# DEFINITION OF "AUTHENTICITY" AND AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN THE CONTEXT OF EFL TEACHING

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**ANNOTATION**

The article deals with various definitions of authentic materials. Authentic materials are defined as language samples that are created by native speakers for native speakers of the language. Another similar opinion comes that authentic materials are not for language teaching purposes, but designed texts used for real life use for interactional and transactional purposes. Authentic materials were used for native speaker only, but some teachers used it for teaching purposes. The development of ELT finally places the authentic materials not only for native but also for EFL as their learning media. Authentic materials as printed materials, which are used in classroom in the same way they would be used in real life. For this development of authentic materials use, it is also added that authentic materials in classroom are stretches of real language, produced by real speakers or writers for real audiences and designed to convey real message.

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Authentic texts have been defined as "...real-life texts, not written for pedagogic purposes" (Wallace). They are therefore written for native speakers and contain "real" language. They are "...materials that have been produced to fulfill some social purpose in the language community." (Peacock).

There are various definitions of authentic materials. Authentic materials are defined as language samples that are created by native speakers for native speakers of the language. Another similar opinion comes that authentic materials are not for language teaching purposes, but designed texts used for real life use for interactional and transactional purposes.

At first, authentic materials were used for native speaker only, but since 1970s some teachers used it for teaching purposes. The development of ELT finally places the authentic materials not only for native but also for EFL as their learning media. Authentic materials as printed materials, which are used in classroom in the same way they would be used in real life. For this development of authentic materials use, it is also added that authentic materials in classroom are stretches

of real language, produced by real speakers or writers for real audiences and designed to convey real message. Authentic materials used in the classroom of EFL students are considered to introduce them not only to the language their learnt but also to the "life" behind the language.

Authentic materials are used in genuine communication in the real world, and not specifically prepared for the teaching and learning of English. For instance, original unedited newspaper articles, written and audio-visual materials form the media can belong to this group. However, the foreignness and difficulty level of authentic materials can cause students to perceive these materials as non-authentic. Although there have been different views of authentic materials proposed in the scholarship, there has been little research done with EFL teachers as subjects to gain their insights and experiences on how to make authentic materials authentic to students. Although scholars and instructors have praised the benefits of authentic materials, they seem to be unable to agree on a specific definition of authentic materials.

According to this definition, authentic materials are unedited or unmodified from their original purposes, and can include items such as original restaurant menu, unedited newspaper articles, and audio-visual materials from the media. Similarly, in their article "Language with a purpose: Using authentic materials in the foreign language classroom," author gives examples of this type of authentic material: "both oral and written-that reflect a naturalness of form, and appropriateness of cultural and situational context that would be found in the language as used by native speakers". For instance, they discuss using TV programs in the target language, which offer the learners a "visual context that is reinforced with the sound element and, in many instances, the written word, all of which contribute greatly to better comprehension of the message".

On the other hand, others have pointed out that the foreignness and difficulty level of unedited original materials can cause students to perceive them as "inauthentic." Researchers have suggested that authentic materials can only be useful and authentic to the students when "learner authenticity" is realized, meaning the students must be interested and involved with the materials.

In order to be authentic, materials need to be a good addition to students' knowledge or experience on this subject, that is, they should "engage the learner's prior knowledge, interest and curiosity". Similarly, authenticity can only be achieved when there is agreement between the material writer's intention and the learner's interpretation. In other words, materials are authentic if they can

generate some schemata, interaction or agreement from the learner, so that the learner can understand what the materials are trying to convey.

Based on this definition, authentic materials can be any materials that are perceived by the learner as useful, lifelike, and interesting. Such materials can include not only original untouched materials from the real world, but also materials created by language instructors, and materials co-designed by ESL teachers and students.

Some materials from the real world can have interesting topics for learners, and students may want to learn the content, yet, if the students are not equipped with the proper level of language skills, vocabulary, or cultural background, they simply cannot comprehend the content of the article. Such materials cannot be useful or authentic to the learners. We cannot mistakenly think authentic materials are equal to acquisition-rich input, since these materials do not guarantee students' automatic comprehension. If the input is not comprehended, then, it has no chance to be integrated into the learner's language system.

In addition, unmodified materials from the real world should not be considered as vehicles to automatic authentic interaction or response. Lee specifically argues that not all materials can promote "the learner's interaction with the authentic materials, in terms of appropriate responses and positive psychological reaction". It is also suggested that: "Authenticity revisited: How real is real," that the use of authentic materials does not guarantee authentic interaction or authentic responses. For instance, when students are taught how to take notes in English with tapes of telephone recordings, these recordings are only set-forms of how conversations might start or end. Through this way of learning, although the tapes are recorded authentic language samples, the learners cannot really interact with the recorded tape or negotiate meanings. After all, the tape is not a person who can initiate conversation or correspond authentically with the learner. So performing this task of taking note is considered authentic for the learner, the interaction is really not.

There are many discussions of the use of authentic texts in teaching reading comprehension in classroom context. It is written that authentic material has been traditionally supposed that the language presented to students should be simplified in some way for easy access and acquisition.

Nowadays there are recommendations that the language presented should be authentic. In this case, it is true that modifying the materials in teaching reading comprehension has been recommended for the sake of easiness to reach the

purpose of the teaching itself. In addition, for the purpose of the present study, the term ''authentic texts'' is defined as language samples that are created by native speakers for native speakers of the language. It keeps clearly in mind that authentic texts, stand for something which made only by the native and provide for the native themself. The examples of authentic texts are advertisements, magazines, newspapers, articles and brochures.

Moreover, authentic texts are not designed for pedagogical purposes, authentic materials are "ordinary texts not produced specifically for language teaching purposes." In line with this, Ferit Kilickaya wrote:" The use of authentic materials in an EFL classroom is what many teachers involved in foreign language teaching have discussed in recent years. We have heard persuasive voices insisting that the English presented in the classroom should be authentic.

On the other hand, authentic texts are the texts that contain a stretch of real language produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort texts that are written for the purpose of communicating information. That is why authentic texts cannot be found in textbook and other sources in instructional area, because of the texts have truly simplified in purpose. Then, authentic materials are materials that are not produced for second language learners.

Moreover, authentic materials can provide resources for ESL/EFL teachers and offer them the opportunity to expose students to materials produced for real-life and out of classroom context. Authentic materials as printed materials, which are used in classrooms in the same way they would be used in real life. This statements explained that authentic materials are the materials which are directly used by the native speakers and it can addressed for teaching Reading Comprehension as well as for creating materials to improve students' reading comprehension skill also expose them to the real language they will face in the real world.

Based on the statement above, it can be concluded that the authentic texts can be defined as those texts that are naturally produced by the interaction between native speakers of the target language. Then, they also the texts that not create for teaching and learning process but they can be used in pedagogic aim in order to increase students' mastery in reading comprehension. Furthermore, authentic materials are among the most important tools a teacher can use in the class in order to make his/her teaching go smoothly and be effective in transmitting the necessary knowledge to students.

Authentic materials had been used for language learning for several years ago due to the rise of communicative approach. The goal of that approach is to develop communicative competence in a real life. For the purpose of the teaching and learning English, an authentic text is one whose primary intent is to communicate meaning. The relevant consideration here is not for whom it is written, but that there has been an authentic communicative objective in mind.

Besides that, authentic materials or texts are texts used in real life communication which are not written for pedagogic purposes. In brief, a text is usually regarded as authentic if it is not written for teaching purposes but for a real-life communicative purpose, where the writer has certain message to pass on the reader. In line with the definition above, authentic materials contain real language produced by a real speakers or writers for a real audience and designed to convey a real message. It means that in authentic materials, the language is not imaginary or artificial but originally used in the real world contexts.

 Moreover, authentic materials can be defined as the materials designed for native speakers and they are used in the classroom in a way similar to their purpose when they are designed for. Here, the definition points out the term authentic as a real language. Though, when teachers bring the authentic materials in the classroom, they used it in genuine way in which those materials are designed to. For example, a report text about pollution brought into the classroom so the students can discuss the report on pollution in relation to their city where they live.

Authentic aural language is presented in movies, radio shows, and songs, among others, while authentic written language appears in newspapers, magazines, books, and Internet web pages. Thus, authentic texts oppose the so-called English textbooks, which comprise gradually controlled grammatical rules and functions in order to teach language content.

Several definitions of the term authenticity and authentic materials have been given in the field of language teaching. One shared element among all such definitions as is given by Kilickaya „exposure to the real usage of the everyday life language', and how native speakers use for their daily lives purposes. Kilickaya has also indicated that something in common in all definitions of authentic materials is "exposure to real language and its use in its own community" it is defined authentic materials as texts produced by and intended for native speakers for non-pedagogical purposes.

Authentic materials, they are not created for educational language purposes. Authentic materials are designed for real-life goals and native speakers, communications. Also, spoken and written materials as samples of authentic materials.

William Guariento and John Morley describe authentic text as: "…one 'created to fulfill some social purpose in the language community in which it was produced' With the onset of communicative movement a greater awareness of the need to develop students' skills for the real world has meant that teachers endeavor to simulate this world in the classroom." Both academics claim that the purpose of using authentic materials is to prepare students for their social lives.

In other words, the authentic materials are used in order to close the language gap between classroom knowledge and real life. Similarly, the language used in text books are only valid in a classroom environment whereas the requirement of real life English is different and this difference has not yet been closed by the use of text books because, as we all know, learners have to deal with the language of brochures, office work, application forms and so on. The author also thinks that the role of the teacher is crucial; it is the teacher's responsibility to filter materials through selection of the learning objectives. It is the teacher's responsibility to identify the items and their adaptability as well.

Authenticity can therefore be considered to be the interaction between the reader and the text and not just the text in itself. Reading is considered to be an ongoing interaction, going beyond the physical context of the text, looking for meaning as well as processing information. Reading is an essential interaction between language and though. Where the writer encodes his thoughts as language and the reader decodes the language into thought. There have been several variations of definitions proposed by scholars. In fact, I can infer that all definitions explained by the scholars are associated each other.

Authentic materials are also known as real-life or genuine materials. Martinez defines authentic materials as materials which are aimed at native speakers' daily life and not for teaching purpose. Moreover, it is described that authentic materials are identified by their authenticity in time, people, and location. These materials exist in the target language country, used by the people of that country and exist in the current situation. Generally, we conclude that authentic materials are real materials which exist in the real world of the target language, used in their daily life and not produced for teaching purposes.

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