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Use of materials in English Language Teaching

AUTHENTIC ELT MATERIALS IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM: AN OVERVIEW¹

Summarized by Mach Buu Hien

The use of materials in language teaching and learning has been considered as one of key factors for the success of language courses. In order to provide an overview of how materials are designed and how authentic materials are utilized in teaching English as a second/ foreign language, the author reviews characteristics of good and/or authentic textbooks as well as introduces features of authenticity paradigm as the basis for his secondary research. This research aims to find out (1) what constitutes authentic materials in language classroom; (2) how authentic and culturally appropriate materials can be beneficial for the classroom; (3) what the advantages and disadvantages of authentic materials are. The answers for these research questions have demonstrated that authentic and culturally appropriate materials play a crucial role in teaching a foreign/second language as they can make traditional lessons more interesting to learners, and major findings are thematically underpinned as below:

Types of Materials

With the support of technological devices and the contribution of resource facilities, there has been a wide selection of materials for language proficiency development in a modern classroom. A variety of materials can be classified as audio visual (movies, cartoons, interviews and etc.); paper (pictures,

posters, newspapers and magazines); realia (restaurant menu, brochure, air ticket, camera and etc.); or audio (news, weather forecast and etc.).

Another two broad categories of authentic materials, recommended by Janiro (2007) are beneficial for EFL/ ESL students such as Print materials, including packing slips, order forms, TV guide, food labels, Greeting cards and etc., and Auditory materials, incorporating Radio, Podcast, Phone messages, E-books and so on.

Advantages of Adapting Culturally Appropriate Materials

In designing modern language syllabus, it is crucial to consider various approaches and the adjustment of syllabus based on thorough decision-making at each level within the course should also be taken into account.

The notion of 'the 3 c's' for culturally compatible materials, developed by Mishan (2005), accounts for the use of authentic materials to facilitate language learning:

- Culture (enable learners' comprehension of the language they learn and their image of the society where it is spoken).
- Currency (topical potential of authentic texts that brings interests and motivation to the learners).
- Challenge (manage strategies by both teachers and learners to assist with the

¹ From Ahmed, S. (2017). Authentic ELT Materials in the Language Classroom: An Overview. Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research. (Vol. 4. No. 2. Pp. 181-202). (<http://www.jallr.com/index.php/JALLR/article/download/551/pdf551>)

perceived level of difficulty). Moreover, adapting culturally appropriate materials can help learners automatically make relationship with materials, express themselves easily, develop new vocabulary, enhance the acceptability of the materials, relate their personal experience and improve their language skills.

Some Culturally Familiar Ideas for Language Development

To create compatible environment in the classroom, it is suggested to use a task, which is regarded as an activity or action to carry out as the result of processing and understanding language. Using a variety of tasks in language teaching is of importance to make it more communicative and

activity-oriented for the practice of language (Richards and Schmidt, 2010).

Additionally, the widespread use of technology in language teaching and learning can make various sources quickly and easily accessible to the language teachers. Learners also easily and comfortably interact, communicate, and participate in the classroom through familiar and authentic situations and functions.

The author also suggests some familiar and common ideas for using and adapting authentic materials in teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing skills to improve the quality of English language teaching and learning.

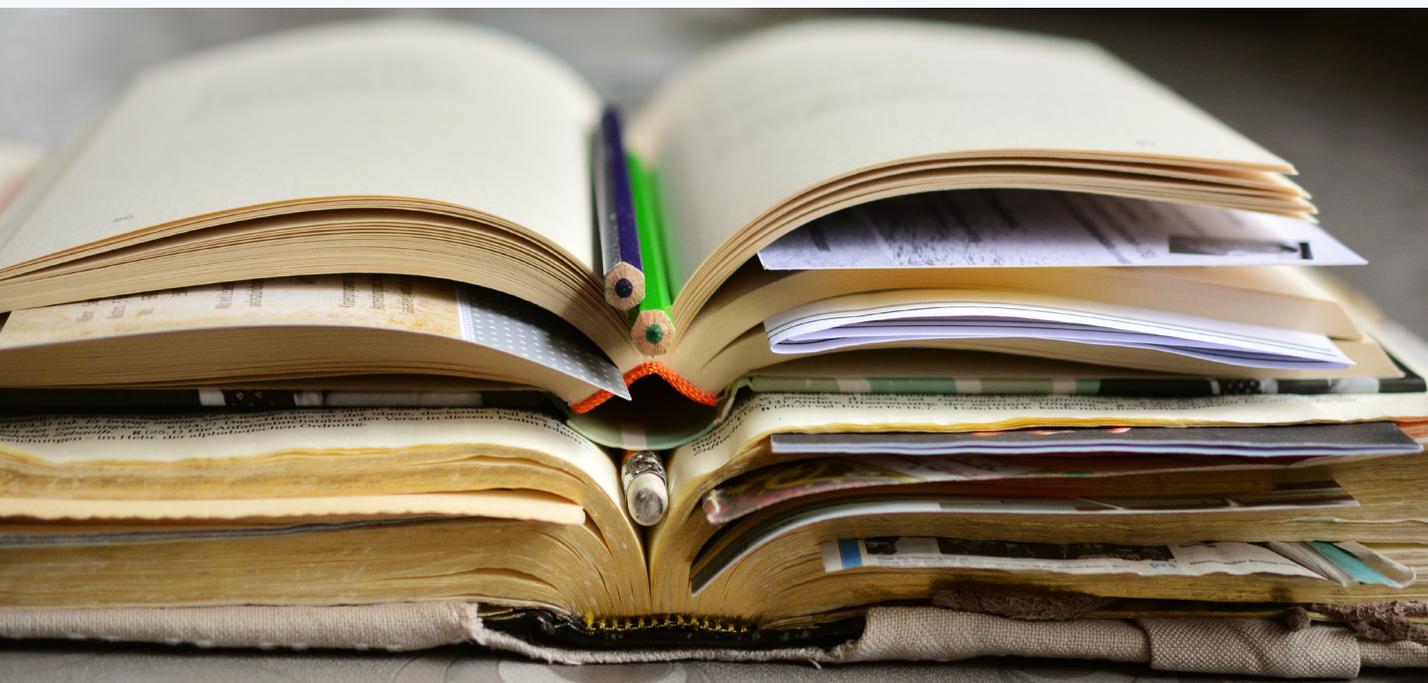
Reference:

Ianiro, S. (2007). *CALPRO Professional Development Fact Sheet-1: Authentic Materials*.

Retrieve from <http://www.calpro-online.org/documents/factsheetauthenticmaterials.pdf>

Mishan, F. (2005). *Designing authenticity into language learning materials*. Bristol: Intellect Books.

Richards, J.C., & Schmidt, R (2010). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (4th Ed.). London: Longman (Pearson Education).



TEACHING AND USING ANECDOTES AND STORIES

7 ANECDOTE ACTIVITIES²

Summarized by Bui Thi Thuc Quyen



1. Just Tell and Anecdote: Telling stories, such as funny stories can be a great introduction or filler task. Sharing stories from your life can provide students with more authentic and more interesting language and can encourage students to tell theirs in English.
2. Read and Tell: Put your students into pairs, and give each member a different story. Ask the students to read the anecdotes and understand what they mean (they can use their phone to translate if you want them to). When both students have finished, get students to tell the anecdotes to their partner from memory. Get confident students to tell the whole class their story.
3. Finish the Anecdote: Cut off the ending from the anecdote/story. Get your students to read it and guess the ending.
4. Arrange the Anecdote: Print out a story and cut it up into pieces. Have students put the story back together in pairs or groups.
5. Dictation: Choose a short anecdote and dictate it to students. This might be a bit long winded for some stories. You could get students to read out sections of the dictation for you.
6. Anecdote Homework: After you've done some work with anecdotes in your class explain to students that they have to find an anecdote to share with their partner in the next session. They can be from their own lives or from a book or the internet – they don't have to be true. Students won't have to tell the whole class (but they can if they want to) and will only have to tell their story to a partner.
7. Write an Anecdote: Have students write the anecdote that they collected for homework. They can do this as a class activity or as further homework.

² <http://busyteacher.org/24922-teaching-using-anecdotes-and-stories.html>

HOW TO USE SHORT VIDEOS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

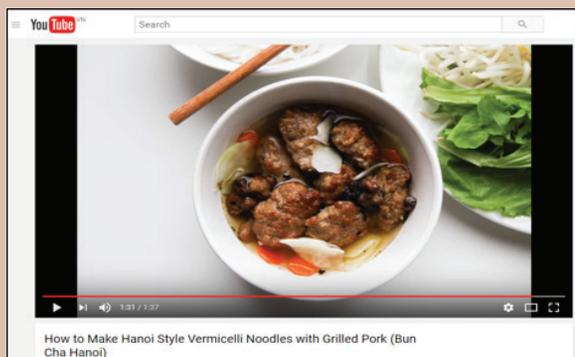
by MV Pineda

We are now in an era when a short video is an important resource in teaching. Many of the current technologies make it possible for anybody to produce a digital video. A laptop, a tablet or even a smart phone can conveniently produce a short video.

A short video is very useful in teaching. It allows greater retention, visual highlight, and strong replication characteristic because of what a viewer has witnessed. It also removes the ambiguity of abstract concepts or processes and makes it understandable.

The Division of Foreign Studies of SEAMEO RETRAC held a short workshop for its faculty on the use of videos last April 12 of this year. The session exhibited a practice exercise that can be used in the ELT, after which, the participants, in small groups, designed their own class session with the use of short videos. Here are the examples with the accompanying teaching strategies produced by the teacher participants in the session that will be useful to ELT mentors with the accompanying classroom strategies. The examples make use of 2-minute short videos.

Example no.1: Expanding the vocabulary and understanding procedures



Material: How to make bun cha Hanoi in 2 minutes
<https://youtu.be/Xf9iudQurQs>

Delivery (may be individual or in groups):

1. Show the 2-minute video to the students.
2. Ask them to write down the food ingredients that they will see.
3. Ask them to make another list, jot down all the cooking verbs that they have watched.
4. As a group, ask them to write the procedure of preparing and cooking a bun cha.
5. After the encounter with the bun cha dish, the teacher can ask about the students' perception of the Vietnamese culture.

Example no. 2: Identifying and understanding past simple tenses and writing a story



Material: History of Starbucks
<https://youtu.be/ftKnSdaxeZ0>

Delivery:

1. Review and give examples of the past simple tenses. Then show the 2-minute video to the students.
2. Ask the students to identify and write down all the past simple tenses.
3. Instruct the students to write their own story using past simple tenses.

Example no. 3: Practicing listening and retelling the story using their own words**Delivery:**

1. Show the 2-minute story to the class.
2. Ask the students to write down the action words they have heard.
3. Provide guide questions such as:
 - a. Who is your favorite character and why?
 - b. What lessons did you learn from the story?
4. Ask the students to make a poster about the Lion and the Mouse and retell the story using their own words.
5. Another option is to ask the students to make a poster about another story about the characters they encountered in the story.



Material: The Lion and the Mouse

<https://youtu.be/iPybpc-xuG0>

The present learning landscape gives way to a more enjoyable language learning through short videos. English language teachers have the advantage of using short videos to develop the language skills of the students, in speaking, reading, writing or comprehension.

7 GREAT PLACES TO LOOK FOR ESL LISTENING MATERIALS³

Summarized by Bui Thi Thuc Quyen

1. **ESL Cyber Listening Lab** contains listening quizzes divided into Easy, Medium and Difficult. Each quiz comes with a pre-listening activity, a multiple-choice quiz based on the listening and post-listening activities that include vocabulary exercises.
2. **Newsy** features short news segments across a variety of topics from business to entertainment, international to US news. Each video goes with a transcript of the news report. This site offers an app for iPhone, iPad, Android and Blackberry.
3. **Voice of America** is a multimedia platform that delivers news to English learners across the globe. The site features MP3 audio and video; each video comes with subtitles. VOA also has a handy little app for iPhone and Android, a Mobile Wordbook that teaches students how to say and use a word in a sentence.
4. **Talk English** has listening lessons of all levels. Students can listen to a conversation, complete a multiple choice quiz and read a script of the audio. Also, there is an app for iPhone and Android.
5. **ESL Fast** offers 365 short stories with audio and text for intermediate students. It has a vocabulary list for each listening, plus a variety of exercises. The site also offers easy

³ <http://busyteacher.org/15102-esl-listening-material-7-great-places-to-look-for.html>

conversations for beginner ESL students who have the unique opportunity to listen to short conversations on a variety of topics and speak to Mike, a "robot" that replies to questions and statements students type in a dialogue box, thus creating an actual, virtual "dialogue".

6. **Easy Listening for Kids** has short and easy listening audio tracks for young learners. Each audio track comes with the text for reading, a vocabulary list, and exercises. There's a second website with additional listening exercises for children.
7. **Ello.org** provides a wealth of listening exercises in video or audio format. Search results can be sorted by level, topic, country or media. All of the exercises come with vocabulary lists, additional exercises or quizzes, as well as download links. Ello includes audio with English speakers of different nationalities, thus effectively exposing students to a variety of English accents.

News

GloCALL 2017 Conference in Brunei Darussalam



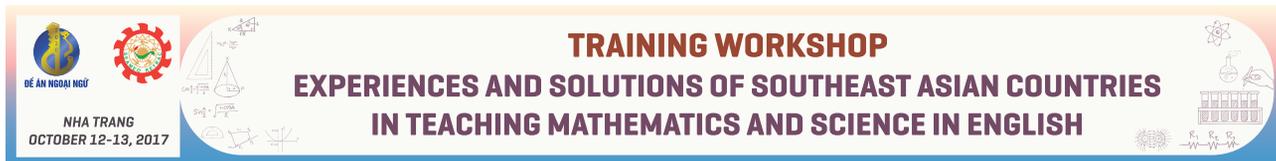
The Globalization and Localization in Computer-Assisted Language Learning (GloCALL) Conference is jointly sponsored by APACALL and PacCALL, which provides valuable opportunities for academics, researchers, students and professionals in the field of English language education to share knowledge, research, and experience

on how to use computer technology; to explore how the technology can be adapted to meet the local needs of students and teachers; and bring the technology within the reach to local teachers who wish to develop their professionalism in CALL.

GloCALL 2017 Conference is jointly organized with PCBET (Professional Communication for Business, Engineering and Technology) 2017 Conference at Universiti Teknologi Brunei, Brunei Darussalam.

Time & Venue:

- Date: September 07-09, 2017
- Venue: Universiti Teknologi Brunei, Jalan Tungku Link, Mukim Gadong A, BE1410, Brunei Darussalam.
- Website: <https://glocall.org>



The SEAMEO Regional Training Center (SEAMEO RETRAC) in collaboration with the National Foreign Languages 2020 Project hosted the symposium “Experiences and Solutions of Southeast Asian Countries in Teaching Mathematics and Science in English”, which accommodated approximately 120 English specialists and high school teachers of Mathematics and Science from the provinces nationwide.

The conference provided excellent venue for researchers, specialists and professionals to exchange profound experiences, address challenges as well as seek solutions in teaching Mathematics and Science in English. Particularly, some speakers from the Southeast Asian region were respectfully invited to the symposium to impart recent relevant researches and deliver applicable models in the discussion.

Conference Themes:

- Policies on teaching mathematics and science in foreign languages in Vietnam.
- Current situations of teaching mathematics and science in English in Vietnam and in Southeast Asian countries.
- Teaching models and their appropriateness for particular goals in particular contexts.
- Experiences in curriculum and materials development and in getting essential conditions ready for the teaching.
- Experiences in teacher selection/ recruitment, training and management.
- Experiences in improving English proficiency for students order to study mathematics and science subjects in English.
- Experiences in classroom based assessment and periodical assessment (how to design and administer tests, etc).
- Experiences in managing the teaching of mathematics and science subjects in English.

Time & Venue:

- Date: October 12-13, 2017
- Venue: Nha Trang city, Khanh Hoa province, Vietnam

Online Course on Writing a Research Proposal

The University of Leicester is offering a free online course on writing a research proposal, which is useful for those who wish to develop their well-organized research proposal. Particularly, it is really crucial for postgraduate applicants to learn how to write a high quality research proposal. Moreover, this online course will help participants to raise their awareness, and provide them with essential skills and tools to make their proposal achievable as well as improve the quality of their research.

By the end of the course, participants are able to:

- identify why they want to do a PhD and whether their expectations are realistic;
- explore the main requirements, structures and problems with aiming to undertake a PhD;
- demonstrate how to set a realistic, manageable and impactful research question;
- compare deductive and inductive research questions;
- describe and be able to implement the steps required to writing a literature review, including: doing a literature search, planning, organizing and writing the literature review;
- discuss what kind of theoretical approach would be useful for their research proposal;
- compare the differences between ontology, epistemology, different research designs and methodology;
- summarize what they have learned from this course into a first draft of a research proposal.

For further details, please go to the website:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/research-question>



Online Course on Writing a Research Proposal



As part of the Instructional Design and Technology Micro-masters Program, this training course will provide participants with an overview of the history and development of online learning. More importantly, course participants will have opportunities to learn more about traditional instructional design models and the progression of the learning design approach to acquire online learning experiences. Moreover, they will be provided with knowledge and skills for curriculum design, collaboration, questioning tech-

niques to acquire shared understanding for the development of the outline of an online course.

Particularly, participants will learn:

- how to apply instructional design models to develop online learning experiences
- how to collaborate with a subject matter expert
- how to create a design document to guide the online course development process

For further details, please go to the website:

<https://www.edx.org/course/instructional-design-models-usmx-university-maryland-university-tyzz-ldt200x#!>

More Teaching Materials

Using Authentic Materials and Resources

<http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/jacobson.pdf>

<https://elt-resourceful.com/tag/authentic-materials/>

<http://www.fluentu.com/educator/blog/authentic-materials-in-language-teaching-2/>

Useful resources for teaching young learners

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/biblio/materials-teaching-english-young-learners>

<https://www.eslkidstuff.com/>

<http://www.onestopenglish.com/clil/young-learners/>

FUN CORNER

Classroom Management Songs⁴

➤ Greeting song "Hello, How Are You?"

by Joan Kang Shin

Sung to the tune of "La Cucaracha"

Hello! How are you?

(Wave hand, then hold hands open with arms outstretched toward class)

Hello! How are you?

(Wave hand, then hold hands open with arms outstretched toward class)

Hello! How are you?

(Wave hand, then hold hands open with arms outstretched toward class)

I'm very good. Yeah!

(Hold hand to chest, then put fist in the air)

I'm very good. Yeah!

(Hold hand to chest, then put fist in the air)

Thank you very much. And you?

(Hold hands open with arms outstretched toward class)

➤ Transition song: "Stand Up Tall"

by Joan Kang Shin

Sung to the tune of "Skip to My Lou"

Stand stand stand up tall.

(Stand up and hold up arms above head)

Touch touch touch the floor.

(Bend down and touch the floor)

Turn turn turn around.

(Turn around)

Now sit down, my darling.

(Motion to children to sit down; children sit down)

➤ Farewell song: "It's Time to Go"

by Joan Kang Shin

Sung to the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down"

Good-bye! It's time to go.

(Wave good-bye, then point to watch)

Time to go.

(Point to watch)

Time to go.

(Point to watch)

Good-bye! It's time to go.

(Wave good-bye, then point to watch)

See you later!

(Point to eye, outstretch hand toward class, wave good-bye)

⁴ English Teaching Forum. (2017). Using songs and movement with young learners of English, 55 (2): 24-25

Heavenly Justice

Once, there was a preacher who was an avid golfer. Every chance he could get, he would be on the golf course swinging away. It was an obsession. One Sunday was a picture-perfect day for golfing. The sun was out, no clouds were in the sky, and the temperature was just right.

The preacher was in a quandary as to what to do, and shortly, the urge to play golf overcame

him. He called an assistant to tell him that he was sick and could not do church, packed the car up, and drove three hours to a golf course where no one would recognize him. Happily, he began to play the course.

An angel up above was watching the preacher and was quite perturbed. He went to God and said, "Look at the preacher. He should be punished for what he is doing."

God nodded in agreement. The preacher teed up on the first hole. He swung at the ball, and it sailed effortlessly through the air and landed right in the cup 250 yards away, a picture-perfect hole-in-one. He was amazed and excited.

The angel was a little shocked. He turned to God and said, "I beg your pardon, but I thought you were going to punish him." God smiled. "Think about it—who can he tell?"



Mental Patient

John and David were both patients in a Mental Hospital. One day, while they were walking, they passed the hospital swimming pool and John suddenly dove into the deep end. He sank to the bottom and stayed there. David promptly jumped in and saved him, swimming to the bottom of the pool and pulling John out.

The medical director came to know of David's heroic act. He immediately ordered that David be discharged from the hospital as he now considered him to be OK.

The doctor said, "David, we have good news and bad news for you! The good news is that we are going to discharge you because you have regained your sanity. Since you were able to jump in and save another patient, you must be mentally stable. The bad news is that the patient that you saved hung himself in the bathroom and died after all." David replied, "Doctor, John didn't hang himself. I hung him there to dry."

Source: <http://www.studyflight.ru/humour/funny-stories.shtml>