

BENEFITING STUDENTS WITH AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRAK

Dewasa ini, bahan ajar harus dikaitkan dengan dunia nyata dalam kehidupan nyata. Materi otentik merupakan salah satu jenis materi yang berkaitan dengan kehidupan kita sehari-hari. Dengan menggunakan materi otentik di dalam kelas akan membantu siswa untuk menjembatani kesenjangan antara konteks kelas dan di luar kelas. Selain itu, penggunaan materi otentik dapat membuat proses pembelajaran menjadi lebih imajinatif dan memotivasi. Artikel ini terdiri dari beberapa kemungkinan penggunaan materi otentik di kelas Bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing dan bagaimana hal itu bermanfaat bagi siswa dalam memaksimalkan pembelajaran mereka.

Kata Kunci: *Keuntungan Siswa, Materi Otentik, EFL*

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, teaching materials should be related to our real world. Authentic materials is one kind of materials that is related to our daily life. By using authentic materials in the classroom, it will help students Bridge the gap between the classroom and outside the classroom. Besides, using authentic materials can make the learning process more imaginative and motivating. This article consists of several possible usages of authentic materials in the EFL classroom and how it is benefitting students to maximize their learning.

Keywords: *Benefiting Students, Authentic Materials, EFL*

INTRODUCTION

The use of authentic materials in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become a popular issue. This is due to the concern that in teaching and learning process the materials should have a connection to real-life. Authentic materials denote to the language materials used in the daily life of native speakers (Jaelani, 2020). Students' trouble in understanding language outside of the classroom may be the result of the materials which are quite different from the language of the real world, such as the use of textbook or other resources materials which is not familiar with the content in teaching and learning process can make students feel bored and not interest to learn. Students need to learn the materials that are close to their lives. The more they interact with the real of the target language in the classroom activities, the higher their interest in learning (Peacock, 1997: 144; Porter and Roberts, 1981: 39).

According to Richards (2001 as cited in Jaelani, 2020) there are several reasons for using authentic materials in the classroom; they prepare learners for real life, they meet learners' needs, they affect learners' motivation positively, they encourage teachers to adopt effective teaching methods and they present authentic information about culture. By using authentic materials in the classroom, it will help students bridge the gap between the classrooms and outside the classroom and also it can motivate students to learn. There are many references and related to the use of authentic materials. Some studies related to the use of authentic materials have been conducted by some researchers. One of the studies conducted by Qamariah (2016) with the title "Authentic Material, an Alternative in English Classroom". She explained about the students' possibility to feel part of the reality and culture of the language they are learning. Another findings was from the

study of Widyastuti (2017) entitled “Authentic Materials and Automaticity for Teaching English” showing that the use of authentic materials in the classroom benefiting from exposure to real language being used in real context. Other positive aspects of using authentic materials were that they are highly motivating, giving sense of achievement to understand and encourage student for further reading. This article aims to describe several possible usages of authentic materials in the EFL classroom and how it is benefitting students to maximize their learning.

What are Authentic Materials?

The terminologies of authentic materials have been defined in various ways. Authentic materials are defined as “real-life material, not written for pedagogical purposes” (Wallace in Berardo., 2006, p. 61 as cited in Kusumawardani, Santosa & Roschsantiningasih, 2018). It is supported by Hedge (2000 as cite in Losada, Insuasty & Osorio, 2016), he agrees that authentic materials are not produced for language teaching purposes and do not have “contrived or simplified language.” Another definition of the term of authentic materials is defined by Martinez (2002:1) in Hussein (2013) 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”. Using authentic materials brings the means of learning and the purpose of learning close together and this establishes once again a direct link with the world outside the classroom (Edge 1996:47 in Elena Kozhevnikova, 2015). From the definition above, it can be concluded that authentic materials is a materials which is not for leaning purpose, but for the giving information for the readers. It can be texts, visual or audio. However, authentic materials help students keep their interest in teaching and learning and makes learning meaningful and easy for students.

Gebhard (1996 as cited in Qomariah, 2016) classified the type of authentic materials as below:

1. Authentic Listening-Viewing Materials
TV commercials, quiz shows, cartoons, information clips, comedy shows, movies, cleaning soap operas, professionally audio-taped quick testimonies and novels, radio ads, songs, documentaries, and income pitches.
2. Authentic Visual Materials
Slides, photographs, paintings, children’ artwork, stick-discern drawings, wordless avenue signs, silhouettes, pix from a

magazine, inkblots, postcard pix, wordless photo books, stamps, and X-rays.

3. Authentic Printed Materials
Newspaper articles, film advertisements, astrology columns, sports activities reports, obituary columns, recommendation columns, lyrics to songs, eating place menus, avenue signs, cereal boxes, sweet wrappers, vacationer records brochures, college catalogs, phone books, maps, TV guides, comedian books, greeting cards, grocery coupons, pins with messages, and bus schedules.

Reason Why Choosing Authentic Materials in Teaching and Learning Process on EFL classroom

The sources of authentic materials that can be used in the classroom are so varied. But the most common are used in the classroom are magazines, newspapers, songs, movies and TV programs, advertisements, brochures. The most useful and easier to find is on the Internet. Teachers can find some materials such as newspapers, magazines, songs, podcast, and advertisement on the internet. There are some reasons why authentic materials can be applied in the teaching and learning process. One of them is to experience a close contact with the real language. Authentic materials can facilitate learners to maximize their learning. The main benefits of using authentic materials in EFL classroom is the learners will be more confident in encountering words that they probably never seen in formal materials and authentic materials lead the students to how language is used in the real world and improve their overall language proficiency which involves reading, listening comprehension, communicative competence, lexical and stylistic knowledge (Qamariah, 2016). For teachers, they are given an opportunity to choose a variety of teaching materials which they think may be appropriate for their students. It is also some challenges for them to design a good lesson plan to apply it in the classroom.

Using authentic materials in the EFL classrooms have several advantages and also disadvantages. Martinez (2000) in Widyastuti (2017) summarized several advantages of using authentic materials:

1. By using authentic materials, learners are exposed to real discourse.
2. By using authentic materials, the learners will

not encounter the artificial language of the classroom but the real world and language how it is really used.

3. Authentic Materials give learners informed about what is happening in the world, so they have an intrinsic educational value.
4. Authentic materials as language change are reflected in the materials so that students and teachers can keep abreast of such changes.
5. Different authentic materials such as books, articles, newspapers, and soon contain a wide variety of text types and language styles not easily found in conventional teaching materials. Thus it can help students extend their vocabulary and help memorize them in a number of meaningful recycling.
6. Authentic materials can be up to date.

Meanwhile, among the advantages of authentic materials, the

disadvantage of authentic materials is that too many structures are mixed so that lower levels have problems decoding the texts and vocabulary might not be relevant to the student's immediate needs.

According to Kilickaya (2004 as cited in Omid & Azam, 2015), teachers can only use authentic materials in intermediate and advanced language classes. When choosing authentic materials for the learning process, there are some criteria for selection of authentic materials that should be taken into consideration by the teachers. Berardo (2000 as cited in Omid & Azam 2015) mentions that there are three criteria of authentic materials in teaching reading, they are (1) Suitability of content, the materials should be interested, motivated and also relevant to the student's needs; (2) Exploitability, it refers to how the materials can be used and exploited to develop the competence of the learners in the teaching and learning process; (3) Readability, it refers to the level of difficulty in the texts/material. It is about the amount of new vocabulary and new structure contained in the texts.

How to integrate Authentic Materials in EFL Classroom?The followings are the adapted ways from Jacobson et.al (2003) in *Creating Authentic Materials and Activities for the Adult Literacy Classroom: A Handbook for Practitioners* as cited in Qamariah (2006)

1. Begins with a needs assessment

The first step in using authentic materials is to identify students, teachers, and student's needs and goals of the institution. This can be done in many ways. Set personal interviews with students, one of which is conducting weekly student focus groups and discussions or administering needs assessment questionnaires or surveys. The main purpose is to identify student goals.

2. Engage students to contribute to identifying authentic materials Students will feel confused when the teacher asks them to learn through authentic materials such as food menus, vouchers, recipes, and other non-school materials into the classroom. Students will definitely think that this materials is not suitable for materials in class. Therefore, the teacher can explain to them in advance about the use of authentic materials and the teacher asks them to bring authentic materials into the classroom to support learning material.

3. Collect local materials

According to Jacobson et.al (2003), research tells us that students will benefit more from using local authentic materials than using ones that are a step removed from their lives. In that way, students are easier to understand and more motivated to learn using local sources rather than authentic materials is taken from textbooks.

4. Use authentic materials in authentic ways

According to Richard (2001 as cited in Umam & Ramadhanti, 2020), authentic materials are teaching materials that are not designed for learning purposes but are used as teaching materials by teachers such as newspapers, video clips, advertisements, and TV series. That is why it is very important to use the materials in an authentically way. The teacher must think in advance whether the content is relevant or interesting or not. For example, using the latest newspaper to search for relevant information, such as looking for TV show information in the newspaper. Because students' level, interest, relevance, and quality of the materials should be appropriate to the authentic materials. It means that authentic materials and the students' needs should be relevant (Mamo, 2013 as cited in Anam, Munir & Anam, 2019).

5. Assess in Authentic Ways

Students generally like having their learning assessed in authentic ways. Reproducing the task

is a more meaningful way to assess learning because it shows how the student will complete the task in the real world. It shows exactly what the student came to class to learn (Qamariah, 2016).

Bellows are examples of procedure on how to use authentic materials in the EFL classroom:

1. Using Recipe, Restaurant Menus
For this case, many restaurant menus are available online. The teachers can find restaurant menus on the internet and then download them. After that, the teacher asks students to guess the name of the food listed on the restaurant menu, or it could be that the teacher asks students to write down the name of what food they will order when they come to the restaurant. The activity is in the form of a role play, where each student plays the role of a waiter and restaurant customer. This strategy focuses on speaking lessons or reading lessons.
2. Using Newspapers, Magazines, Song Lyrics
First of all, the teacher finds an interesting text. Then prepare a vocabulary list and make a worksheet for students. The students are allowed to read the content and do the worksheet after that the students make a summary about what they have read.
3. Using Video
This example is modified from Larimer and Schleicher (1999) in Qamariah (2016):
 - a. The teacher finds some short clips showing greetings which can be found for free on the internet.
 - b. The teacher prepares a worksheet with a vocabulary list and also the questions.
 - c. The class talks about greeting customs in various countries.
 - d. The class conceptualized a rundown that the teacher puts on the board.
 - e. The teacher plays video clips with sound off.
 - f. The students do the hand-out.
 - g. The students share their thoughts
 - h. The teacher plays clips again with the sound on, repeating as much as the class wants.
 - i. The students check their own particular worksheets.
 - j. The class discusses and summarizes what they have seen.

These activities could be more spontaneous and it can be said as student-centered method because they are more active in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Authentic materials can be an alternative source in the teaching and learning process on the EFL classroom to maximize students learning. It can be printed material, audio, or non-printed material such as restaurant menus, recipes. The materials focus on speaking lesson or reading lesson. To focus on reading comprehension, the authentic materials can be newspapers, magazines, song lyrics, and poems. In addition, video can be used to focus on speaking, reading, listening, and speaking. Through authentic materials, students will have more possibilities to bridge the gap between the classroom and outside the classroom. The teachers certainly have to be more selectively to find up to date authentic materials which are also interesting and motivating.

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