

## THE USE OF ONLINE AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

**Gulruh Majidova**

Jizzakh State Pedagogical University

**Abstract:** The excerpt highlights the growing prominence of online learning and the abundance of resources available to students, including materials not explicitly designed for educational purposes. The authentic materials are originally created for real-life communication rather than language instruction. These materials offer valuable opportunities for language learners, as they provide authentic contexts and promote genuine communication. In the paper the effectiveness of digital authentic materials to be used while teaching foreign languages are discussed for teachers to consider when they organize their classes integrating those resources.

**Key words:** Authentic material, printed materials, digital resources, real-life language usage, varied content, digital literacy skills, cultural awareness, accessibility and flexibility, motivation and engagement.

**INTRODUCTION:** While authentic materials offer numerous advantages, incorporating them into language teaching can present challenges and consume considerable time. Nonetheless, English language instructors should embrace authentic materials as tools to enhance students' intercultural competence.

As Adriani Yulia Purwaningrum and Fazri Nur Yusuf (2020) point out authentic materials offer genuine communication opportunities as they are presented in the target language. They encompass various forms such as authentic audio for listening, visual materials for viewing, printed materials, and real-life objects. Accessible online, they include podcasts, online news, YouTube videos, and blogs. Incorporating authentic resources is an effective strategy to enhance motivation and interest in language acquisition. However, integrating real-world examples in language classes can be demanding and time-intensive, necessitating adaptation to align with students' objectives and interests. Utilizing authentic resources facilitates students' development as effective communicators, critical thinkers, and culturally sensitive individuals. The advantages of employing authentic resources in language learning include heightened motivation and engagement. Hence, it is imperative for foreign language and culture instructors to leverage technology in delivering authentic materials to students.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:** Authentic resources can be categorized into two main types: printed materials and online resources. As a result, accessing authentic materials, particularly those available online, has become more convenient for both teachers and students. The internet offers a plethora of authentic materials suitable for use in English language classrooms, particularly in courses focusing on reading comprehension. In addition to a wide variety of text types, the internet also provides an abundance of potential themes and topics, allowing teachers and students to select materials that align with their lesson plans (Rahma Dania.et.al.2020).

Furthermore, given that contemporary students are immersed in a tech-centric environment, educators should capitalize on this by integrating technology into educational practices. For instance, digital media offers a plethora of authentic resources readily available to both teachers and students across different devices. These resources encompass a range of authentic listening, viewing, and visual materials, allowing educators to tailor content selection according to students' requirements.

Since digital media is predominantly crafted for personal and social engagement, its inherent authenticity underscores its value in educational contexts.

The benefits of including online materials in teaching foreign languages have been discussed by lots of researchers. The educators concurred that incorporating authentic online reading materials could greatly benefit students in gaining insight into the real world. Consequently, they emphasized the importance of integrating genuine online reading materials by means such as offering English platforms through educational institutions (Fifi Nur Ulwiyah.et.al.2021).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:**Using online authentic materials in teaching English has become increasingly popular due to the abundance of resources available on the internet and the benefits they offer in language learning. Here's a breakdown of the use of online authentic materials in English teaching:

Online authentic materials provide learners with real-life language usage examples such as articles, videos, podcasts, social media posts, and more. This authenticity reflects the way language is naturally used by native speakers in various contexts, which can enhance learners' comprehension and cultural understanding.

Online authentic materials can be selected based on learners' interests, needs, and proficiency levels, making the learning experience more relevant and engaging. Teachers can tailor materials to suit the specific goals of their lessons or cater to the diverse interests of their students. The Internet, being a dynamic platform, offers abundant information presented in various formats. Language educators should be motivated to explore its potential for language instruction, leveraging its capacity to access authentic materials and engage in dynamic interactions with native speakers globally. This resource equips teachers with instructional aids and offers instant solutions to teaching-related queries or challenges they encounter. Likewise, students can effortlessly access information and resources with just a click, requiring only a computer or smartphone with internet connectivity (Catherine Kanellopoulou, Andreas Giannakoulopoulos. 2021).

The internet offers a vast array of authentic materials covering a wide range of topics, themes, and genres. This diversity allows teachers to incorporate materials that align with different learning objectives, whether it's improving listening skills through podcasts, developing reading comprehension with news articles, or enhancing speaking abilities through online discussions. One notable characteristic of authentic materials is their boundless nature. They cater to a wide array of language requirements, diverse proficiency levels, and various contexts. Every day, numerous texts are continually incorporated into various sources of authentic materials (Meena Sadam.2021. Learning English as a foreign language through authentic materials).

Exposure to authentic materials from different cultures and regions helps learners develop cultural awareness and sensitivity. They not only learn language but also gain insights into the customs, traditions, and perspectives of English-speaking communities around the world. Because authentic materials whether they are online or printed form are produced for native speakers and not for educational purposes but any other purposes except teaching. So they are not tailored to the needs of language learners therefore, they represent the real language in its real use in real context. So as Sherman (2003), states that the importance of authentic materials reside in the fact that "it is a window into culture." Online authentic materials provide learners with exposure to authentic

language use, including colloquialisms, slang, idiomatic expressions, and regional variations. This exposure helps learners develop a more natural and nuanced understanding of the language beyond textbook examples.

Integrating online authentic materials into English teaching fosters the development of digital literacy skills. Learners engage with various digital platforms, navigate online resources, evaluate information credibility, and interact with multimedia content, which are essential skills in today's digital age. Incorporating ICT (Information and Communication Technology) into the classroom offers advantages for both educators and learners. With ICT, teachers can utilize numerous visuals to enhance students' memory retention, clarify complex instructions, confirm comprehension of the subject matter, and craft dynamic lessons that captivate students' interest and enhance their focus (ERYANSYAH.et.al.2019). While working with materials online language learners can also improve their IT skills as well as learning language.

The use of online authentic materials can enhance learner motivation and engagement by offering dynamic and multimedia-rich content. Interactive elements such as quizzes, games, and multimedia presentations can further stimulate learners' interest and participation in language learning activities.

Accessibility and flexibility are another benefit that online authentic materials offer which are often easily accessible and can be integrated into both traditional classroom settings and online learning environments. They are flexible in terms of when, where, and how learners access and engage with language resources, catering to diverse learning preferences and schedules.

Authentic materials can also be used for assessment purposes, allowing teachers to evaluate learners' language proficiency in real-life contexts. Tasks such as summarizing articles, analyzing videos, or participating in online discussions provide authentic assessment opportunities that mirror real-world language use.

In summary, the use of online authentic materials in teaching English provides numerous benefits, including enhanced authenticity, relevance, cultural awareness, language proficiency, digital literacy skills, motivation, and flexibility. By integrating these materials into their teaching practices, educators can create more engaging, effective, and dynamic language learning experiences for their students.

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