

THE IMPORTANCE OF USING AUTHENTIC TEXTS AND MATERIALS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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Authentic texts - are defined as may be thought of as any text that was written and published for the public. Journal articles, blog posts and novels are just a few examples. Authentic texts are written for “real world” purposes and audiences: to entertain, inform, explain, guide, document or convince. We can find authentic texts everywhere: movies, songs, newspapers, books, signs, food label, and various resources on the Internet.

Authentic texts and materials are essential in communicative English language teaching because they allow students to learn the use of language in real communication as well as the sociocultural contexts in which such communication occurs real-life examples of language used in everyday situations. They can be used to add more interest for the learner. They can serve as a reminder to learners that there is an entire population who use the target language in their everyday lives.

Authentic text and materials can provide information about the target culture and provide that culture’s perspective on an issue or event. The rich language found in authentic materials provides a source of input language learners need for acquisition.

Whole idea of authentic materials came along with the one of the principals for communicative language teaching. Communicative approach emphasizes interaction as the ultimate goal of learning a language. So, the idea was that teachers should use authentic materials as much as possible instead of materials that have been developed specifically for language learners, because then they will be giving the students texts that they would actually need to use in the real world. In this case authenticity opposes artificiality. [1. p.24]

Authentic materials could be almost anything, for example, it could be a new newspaper article, or something found in a journal or a magazine, or forms that the patient has to fill out in a doctor’s office, or a menu from a restaurant. In other words, it could be any kind of naturally occurring artifact in a language. There are also a lot of oral and visual sources of authentic materials, such as movies, TV news, and podcasts. Recent years a gradual growth of interest of many English teachers toward the use of authentic materials has been observed. The main argument is that it is more beneficial for learners to use materials that have been taken from the real life of native speakers than artificial texts and dialogues that have been conceived in the minds of textbooks developers.

This kind of English occurs in daily communication among people for the majority of whom it is mother-tongue language; there are textbooks that include anthropologically correct samples of English language. It means that they reflect to some extent the real language. Thus, we arrive to a question whether it is worth for us, as teachers, to spend time and strength to prepare raw authentic materials for our students when we can use well-thought and structured texts and tasks found in textbooks. These materials contain difficult language, materials are needed much effort, have unnecessary vocabulary terms, complex structure and culturally biased. Also, at this time come question: in what way should be materials introduced or how should they be used in classes.

Written or spoken text which has been produced for native speakers, rather than for foreign learners of a language. Martinez defined that "Authentic would be materials designed for native speakers of English used in the classroom in a way similar to the one it was designed for". And obviously all this term has a main common idea which is "...exposure to real language and its use in its own community" [4.p 21.].

Authentic text helps students understand how language works in the real world, and invites them to take part in that world by moving in, out, and through the world of ideas and living language dealing with a wide variety of themes/ subjects, from different fields, such as economics, politics, social life, entertainment, etc., representing thus a precious and "renewable" source of vocabulary and grammatical items and structures.

Authentic text helps students understand how language works in the real world, and invites them to take part in that world by moving in, out, and through the world of ideas and living language, moreover, authentic text is one of the useful way to learn English language with new vocabulary or by reading authentic texts such as: journal , newspaper, magazines, news, poems, novels, short stories, stories and the others. It can also be useful to elicit genuine responses from learners.

The great thing about using authentic material is that it is everywhere, which makes it easy to find, and simple for learners to practice English in their own time. Remember that it isn't limited to articles from newspapers and magazines. Using authentic materials can expose students to language beyond the classroom and prepare students for real life situations. By the way Berar do (2006) provides three criteria for choosing authentic texts:

1. Suitability of content,
2. Exploitability,
3. Readability.

Suitability of content indicates that the text should interest the students as well as be appropriate to their needs and abilities add that the texts should be culturally relevant to the experience of the students. In this vein states that "a careful and wise

selection of materials focused on learners is a must if we want a positive response from them” [2.p.325].

Meanwhile, exploitability refers to how the text can be used to develop the students’ competence and how the text can be exploited for teaching purposes. Finally, readability refers to the language of the text, including the structural and lexical difficulty as well as the amount of new vocabulary and grammatical forms.

The text must be compatible with the course objectives— i.e., it can improve the language skills educators want the learners to practice. In addition, teachers must consider the length of the text and their teaching approach. A variety of text types must be selected, such as articles, advertisements, weather forecasts, interviews, poems, radio talks, application forms, train timetables, and brochures.

So, teachers need to reflect on the following questions before selection of the materials:

- Does this text help my students to get what they want? (Instrumental)
- Does this text inform my students on the rules that they might follow?

(Regulatory)

- Does this text help my student to establish or maintain a personal relationship with someone? (Interactional)

- Does this text help my students to express their personal thoughts?

(Personal)

- Does this text help my students to explore the world? (Heuristic)

- Does this text help my students to express or create for someone an?

- imaginative world? (Imaginative)

- Does this text provide the information my students want or need?

(Informative)

So, we have discussed and reviewed some definitions of authentic materials, which were taken from various materials. As we noticed all authors’ state one point that authentic materials or texts are materials which were created by native speaker for using of native speaker. [2.p.99]

This is main characteristics of authentic materials and if we want to save these features we have to dive deeply into text and understand it. During this process the teacher`s role is to clearly and accurately, without any misunderstandings bring the meaning of authentic text to learners. In learning process as learning material have also to be used authentic materials. Consequently, they have to be clear to learners, be required to correspond to learner`s language competence and have to reflect the real examples of written and spoken English.

There we can mention that, to achieve a high level of a real and modern English language is possible only with materials, which were taken from native speakers` life or with materials which were created on the basis of English culture, mentality and its

speeches` rates. The using of such materials in learning which represents essential speech, writing will help effectively to teach learners all general skills and will imitate the real English-speaking atmosphere on English lessons.

Also, in the first part we enumerated various types of authentic materials can be used in various ways in EFL teaching e.g. different prompts, movies, projects, audio materials, fiction, newspapers and gave some recommendations of the using them. Authentic materials can be broadly classified in audio, visual, and printed materials. [7.p.24]

Some advantages such as a positive effect on learner motivation, providing cultural information, exposure to real language, closeness to learner's needs, supporting a more creative approach to teaching gave a great opportunity for learner and teachers willing them to use authentic materials, but while using them it is inevitable that we face some problems. Problems with unneeded vocabulary items, with complex language structures, with not readily available and obtaining them can be time consuming and frustrating. [4.p.345-346]

So, on English lessons teachers during the process of teaching have to remember that, learner always have difficulties in working with authentic materials. They have to carefully select these materials according to their students` level. Many researchers stated when to introduce authentic materials e.g. “authentic materials can be used with intermediate and advanced students only the target group of students was introduced to the topic through the authentic material, which is an authentic movie named “Home Alone” taken from internet. The initial section was planned around this authentic video text.

As it is a movie it requires mainly students to listen for information with the help of visuals and so the section was orientated towards developing listening skills around the topic of the family in order to prepare students for the reading text on the same topic which students will read in the following lesson. After familiarizing students with the topic through exposure to the authentic video text, students will then be guided to look at the textbook text on the same topic in the subsequent lesson. [5.p.21]

Based on the scheme of work in the teaching practice, the reading sessions as well as the reading texts were analyzed. From the textbook, suitable themes were selected and video resources on similar themes or topics were incorporated. After careful selection, the theme “Family Ties” was adapted from chapter 1 of the textbook Laser by Steve Taylore-Knowles. The target reading text is entitled “It takes all sorts.....!”. It is a magazine article in interview form. Each interviewee talks about his/her family. The reading text and the self-created materials are attached. [6.p.200]

Using videos in the classroom allows the learners access to more information when listening. That is, the learners can now see what is happening as well as listen to the text. Nonverbal behavior or paralinguistic features of the spoken text are now

available to the learners (compared with radio, that is), so learners can develop their listening skills in a richer language context.

Many language learners watch movies outside of class time, but few of them consider this as an opportunity to develop their listening skills (perhaps because they become used to reading the sub-titles of English movies). Going to a movie is considered as entertainment and often "doesn't count" in terms of learning. We can, however, in the language classroom, sensitize our learners to how they can make use of movies to help them develop their foreign language skills. For students we might consider the following during-class activity:

· **Stage 1: Pre-Viewing Task.** Teacher gives one film in English language and tell students that they will watch a short sequence for 10 minutes, express the content of the video. If some of the participants have seen the film, ask them not to tell the rest of the group anything about it.

· **Stage 2: While-Viewing Task.** The teacher call to watch the section of film and answer the questions while watching it e.g. Who is the main hero? How many people are there in the film? Where are they? Who are they? Where are they going? What are they doing?

· **Stage 3: Post-Viewing Task.** Divide students into 4 groups and give the following task for each group: Group 1: Write all the words you can hear ending in –ed (max 6);

Group 2: Write all the words you can hear ending in –s (max 6);

Group 3: Write all the words you can hear ending in –ing (max 6);

Group 4: Write all the adjectives or adverbs you can hear (max 6.)

The viewing task were planned and divided into mainly three stages namely, “Pre-, while- and post-reading stages”. The reason for doing this is to ensure that all 4 skills are taught in the sense of helping students develop an increasing ability to work with movies.

Thus, the using of authentic materials in teaching of English language plays a crucial role and is counted as a necessary tool in achieving the main practical aim of learning. This aim is to form learners` ability to communicate in target language. Authentic materials really help to arouse cognitive motivation, to understand and percept the native English speech. They create a real nature of English language in the classrooms; introduce the learners with culture and everyday life of target language.

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