students to explore language in an organized, learner-friendly way.

### **Personalizing Reading Materials**

Personalization is a key strategy to enhance student engagement and motivation in foreign language learning, particularly when it comes to reading. When students feel that the materials they are working with are relevant to their own interests, needs, and proficiency levels, they are more likely to become active participants in the learning process. By tailoring reading materials to individual students, teachers can create a more engaging and effective language learning environment. In the digital age, technology provides countless opportunities to personalize reading materials, ensuring that every student has access to content that resonates with them. This section explores various ways to personalize reading materials to improve foreign language acquisition and increase student motivation. One of the most effective ways to personalize reading materials is to allow students to choose the topics they read about.

When students have the autonomy to select content that aligns with their personal interests, they are more likely to engage with the material and stay motivated throughout the reading process. Whether students are interested in sports, music, fashion, technology, or current events, giving them the option to choose reading material that aligns with their passions can increase motivation [4,100].

Teachers can curate a list of authentic texts-such as magazine articles, blog posts, short stories, or even social media content-in the target language that cover a wide range of topics, allowing students to pick what excites them most. Personalization can be integrated into project-based learning, where students are encouraged to explore reading materials related to a theme or project they are working on. For example, a student interested in environmental issues could be tasked with reading articles, reports, or news stories related to climate change in the target language. At the beginning of a course or unit, teachers can conduct interest surveys or ask students to complete a brief questionnaire about their hobbies, preferred genres, or topics of interest. These responses can inform the selection of reading materials, ensuring that students are exposed to content that resonates with them. Another essential aspect of personalizing reading materials is ensuring that they are appropriately matched to the individual student's language proficiency. Too difficult or too easy reading material can lead to frustration or boredom, which may undermine motivation. Just as students have different interests, they also have different language abilities. Teachers can provide a range of reading materials with varying levels of complexity, from beginner-level texts with simple vocabulary and basic grammar to more advanced texts with

complex sentence structures and idiomatic expressions.

For students who benefit from auditory learning, audiobooks or podcasts in the target language can be a helpful alternative. Many language learners find listening to a text while reading along (a technique known as ‘shadow reading’) helps them improve both listening comprehension and reading fluency. Apps like ‘Audible’ or ‘Librivox’ provide a variety of audiobooks in many languages, ranging from fiction to non-fiction and everything in between. For visual learners, graphic novels or illustrated stories can be more engaging than traditional prose. Comics or graphic novels such as “Tintin” (French), “Asterix” (French), or “Maus” (German) provide rich language input while maintaining visual interest. Interactive digital texts, where students can click on words for definitions, audio pronunciations, or even cultural explanations, can further enhance engagement. Another powerful way to personalize reading is by encouraging students to create their own materials, which can be shared with the class.

This process not only motivates students but also reinforces their language skills by giving them ownership over the learning process. Have students write their own short stories, blog posts, or articles in the target language. These texts can be based on their own experiences or interests, allowing them to apply new vocabulary and grammar in creative ways. Students can then exchange their work with peers for feedback and discussion. Students can collaborate on reading projects where they create summaries, visual aids, or multimedia presentations about a particular text or topic. This collaborative approach makes reading more social and interactive, which can be motivating for students who enjoy teamwork. With the help of technology, students can create digital content such as video blogs (vlogs), podcasts, or multimedia presentations in the target language. These projects allow students to explore the language in a creative and personalized way while also developing their speaking and listening skills.

Language is deeply tied to culture, and personalizing reading materials often involves integrating cultural elements that students find meaningful. This approach makes reading not only a language exercise but also a window into the values, customs, and worldviews of the target language community. Select texts that reflect the cultures associated with the language. For example, reading a story about a holiday celebrated in the target culture—such as ‘Diwali’ in Hindi, ‘Carnival’ in Portuguese, or ‘Bastille Day’ in French—can make language learning feel more immersive and personally relevant. Teachers can also connect students to global issues that may resonate with their own experiences, such as social justice, environmentalism, or technology. Encourage students to connect their own lives to the texts they are reading [8,95]. For instance, students might read a blog post about a cultural tradition or a short story about a young person navigating a challenge, and then discuss how the themes of the text relate to their own experiences. This can increase the emotional investment in reading.

For students with multicultural backgrounds or those learning multiple languages, providing bilingual texts or texts that reflect diverse cultural perspectives can further personalize their learning experience. For instance, a student who speaks Spanish at home may be interested in reading literature that reflects the Spanish-speaking world, while a student of Asian descent might connect with stories about Asian traditions or experiences. Personalized learning is not only about the materials themselves but also about the process.

Some apps even allow students to rate books or articles, adding an interactive element to the process. Personalizing reading materials is a powerful way to increase motivation and engagement in foreign language learning. By offering students the freedom to choose topics that interest them, adapting materials to their proficiency levels, and leveraging multiple formats and media, teachers can create a learning environment that is both enjoyable and effective. Personalizing the reading experience also encourages students to take ownership of their learning, which is key to long-term success. By fostering a connection between the language and students' personal interests, cultural contexts, and goals, teachers can help make language learning more meaningful and enjoyable.

Concluding the description of the integration of technology into foreign language reading instruction opens up a world of possibilities for both teachers and students, significantly enhancing the learning experience. Through the use of authentic materials and personalized reading strategies, educators can create a dynamic, engaging environment that fosters both language acquisition and motivation. “Authentic materials”, made easily accessible through digital tools, bring real-world language use into the classroom. By exposing students to online newspapers, blogs, podcasts, and video content in the target language, teachers can help students connect with the culture behind the language. This exposure not only builds linguistic competence but also enhances cultural understanding, making the learning process more relevant and engaging.

#### **The list of the used literature**

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