

METHODS OF USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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Abstract. *This article not only discusses the advantages of using authentic materials in English language teaching, what teachers should pay more attention to, but also provides examples of authentic materials and activities that can be done using authentic materials in the classroom.*

Keywords: *authentic materials, skill, communication, age, learning style, teaching style, culture, cultural conflict, authentic learning environment.*

INTRODUCTION

According to the widely chosen definition of authentic materials, most linguists agree with this one: authentic materials are those created for some real-world purpose other than language learning and teaching, and often, but not always, provided by native speakers for native speakers.

It may include any materials in the English language except workbooks, teacher's books and grammar books, because authentic materials are for everybody, including native, non-native and second language speakers. They are especially prepared for a set of information, entertainment, relaxation or considering interest of public audience. These are texts written for everyday life; be it by native speakers or fluent second-language speakers. The topics of these texts are aimed at a target audience of fluent speakers and some types of text may be technical. They may be written in local dialects or have specific registers, such as formal or academic writing.

METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES

Besides, as technology is developing day-by-day, authentic materials can be found in different forms. One can utilize them both online and offline.

1. Written (printed) authentic materials
2. Audial authentic materials
3. Visual authentic materials
4. Realia

Here are examples of authentic materials according to its type structure.

Print	Auditory	Visual	Realia
Job applications	Voicemail messages	Movies	Coins, currency
menus	Radio broadcasts	Videos	Wall clocks
Utility bills	Podcasts	TV programs	Phones
Packing slips	Audiobooks	Slides	Dolls
Order forms	Music	Photographs	Puppets

ATM screens	Radio ads	Paintings	Maps
Recipes	Radio shows	Comics	Flags
Websites		Artwork	Globe
Coupons		Stamps	Plants
Traffic tickets		Postcards	Clothes
Greeting cards		Pictures	Clay
Report cards		Soap operas	Rocks
TV guides		Cartoons	Fruits
Magazines		Comedy, game, talk shows	Toys
Newspapers		TV commercials	
Literature		Weather reports	
Classified ads			

Written authentic materials include many materials such as stories, novels, articles, newspapers, magazines, written news, posts and even poems. They can be as big as books and as small as posts in social media as well. This blog post can be the smallest example of written authentic materials. Blog posts contain such a wide variety of language styles and grammar. They can be written in both informal and formal styles of writing depending on the topics it is written for. They provide great modeling for new language use and they also provide a starting point for both conversation and deeper debate.

They provide opportunities for reading and speaking. They can also provide the possibility for creative writing exercises and report writing. There are virtually no limits on how blog posts can be used in the class. They can be used at different levels and with so many different types of activities.

Audial authentic materials can include audio tapes, podcasts, songs, and audial versions of poems, CDs, news, radio advertisements, broadcasts, voice messages and recordings. Music and the latest pop songs can be a useful authentic resource to use in your classroom. Music can help engage and motivate learners and can create a productive learning environment in your classroom.

Moreover, visual authentic materials include any content from pictures to movies. Even a wordless sign on the street can be a great example of visual authentic materials.

In addition, the last one is real authentic materials that are often called realias. They include anything that can be touched with hand. Coins of the English speaking countries, flags, national puppets, national toys and even clothes can be cited on them.

As we said above. These authentic materials are created for native speakers. However, most teachers use them effectively during their lessons and students just enjoy seeing, listening, watching or doing them.

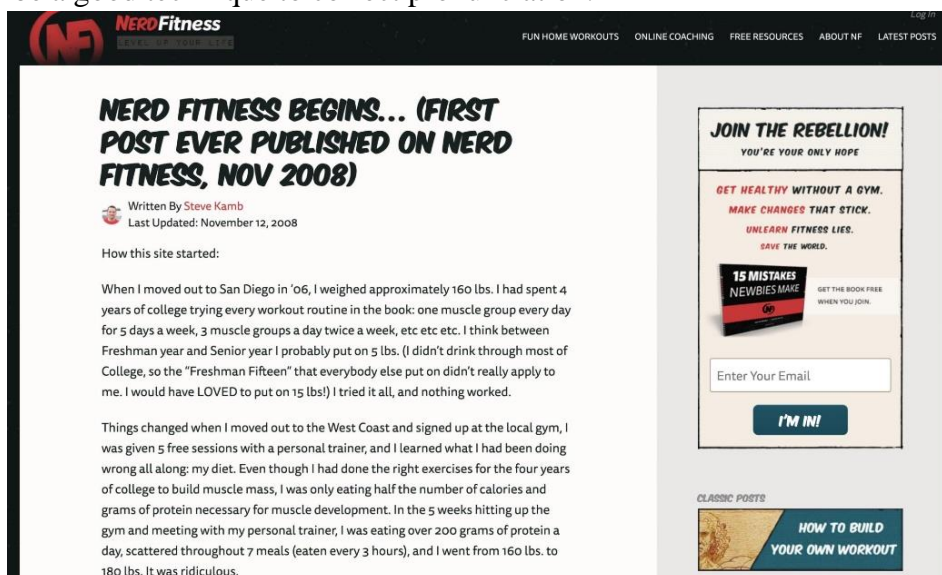
Therefore, what should teachers pay attention while using authentic materials? What methodology may they take into account?

From shorter to longer. Teachers should choose shorter authentic materials like short songs; short movies while using authentic materials for the first time.

From simpler to more comprehensive. Presenting full movies or difficult books may bore students and dissatisfy their learning needs.

Each time teacher should prepare an activity after presenting authentic materials. For example, just listening to a song for enjoyment may make students lazy. Instead of it, teacher may instruct them to note unknown words or past simple verbs in the song. It teaches learners always to put an aim before doing something.

Using colorful materials aimed at different skills. Teachers should be careful to present different materials each time and for different teaching purposes. For example, a song can be used as listening task while it can be a good technique to correct pronunciation.



Taking into consideration the interest of students make authentic materials more effective. If learners are eager to know about science, teachers would rather to use scientific articles than presenting songs.

Taking into account the age of students is vital while using authentic materials. If they are kids, they may prefer crosswords, realias, cartoons and simple audial materials, while adult learners want ones that are more serious.

Paying attention to learning style of learners are important in using authentic materials. If there are many audial learners in the class, teacher should not give written authentic materials each time, it makes authentic materials less effective.



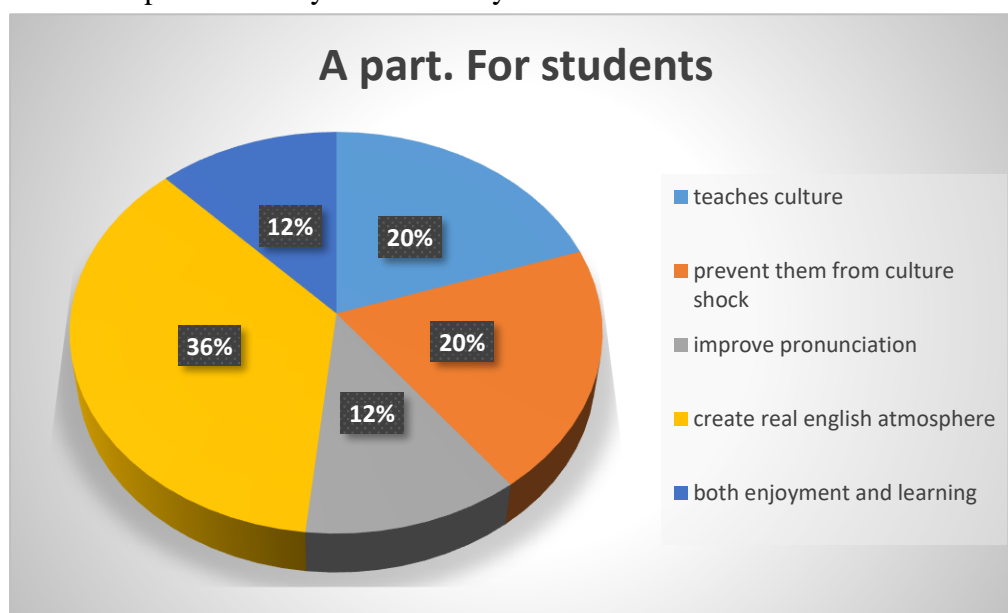


Selecting authentic materials taking into account the cultural aspects of learners. It is teacher who is responsible for choosing an appropriate authentic material that is suitable to culture of students and should abuse their cultural and traditional peculiarities.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Authentic materials are very reliable and useful as well. Because they can provide both teachers and student with several comforts and opportunities during the teaching and learning process. They are defined in detail in A and B pie charts.

Just one authentic material can be used in different ways and different skills. For example, podcasts are often given for listening for students and improving their listening skills. But podcasts can enhance students' horizon and outlook, additionally making them pronounce words like natives and speak naturally and smoothly.



However, as authentic materials are prepared for native speakers, they may include many idioms, phrases, proverbs and sayings; shortenings, wrong or incorrect usage of grammar rules and written or recorded in informal context, that's why, before presenting authentic materials, teachers should point to those peculiarities of them and explain those aspects.

Indeed, in this internet-based world, teachers can find any appropriate authentic materials in no time. For example, music can be used in different activities like the followings:

Consolidate a topic;

Look at a particular grammar point;

Focus on a particular language point;

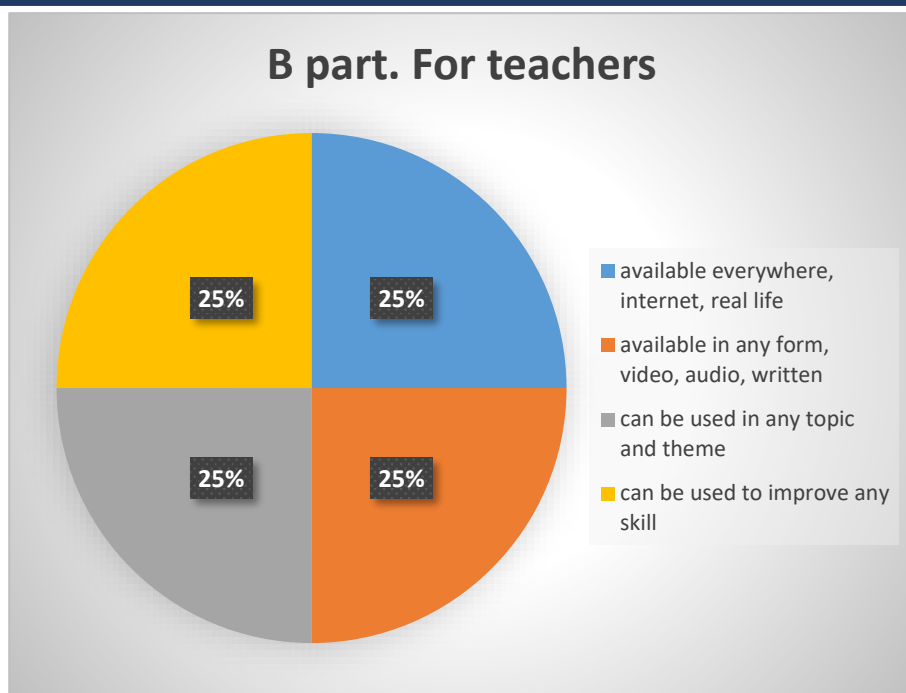
Focus on the lyrics to create a conversation/debate;

Look at a particular phoneme or phonemes;

Use questions related to the song lyrics to start a conversation;

Motivate a class. Ask your learners what music they enjoy, see if you can personalize some music genres, and incorporate them into your class.

However, teachers should be careful before using this authentic material.



They should pay attention:

The lyrics - Check the lyrics carefully. There are so many explicit lyrics in current pop songs, make sure you choose an appropriate song.

Will your learners like the song? Your music style and their music style may be very different.

Is it far too fast or difficult for the students to understand?

Take into account the age and level of the class. Younger learners will need songs that are less wordy and very repetitive. Teenagers may only want to listen to current music and older learners may not see the benefit of using music in the classroom. As with anything, make sure you have a clear learning objective.

Culture - Some cultures may not like the idea of listening to music. Always think about the religion, culture, and opinions of your learners.

Don't play the song more than 3 times, even if the students like the song; they will bore easily. Make sure you have a range of activities that you can incorporate into the song and class.

DEDUCTION

To sum up all the opinions mentioned above, we can deduct that authentic materials are full of advantage and enjoyment when they are used appropriately during the lessons. In modern world, one can find authentic materials in internet sites without any difficulties. However, pupils and students do not know how to use them and make them effective for their study, while teachers make authentic materials more effective by selecting appropriate ones and creating some activities based on them.

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