

APPLYING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS INTO EFL TEACHING

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Abstract: *it has been argued that teaching materials should motivate the learners by stimulating their interest and should encourage them to further explore the potential for language learning capacities and should provide the teacher with scope to create meaningful and engaging activities. This article starts by presenting a review of the literature so as to highlight key tenets such as communicative competence, authenticity, and authentic materials and tasks in the English language teaching and learning process. In a subsequent section, the methodology, the research methods, and the step-by-step process implemented are also presented.*

Keywords: *communication, learning needs, communicative competence, authentic material, paper-based materials.*

ПРИМЕНЕНИЕ АУТЕНТИЧНЫХ МАТЕРИАЛОВ В ПРЕПОДАВАНИИ EFL

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Аннотация: *утверждалось, что учебные материалы должны мотивировать учащихся, стимулируя их интерес, и должны побуждать их к дальнейшему изучению потенциала способностей к изучению языка, а также должны предоставлять учителю возможность создавать значимые и увлекательные занятия. Эта статья начинается с обзора литературы, чтобы выделить ключевые принципы, такие как коммуникативная компетентность, аутентичность и аутентичные материалы и задачи в процессе преподавания и обучения английскому языку. В следующем разделе также представлены методология, методы исследования и пошаговый процесс.*

Ключевые слова: *общение, учебные потребности, коммуникативная компетентность, аутентичный материал, бумажные материалы.*

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Starting from the assumption that authentic materials are crucial in teaching/learning a foreign language, this paper is an attempt to analyze how such materials can be used in the particular situation of teaching/learning, especially since our access to materials designed for native speakers of English/German/French is virtually unlimited, due to various reasons (geographical, financial etc.). We have laid special emphasis on the internet, since we consider it to be an extremely useful and convenient resource. Generally speaking, communication is based on the existence of a speaker and of a listener, between which there is an information gap which will be filled in the communication process, so that, in the end, both the speaker and the listener will have the same information. In other words, the aim of all communication is to adequately convey an intelligible message to a speaker, within a larger social and situational context. Teachers have always been on a continuous search for the most adequate and efficient teaching method, even though, in reality there is no such a thing as a “perfect” teaching/learning recipe, maybe except for the one indicated by Jordan [1, 20]: “the method recommended by experts is to be born as a Japanese baby and raised by a Japanese family, in Japan”. For all others, less fortunate, there is nevertheless the possibility of being included in a learning context that resembles real life situations as much as possible. This is the very general principle the communicative teaching/learning method is based upon, a method focused on making the student acquire communicative competence. Its declared purpose is that of enabling the students to use the appropriate language in a given real-life like context (appropriate from the point of view of the communication situation), and to make themselves understood by communicating efficiently, while establishing at the same time the process of negotiating meaning with the listener. To attain this, the communicative method is based upon a few clear, well-defined principles that guide the entire teaching/learning process that is [3]:

1. The aim of all verbal interactions is to communicate;
2. Linguistic competence must be doubled by the competence/ability to adequately convey meaning in various contexts;
3. Communication of all kinds occurs in social and situational contexts, which is why language must also be learned in authentic, real-life like situations;

4. For an efficient communication in a language it is necessary to acquire communication abilities and skills, as well as all four communication competences, that is: reading, speaking, listening, writing;

5. All verbal interactions have an aim;

6. One remembers better familiar, interesting and relevant (to the learner) situations;

7. One remembers better things that one performs.

Paper-based materials include a wide range of things that native speakers use in everyday life, for various purposes [2]. Some of the most common examples in this category are books, newspapers and magazines, while books require a certain level of proficiency. Newspapers and magazines provide the language teacher with a multitude of elements that can be used with various levels and for various teaching purposes: advertisements (both commercial and classified), horoscopes, TV/radio programs are just a few of the items in a newspaper/magazine that can be of much help when trying to make your lesson more interesting and appealing. Cook books, recipes and menus are a good idea when teaching, for example, certain forms of the verb, the direct object or vocabulary related with food. Maps could be an example of material for raising the learners' awareness about the country in question, introducing names of places or vocabulary related to travelling. Paper-based materials may also include various other things that could be linked to teaching: entrance tickets, labels, pamphlets, medical prospects, postcards, calendars etc. As already mentioned, finding authentic material for teaching vocabulary not only does it not represent a problem, especially now, when we can use the Internet, but it also increases the chances of finding material that meets the students' interests and preoccupations, and thus of being relevant. We strongly believe that a language can be taught resorting to a series of such materials, ranging from realia, to pictures, documentaries available on-line or on CDs or on video tapes, materials which the students will undoubtedly come across in everyday life, as well as in the course of practicing their present/future job. To conclude, one must say that the use of authentic materials in teaching/learning specialized vocabulary is not just possible, but also recommended, since it manages: to meet the students' learning needs; to offer them the chance of becoming truly competent in a foreign language; to stimulate personal motivation; to insure the much needed mental comfort and confidence; to allow the acquisition of vocabulary as active vocabulary.

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