

with brief explanations.

Word Search

The students search for parts of speech such as adjectives on a given page or search for certain categories of things. An advantage of this activity is that students do not need identical copies of the authentic material.

Crosswords

The teacher prepares a crossword puzzle using words from the handout. The questions for the handout can also be presented as crossword clues. Crossword generating programs found on the Internet make this easy.

Personalizing

The students write a list of purchases for an imaginary party using a supermarket handout, plan a trip using a travel brochure or plan a meal with a menu. The students could also be asked to fill out a mail order form with an imaginary order of purchases for family members, friends, and themselves.

When used effectively, authentic materials help bring the real world into the classroom and significantly enliven the class.

Pair practice

The students ask and answer the printed questions on the handout and are encouraged to ask their own questions. The students can role play the parts of customer and clerk either following a sample conversation provided by the teacher or making up their own.

Conclusion

What is advocated in this article is using authentic materials and the way

of implementing them in the classroom. Authentic texts can provide the students with original language. Moreover, it could be argued that authentic materials increase student motivation when reading in English and provides opportunities for them to deduce important cultural and lexical information.

When used effectively, authentic materials help bring the real world into the classroom and significantly enliven the class. Exposing the students to cultural features generates a deeper understanding of and interest in the topic. On the one hand, the students develop their ability to zero in on relevant information, and on the other, they learn how to disregard what is not relevant. As students pool their individual strengths they gain confidence in being able to function in an English-speaking society.

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to choose items from the material or a course of action based on personal preference. These often lead to lively discussion because students must agree on what answer to write.

Challenging questions

The third part should have questions that are more challenging and time consuming. Because of the differences in abilities (and sometimes luck), the time it takes students to complete a question handout can vary considerably. The more challenging questions at the end of the handout tend to work as 'equalizers' and slow down faster students so slower students can catch up. Questions can involve reading the small print, be especially detailed, or involve deductive reasoning. When students are working on the challenging questions they often begin to compare their progress to that of their neighbors'. Deliberately misleading 'red herring' questions add to the competitiveness while developing the students' critical thinking.

Types of questions and sample questions

Multiple Choice:

1. How many Navel Oranges can you buy for a dollar? a) 3 b) 4 c) 5
2. Which is the cheapest? a) orange juice b) grapefruit juice c) tomato juice

One Word Answer:

1. What country are the seedless grapes from? _____
2. On the back page it says Chilean Asian Pears for \$1.00 each. What do you think "Asian pears" are called in Persian? _____

Written Answer:

1. Why are the strawberries on the back page called California Strawberries?
2. How do you order coupons on the Internet for this store?

Factual:

1. How many large brown eggs can you buy for \$1? _____
2. How much are two jars of jam on page 7? \$ _____

Analytical (multi-step):

1. How much do 10 ears of Florida Super Sweet Corn and 2 pounds of Fresh Ground Round cost? \$ _____
2. Which costs more, one lb. of Fresh Boneless Shark Steaks or one lb. of Whiting Fillets? _____

Personal Preference:

1. Look at the back page. What fruit would you like to eat? _____
2. What flowers do you want to give to your mother on Mother's Day?
_____ \$ _____

Red Herring:

1. One Florida Juice Orange costs \$2.00. True or False (NOTE TO TEACHERS: The advertisement says one bag is \$2.00.)
2. Which is cheaper, a bottle of milk or a jar of jam? _____

Challenging:

1. Find something that is cheaper in Iran than in the USA. _____.
2. What can you buy in a glass jar that is usually sold in a plastic bottle in Japan? _____

Activities

There are other methods of using authentic materials. Some of these can be used as a supplement to the question handout, or on their own, for variety. Here are four examples of effective activities

approach because they tend to be more enthusiastic and work harder. We give each pair the authentic material and a question handout. Interestingly, the student with the stronger command of English is not necessarily the one who is able to extract the most information from the material. Students of different abilities tend to complement one another and, as a result, do not get bogged down easily. Students tend to contribute individual strengths to the completion of the task. We usually tell students that question handouts will be collected since this keeps them more focused on the completion of the exercise. The teacher's personal anecdotes and other background information should be shared before the students begin concentrating on the material.

After the authentic material has been distributed, we give a brief explanation and point out, for example, the importance of the table of contents in a pamphlet or the legend in a map. We point out small print and other parts of the material that are easily missed. This is a good time for the teacher to explain measures, abbreviations, and difficult words and expressions. While the students are working on the assignment, we help them by answering questions and commenting on their work. This is also a good opportunity to give hints to those who are stuck on a particular question.

Once the allotted time is up, we collect the material along with the question handout and go over the difficult questions with the class. If the handouts are to be factored into the students' grades, it is a good idea to make sure they have a chance to work with various

partners over the course of the semester.

Putting the question handout together

For the authentic materials to be effective, the questions must be well constructed to (a) give the students the opportunity to practice English, (b) help the students gain confidence in their English ability, (c) expose the students to cultural differences and customs, and (d) help the students develop their ability to find pertinent information quickly

Tour questions

The first part of the question handout should contain easy multiple choice or fill-in factual questions. These questions give the students a 'tour' of the material and expose them to a variety of question types. The students gain an overview of the material as they answer these initial easy questions and this makes them feel confident enough to tackle more difficult questions later.

Cultural and personal choice questions

The second part of the handout should contain questions that can be used to bring attention to cultural differences in packaging, sizes, and pricing. Authentic materials often contain references to cultural events such as holidays, and questions can be used to bring these to the students' attention. Questions which require one word or written answers could be used at this stage. Furthermore, students are familiar enough with the material at this point to answer personal choice questions. These questions usually require the students

language structures, which can often create problems for the teachers too. They can also become very dated, very quickly but unlike textbooks can be updated or replaced much easier and more cost effectively. The biggest problem with authentic materials is that if the wrong type of text is chosen, the vocabulary may not be relevant to the learners' needs and too many structures create difficulty. The disadvantages mentioned by several scholars are:

1. They may be too culturally biased, so unnecessarily difficult to understand outside the language community.
2. The vocabulary might not be relevant to the students' immediate needs.
3. Too many structures are mixed so lower levels have a hard time decoding the text.
4. Special preparation is necessary which can be time consuming.
5. With listening: too many different accents.
6. The material can become outdated easily, e.g. news.

Sources of authentic materials

Many proponents of Communicative Language Teaching have advocated the use of authentic materials in the classroom. These might include language - based realia, such as signs, magazines, advertisements, and newspapers, or graphic and visual sources around which communicative activities can be built, such as maps, pictures, symbols, graphs, and charts. Different kinds of objects can be used to support communicative exercises, such as plastic models to assemble from directions (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

One of the most useful sources of authentic materials is the Internet. Whereas newspapers and any other printed materials date very quickly, the Internet is continuously updated, more visually stimulating as well as being interactive; therefore, promoting a more active approach to reading rather than a passive one. From a more practical point of view, the Internet is a modern day reality, most students use it and for teachers, there is easier access to endless amount of many different types of material (Berardo, 2006).

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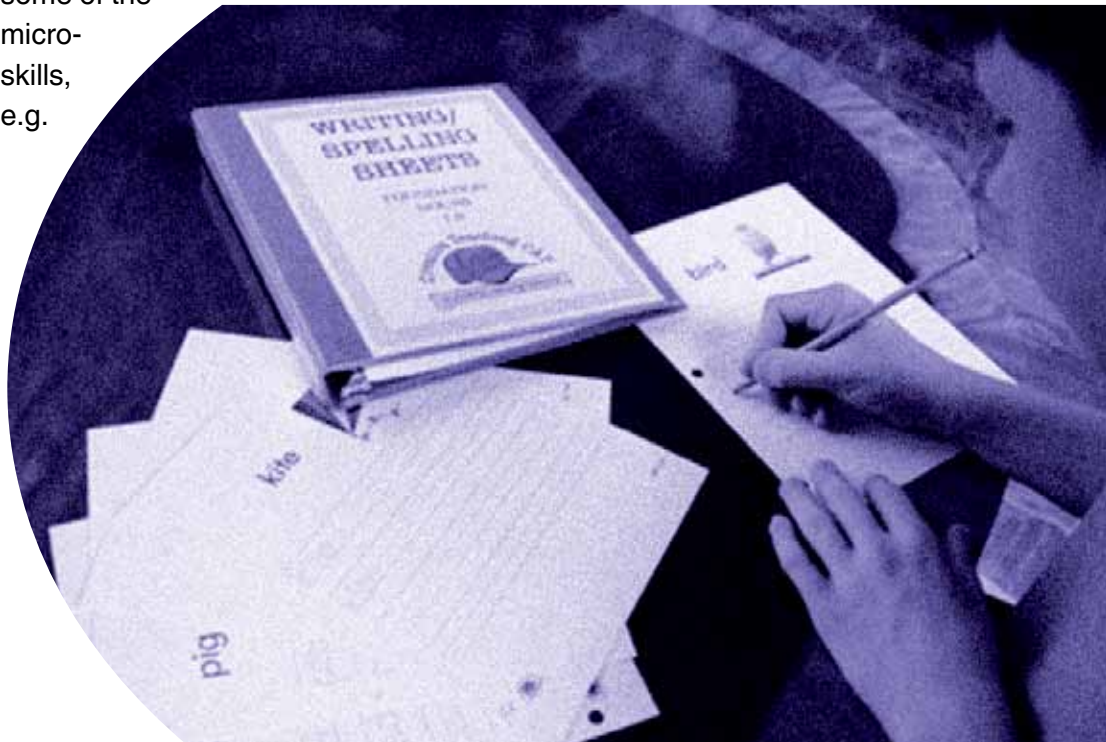
Literature can be used as a source of authentic material in the classroom because literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree. Of course the focus should be on teaching language, not literature, in other words, the idea should be using literary texts as one kind among other texts. With that in mind, the tasks should aim at meaning and not form, especially literary form or stylistics (Martinez, 2002).

Using authentic materials

When we (the teachers) first begin using authentic materials, we distribute the material among students and have them work on it individually. However, experience has shown that having students work in pairs is a better

authentic situation, and provided it is appropriately exploited, is significant for many reasons, among which are:

1. Students are exposed to real discourse, as in videos of interviews with famous people where intermediate students listen for the gist.
2. Authentic materials keep students informed about what is happening in the world, so they have an intrinsic educational value. As teachers, we are educators working within the school system, so education and general development are part of our responsibility
3. They can produce a sense of achievement, e.g., a tourist brochure of England given to students to plan a 4-day visit.
4. The same piece of material can be used under different circumstances if the task is different.
5. Reading texts are ideal to teach/practice micro skills such as scanning. The teacher can have students practice some of the micro-skills, e.g.



basic students listen to news reports and they are asked to identify the names of countries, famous people, etc. (ability to detect key words).

6. Books, articles, newspapers, and so on contain a wide variety of text types, language styles not easily found in conventional teaching materials.

7. They can encourage reading for pleasure because they are likely to contain topics of interest to learners, especially if students are given the chance to have a say about the topics or kinds of authentic materials to be used in the class.

8. They relate more closely to students' needs and have a positive effect on student motivation.

Disadvantages of authentic materials

Richards (2001) notes that authentic materials often contain difficult language, unneeded vocabulary items and complex

language is put, the setting, the nature of interaction, and the interpretation the participants bring to both the setting and the activity (1994, p.4).

The term authenticity and authentic are often used to describe language samples – both oral and written – that reflect the naturalness of form, and the appropriateness of cultural and situational context (Shomoosi & Ketabi, 2007).

Guariento and Morley (2001) have identified four broad schools of thought regarding task authenticity: authenticity through a genuine purpose, authenticity through real world target, authenticity through classroom interaction, and authenticity through engagement.

Authentic materials

There are a lot of definitions of authentic materials. Here are some definitions:

Authentic texts (either written or spoken) are those which are designed for native speakers: they are real texts designed not for language students, but for the speakers of the language in question (Harmer, 2007).

A rule of thumb for authentic here is any material which has not specifically produced for the purposes of language teaching (Nunan, 1989).

Alongside the recognition of the need to develop effective skills and strategies for the real world, there has been a growing awareness of the importance of affective factors in learning, and the use of authentic texts is now considered to be one way of maintaining or increasing students' motivation for learning. They give the learner the feeling that he or she

is learning the real language; that they are in touch with a living entity, the target language as it is used by the community which speaks it.

Authentic materials have two principal characteristics. First, the materials have a definite communicative purpose. The speaker is trying to inform, convince, or instruct the listener. His focus is normally on the objective he has in mind rather than on the language he is using to accomplish that purpose. Second, the content is important for its own sake. The speaker intends to communicate a message to someone else. He is not talking to demonstrate the use of commands or direct object pronouns. He is not using certain vocabulary items to teach them for a vocabulary quiz later in the week (Chastain, 1988).

Advantages of authentic materials

One of the main ideas of using authentic materials in the classroom is to expose the learner to as much real language as possible. Even if the classroom is not a real life situation, authentic materials do have a very important place within it.

One of the aims of authentic materials is to help the student react in the same way as L1 speakers in their first language. Learners who live in the target language environment, once outside of the classroom will encounter a variety of situations in which different reading purposes are required. We can claim that, by using authentic materials, learners are being exposed to real language and they feel that they are learning the real language.

Using authentic materials in the classroom, even when not done in an

materials is one of the mainstays of an imaginative and motivating higher level course. We now have an extensive collection of materials that include menus, maps, newspaper inserts, store advertisements, travel brochures, catalogs, phone books, real estate pamphlets, and various pamphlets of sightseeing and tourist information. We have found that using sets of materials are particularly appealing and all of these materials being interwoven immerse the student in a multidimensional English experience.

What is authenticity?

Widdowson (1979) makes a point when he talks about authenticity not as a quality residing in instances of language but as a quality which is bestowed upon them, created by the response of the receiver. He further maintains that we do not recognize authenticity as something there waiting to be noticed, we realize it in the act of interpretation.

Breen (1985) and Taylor (1994) mentioned facets of authenticity which have been shown in Table 1.

Table1. Facets of authenticity according to Taylor and Breen

Authenticity of language	Authenticity of text used as input data for learners
	Authenticity of the learners' own interpretation of such texts
Authenticity of task	Authenticity of tasks conducive to language learning
Authenticity of situation (Taylor, 1994)	Authenticity of actual social situation of the language classroom (Breen, 1985)

Widdowson (1978) cited in Tatsuki (2006) use genuineness to refer to a characteristic of the text or the material itself. He claims that it is distinct from authenticity which refers to the uses to which texts are put. So the claim here is that texts themselves can actually be intrinsically genuine but that authenticity itself is a social construct. In other words, authenticity is created through the interaction of users, situations, and the texts.

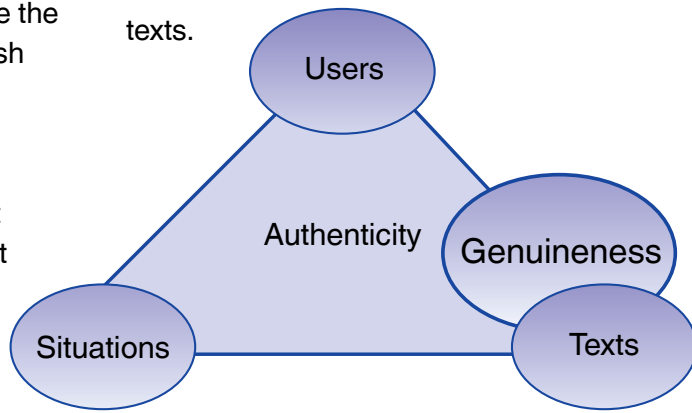


Figure1. Interaction of users, situations and texts in authenticity

Taylor remarks that the general confusion about authenticity and genuineness is compounded by the idea of naturalness. What is natural? Does naturalness mean the same thing to everyone? Is naturalness in one context naturalness in another? He concludes that this is a hopeless debate and that we should concentrate instead on the use and interpretation of text, which alone can make them authentic. He states that we should acknowledge that there is no such thing as an abstract quality “authenticity” which can be defined once and for all. Instead we should acknowledge that authenticity is a function not only of the language but also of the participants, the use to which

The Use of Authentic Material in the Classroom

Heidar Abdi M.A. in TEFL. Shahid Beheshti University
High School Teacher in Divandarreh, Kurdistan
E-mail: h_abdi62@yahoo.com

Bahareh Asadi High school teacher in Divandarreh, Kurdistan



چکیده

این مقاله سعی دارد نگاهی به مواد آموزشی اصلی (تغییرنیافته) و مزایا و معایب آنها بیندازد. متون اصلی موضوعات جالبی به همراه دارند؛ کلاس درس فعالی را به وجود می‌آورند، ایجاد انگیزه می‌کنند و تا آنجا که امکان دارد، دانش‌آموزان را در معرض زبان واقعی قرار می‌دهند. این مقاله چگونگی استفاده مؤثر از مواد آموزشی اصلی در کلاس را توضیح می‌دهد. به این ترتیب که به هر دو دانش‌آموز یک کپی از مواد درسی اصلی همراه با مجموعه‌ای از سؤالات در مورد محتوای مواد آموزشی داده می‌شود. دانش‌آموزان ضمن همکاری با یکدیگر، اطلاعات مناسب را استخراج می‌کنند و به سؤالات جواب می‌دهند.

کلیدواژه‌ها: مواد آموزشی اصلی، انگیزه دانش‌آموز، معلمان

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to take a look at authentic materials and their advantages and disadvantages. Authentic texts provide students with interesting topics, create an active classroom, create motivation and expose students to as much real language as possible. This paper explains how authentic materials can be effectively used in the classroom. Each pair of students is given a copy of the authentic material accompanied by a set of questions about the content of the handout. Students work together with a partner to extract pertinent information that is necessary to answer the questions.

Key Words: authentic materials, student motivation, teachers

Introduction

Many scholars believe that authentic materials should be introduced in the classroom.

Authentic materials refer to books, articles and etc. where language and structure are not simplified in any way. According to Oxford Dictionary of English, the term “authentic” has at least one meaning: of undisputed source or origin and not a copy; genuine. For

teaching purposes, this refers to English books, novels or articles that have been written by an English speaking author to a native audience or speaker; in these cases the language used has not been altered.

Authentic materials can complement English classes by enlivening the class and creating a more positive attitude toward learning. Using authentic