



TEACHING ACADEMIC WRITING THROUGH AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

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Abstract: The article deals with utilizing from authentic materials and also its pros and cons in teaching academic writing. As well as this, it is aforementioned opinions of some scientists in this article.

Keywords: Authentic materials, academic writing, genuine materials.

These days and age, learning foreign languages has become a real enthusiasm of nearly all students and young adults. Learning foreign languages has been pitched as an important style in the whole of educational areas. It is the responsibility of all teachers to use effective methods in language teaching, including teaching academic writing. It plays a vital role utilizing from authentic materials in academic writing. It has some positive and negative sides. In this article, I want to share my own information and some opinion of scientists about authentic materials in academic writing.

Academic writing is a formal style of writing in universities and scholarly publications. It is usually written journal articles and books on academic topics and also it is expected to write essays, research papers, and dissertation in academic style. The use of authentic materials in academic writing helps students to expand their worldview and further strengthen their knowledge. Authentic materials include TV shows, news segments, movie clips and trailers, documentaries, radio broadcasts, advertisements, and such kind of things like these.

Scholars such as Tomlinson, Wallace, Mc Neill made the following points about authentic materials:

The term "material" can be defined as information, objects whereas, "Teaching materials" are the lectures, syllabi, texts, useful guidelines to get the students involved etc" (LittleJohn ,1998; as cited in Tomlinson, 2003, p. 43).

Examples of authentic materials would be newspaper reports, magazine articles, advertisements, poems, songs, video clips, menus, horoscopes etc. One important feature of authentic materials is that they are not written for educational purposes and are rather defined as real life texts (Wallace, 1994, p. 145).



Teachers may incorporate authentic materials not only to motivate the learners but also to give them the feeling that they are using real language- “the target language as it is used by the community that speaks it”. (McNeill, 1994, p. 130).

There are positive and negative sides of using authentic materials in academic writing. The first advantage of authentic materials is that they provide real-life example of language used in everyday situations. They can be used to add more interest for the learner. For instance, learners can have different kind of opinions from using these materials by searching for information that is of interest to them. That is mainly because, learners can read different texts and get a variety of information from them.

Secondly, authentic materials are more absorbing. When learners read this kind of texts, they can get more details.

Peacock pointed that "Authentic materials are intrinsically more interesting or stimulating than artificial or non-authentic materials. He also believed that if a teacher uses suitable authentic materials in the language classroom, it motivates students because these are more interesting and inspiring than artificial materials."(1997)

In addition to this, Gower mentioned that " while applying authentic materials in the language classes, a teacher has to ensure that the material is exploited well. Sometimes teachers need to “shorten authentic texts, or add a glossary in order to make them more accessible” or suitable to the class“ program of work. (1995, p.83.)

So, teaching by using authentic materials in academic writing is useful tendency to broaden learners' cultural and spiritual horizons.

However, on the other hand, there are some disadvantages of using authentic materials in writing classes. Firstly, it may cause some confusion while using them in writing. That is, when it is taken one article of the newspaper, different points can be made in it. As a result, the learner can confuse about using which one to write.

Secondly, some newspaper articles are difficult to understand. That is, it can be used more scientific terms, advanced vocabularies and also mixed structures of sentences.

Kilickaya claimed that while selecting materials teachers need to look at some points that sometimes these materials use more complex sentence and superfluous vocabulary items which are time consuming for both the students and teachers. (2004)

In additionally, Martinez explained that authentic materials are sometimes too culturally biased that becomes challenging to understand while writing. (2002)

Concluding from the points mentioned above, while teaching academic writing through authentic materials, teachers can provide students with more data. And also, these materials help students to work on themselves and improve their knowledge. It requires some time and patience from the learners. Therefore, the use of authentic materials in



writing plays an important role in expanding students' worldview and gaining more information about in various fields.

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