

MODERN REQUIREMENTS TO THE ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR B2 LEARNERS

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Abstract: This article explores the modern requirements for English language textbooks designed for B2 level learners according to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). It outlines key criteria that contemporary textbooks should meet to ensure effective language acquisition. These include alignment with CEFR standards, the communicative approach, the integration of authentic materials, contextualized vocabulary and grammar instruction, digital tools, and the development of 21st-century skills. The article emphasizes the importance of learner-centered content, real-life communication tasks, cultural inclusivity, and systematic assessment. The goal is to highlight how modern textbooks can better prepare learners for academic, professional, and real-world communication in English.

Keywords: B2 level, CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), English language textbooks, Communicative approach, Authentic materials, Vocabulary in context, Grammar in context, Digital learning tools, Language teaching methodology, Task-based learning, 21st-century skills, Learner-centered education, Language assessment, Inclusivity in education, English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

Annotatsiya : Ushbu maqola CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) bo'yicha B2 darajasidagi o'quvchilar uchun mo'ljallangan ingliz tili darsliklariga qo'yiladigan zamonaviy talablarni o'rganadi. Unda zamonaviy darsliklar tilni samarali o'zlashtirishni ta'minlash uchun javob berishi kerak bo'lgan asosiy mezonlarni belgilaydi. Bularga CEFR standartlariga moslashish, kommunikativ yondashuv, asl materiallarni birlashtirish, kontekstli lug'at va grammatika bo'yicha ko'rsatmalar, raqamli vositalar va 21-asr ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirish kiradi. Maqolada o'quvchiga yo'naltirilgan mazmun, real hayotdagi muloqot vazifalari, madaniy inklyuzivlik va tizimli baholash muhimligi ta'kidlangan. Maqsad - zamonaviy darsliklar o'quvchilarni ingliz tilida akademik, professional va real dunyo muloqotiga qanday qilib yaxshiroq tayyorlashi mumkinligini ta'kidlash

Kalit so'zlar : CEFR (Tillar uchun umumiy Evropa ma'lumotnomasi), Ingliz tili darsliklar, Kommunikativ yondashuv, Haqiqiy materiallar, Kontekstdagi lug'at, Kontekstdagi grammatika, Raqamli ta'lim vositalari, Til o'qitish metodikasi, Vazifaga asoslangan ta'lim, 21-asr

qobiliyatlari, O'quvchiga yo'naltirilgan ta'lim, Tilni baholash, Ta'limda inklyuzivlik, Ingliz tili chet tili sifatida (EFL)

Аннотация: В статье рассматриваются современные требования к учебникам английского языка, предназначенным для учащихся уровня B2 CEFR (Общеввропейские компетенции владения иностранным языком). В нем изложены основные критерии, которым должны соответствовать современные учебники для обеспечения эффективного усвоения языка. К ним относятся соответствие стандартам CEFR, коммуникативный подход, интеграция оригинальных материалов, контекстное обучение лексике и грамматике, цифровые инструменты и развитие навыков 21 века. В статье подчеркивается важность содержания, ориентированного на обучающегося, реальных коммуникативных задач, культурной инклюзии и систематической оценки. Цель — показать, как современные учебники могут лучше подготовить студентов к академическому, профессиональному и реальному общению на английском языке.

Ключевые слова: CEFR (Общеввропейские компетенции владения иностранным языком), Учебники английского языка, Коммуникативный подход, Реальные материалы, Словарь в контексте, Грамматика в контексте, Цифровые инструменты обучения, Методология преподавания языка, Обучение на основе задач навыка 21 века, Образование, ориентированное на учащихся, Оценка языка, Инклюзивность в образовании, Английский как иностранный язык (EFL)

Modern English textbooks for B2 learners (Upper-Intermediate level)

Modern English textbooks for B2 learners (Upper-Intermediate level) must meet a range of pedagogical, linguistic, and practical requirements to effectively support language acquisition and align with current educational standards. Here's an overview of the key modern requirements: In today's globalized and technologically driven world, English language teaching has undergone significant transformations. For learners at the B2 level (Upper-Intermediate), textbooks must meet not only linguistic but also pedagogical, cultural, and technological demands. Modern English textbooks are expected to provide a comprehensive and dynamic learning experience that prepares learners for real-world communication, academic purposes, and professional environments. This article outlines the key modern requirements for English textbooks aimed at B2 learners.

1. CEFR Alignment

Must be clearly aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). A fundamental requirement is that textbooks should be aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). At the B2 level, learners should be able to understand complex texts, interact with fluency, and express ideas clearly on a wide range of topics. The textbook should reflect these competencies in its learning outcomes, activities, and assessments. Should include descriptors and outcomes based on B2 level communicative competence (e.g., understanding complex texts, expressing opinions on abstract topics). The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is an internationally recognized guideline used to describe language ability. Developed by the Council of Europe, the CEFR provides a standardized scale for assessing and teaching language proficiency across six levels:

A1 and A2 (Basic User)

B1 and B2 (Independent User)

C1 and C2 (Proficient User)

Each level includes descriptors that outline what a learner can do in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Aligning textbooks with the CEFR ensures that:

Learning outcomes are clear and measurable

Content is appropriate for the learners' level

Skills develop progressively and consistently

Preparation for international exams (like IELTS, Cambridge, TOEFL) is supported

Instruction is standardized across different institutions and countries

B2 Level in the CEFR

At B2 (Upper-Intermediate) level, the learner is an Independent User, meaning they can:

Understand the main ideas of complex texts on both concrete and abstract topics

Interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers possible

Produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects

Explain a viewpoint on a topical issue, giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options

Examples of "can-do" statements from the CEFR at B2 level:

Skill	Can-Do Statement
Reading	Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems.
Listening argument.	Can understand extended speech and lectures and follow complex lines of
Speakin strain.	Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity without much

Writing interests. Can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to their interests.

Clear Level Labelling

Textbooks should explicitly state that they are designed for B2 learners, with CEFR references throughout the content.

Skill Integration

All four language skills (reading, listening, speaking, writing) should be covered with tasks that reflect real-world communication at the B2 level.

Progression in Tasks

Activities should build progressively in difficulty and mirror the B2 descriptors—such as debating, summarizing, presenting arguments, and writing essays.

Assessment Aligned to B2 Level

Exercises and tests should reflect the complexity expected at the B2 level, such as gap-fills, open-ended questions, and discursive writing.

Preparation for International Exams .Since exams like Cambridge B2 First (FCE) and IELTS Band 5.5–6.5 align with this level, textbooks often include exam-style tasks and tips. Aligning English textbooks with CEFR standards ensures consistency, quality, and effectiveness in language education. For B2 learners, it guarantees that materials are challenging but achievable, and support learners in reaching real-world communicative competence.

2. Communicative Approach

Emphasis on communication over rote memorization. Tasks should focus on real-life communication: debates, role-plays, interviews, presentations, etc. Activities must integrate speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in a balanced way. The Communicative Approach, also known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), is a language teaching method that emphasizes real-life communication as the main goal of learning a language. Rather than focusing only on grammar rules or vocabulary memorization, this approach encourages learners to use the language in meaningful contexts to express themselves and understand others.

Core Principles of the Communicative Approach

Language is a tool for communication, not just a system of rules. Fluency is as important as accuracy—learners should be able to express themselves even if their language isn't perfect. Interaction is essential—students learn better when they speak, listen, collaborate, and negotiate meaning. Context matters—language should be taught in contexts that resemble real-life situations.

Learner-centered instruction—students are active participants, and the teacher acts more as a facilitator than a lecturer. Features of Communicative Language Teaching in B2 Textbooks

Modern B2 textbooks that follow the communicative approach typically include:

✓ Real-life Speaking Tasks

Discussions, debates, interviews, presentations, and role-plays. Examples: "Debate whether social media is more harmful or helpful", "Role-play a job interview"

✓ Authentic Materials

Texts from newspapers, websites, videos, podcasts, and emails that show language used in real situations

✓ Pair and Group Work

Learners collaborate to complete tasks, which builds communication skills like asking for clarification, agreeing/disagreeing, etc.

✓ Functional Language

Focus on language used for specific purposes, such as:

Making suggestions

Giving opinions

Expressing agreement/disagreement

Apologizing

Making complaints

✓ Integrated Skills

Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are not taught separately but are integrated into communicative tasks.

✓ Task-Based Learning

Tasks simulate real-world activities (e.g., planning a trip, writing a blog post, negotiating a price)

Benefits of the Communicative Approach for B2 Learners

Improves confidence in using English spontaneously

Encourages fluency, not just accuracy

Develops intercultural communication skills

Prepares learners for real-life situations (e.g., travel, work, study abroad)

Helps students think in English, not just translate from their native language

Challenges and Considerations

Requires trained teachers who are comfortable managing active, talkative classrooms. Some students may feel less confident speaking, so supportive scaffolding is essential. Still needs systematic grammar instruction, but embedded in meaningful use. The Communicative Approach has become a cornerstone of modern English language teaching, particularly at the B2 level, where students are expected to handle a wide range of real-life communication tasks. Textbooks designed around this method help learners become confident, fluent users of English by emphasizing interaction, authenticity, and practical language use.¹

3. Authentic Materials

Include authentic texts (articles, blogs, news, audio/video clips) to expose learners to real-world English. Use natural and varied language, including idioms, phrasal verbs, and discourse markers. Authentic materials are real-life texts and resources that are not originally designed for language learners, but for native speakers. These materials reflect natural language use, including vocabulary, grammar, tone, and cultural references found in everyday communication.

Examples of Authentic Materials

Type	Examples
Written texts	Newspaper articles, blog posts, menus, brochures, emails, signs
Audio	Podcasts, radio programs, interviews, announcements
Video	News reports, vlogs, commercials, documentaries, movie clips
Visuals	Infographics, charts, real advertisements, social media posts

At the B2 (Upper-Intermediate) level, learners are expected to:

Understand the main ideas of complex texts

¹ Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Follow spoken language on familiar and abstract topics

Communicate effectively in a range of situations

Using authentic materials helps bridge the gap between the classroom and the real world.

Benefits of Authentic Materials

✓ Exposure to Real Language

Learners hear and see natural expressions, idioms, phrasal verbs, and slang.

✓ Improved Listening & Reading Skills

Learners practice understanding different accents, speeds, and text structures.

✓ Cultural Awareness

Materials offer insights into native speaker cultures, behaviors, and perspectives.

✓ Motivation and Engagement

Students are often more interested in real-world topics like current events, music, or social media.

✓ Critical Thinking

Discussing and analyzing real content encourages interpretation and opinion-sharing.

Modern English textbooks for B2 learners often:

Include real articles, interviews, or audio clips as reading/listening texts

Use social media posts or YouTube clips as conversation starters

Provide tasks like:

Summarize the article and share your opinion

Watch a video and answer comprehension questions

Compare two advertisements and decide which is more effective

Challenges and Solutions

Challenge

Solution

Complex vocabulary or structure Provide pre-teaching of key vocabulary

Cultural references may be unclear Add footnotes or short explanations

Too fast or unclear audio Use scripts or play multiple times

Authentic materials are an essential component of modern English textbooks at the B2 level. They not only enhance language skills but also prepare learners for real-life communication in academic, social, and professional settings. When used effectively, authentic materials can make language learning more engaging, relevant, and meaningful.²

4. Digital Integration & Interactivity

Provide digital support: interactive e-books, online platforms, apps, and multimedia materials.

Include QR codes linking to audio/video or practice tests.

Enable self-study through online exercises and progress tracking.

5. Task-Based & Project-Based Learning

Incorporate task-based learning that encourages problem-solving and collaboration. Include projects to develop research and presentation skills (e.g., create a travel blog, plan an event).³

6. Vocabulary & Grammar in Context

Teach grammar and vocabulary in meaningful contexts, not in isolation. Emphasize lexical chunks and collocations. Include practice for word formation, register, and nuanced usage. Teaching vocabulary and grammar in context means presenting new language within real or meaningful situations—not in isolated lists or disconnected rules. Learners see how words and grammar structures are used naturally, helping them understand usage, tone, register, and collocations.

At the B2 (Upper-Intermediate) level, learners are expected to:

Use a wide range of vocabulary and grammar with flexibility and accuracy. Understand the nuances of language (e.g., formal/informal, polite/direct). Apply language in real-life situations, not just in exercises. Teaching in context helps learners move beyond memorization and develop the ability to use language naturally and effectively.

Benefits of Contextualized Language Learning

² Harmer, J. (2015). *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Education.

³ Gilmore, A. (2007). Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, 40(2), 97–118. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444807004144>

✓ Better Understanding of Meaning and Use

Students see how words and structures function in real situations.

✓ Improved Retention

Learners remember vocabulary and grammar better when connected to a story, topic, or conversation.

✓ More Natural Production

Helps learners sound more fluent and accurate by using chunks, collocations, and appropriate structures.

✓ Prepares for Real Communication

Equips learners to understand and produce language in everyday and academic contexts.

How B2 Textbooks Present Vocabulary & Grammar in Context

Modern textbooks use several strategies, such as:

Text-Based Introductions

Vocabulary and grammar are introduced through dialogues, articles, interviews, or emails. Example: Reading a travel blog before learning narrative tenses. Authentic Communication Tasks.

Learners use new language in discussions, role-plays, or presentations. Example: Use modal verbs of speculation ("might have," "could have") while analyzing mystery photos.

Lexical Approach. Focus on chunks of language (e.g., "make a decision," "on the other hand") instead of individual words.

Integrated Skills Practice. Vocabulary and grammar are practiced in speaking, writing, listening, and reading tasks. Focus on Form in Use Grammar is highlighted after exposure, then practiced meaningfully. Example: After reading a job interview transcript, learners analyze how conditionals are used to give advice. Examples of Contextual Learning Tasks at B2.

Skill Example Activity. Vocabulary Match phrases from a blog with their meanings and use them in your own story.

Grammar Identify how the past perfect is used in a news report and write your own version.

Speaking Use new adjectives of opinion in a debate on environmental policies.

Writing Write an email using formal connectors and passive voice appropriately. Teaching vocabulary and grammar in context is a core feature of modern English textbooks for B2 learners. This

approach enhances comprehension, retention, and natural language use, preparing learners to apply what they've learned in authentic, communicative situations—whether in exams, work, or daily life.⁴

7. Assessment & Feedback Tools

Include formative and summative assessments: self-checks, tests, exam-style tasks. Provide clear feedback mechanisms (model answers, rubrics). Prepare students for standardized exams (Cambridge B2 First, IELTS, TOEFL).

8. Inclusivity and Cultural Diversity

Content should reflect diverse cultures, perspectives, and social realities. Avoid stereotypes and include representation of different ages, ethnicities, genders, and abilities. Teacher Support provide a detailed teacher's book, lesson plans, tips for differentiation, and adaptable materials. Offer professional development support through webinars, guides, or training videos.

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