THE ROLE OF USING AUTHENTIC VIDEO MATERIALS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

This study is addressing the utilization of authentic video materials as an essential strategy within the area of EFL/ESL teaching. The study presupposes to gain an in-depth understanding of the application of authentic video materials in EFL classroom, and exploring the reasons of incorporating authentic video materials into the EFL classroom from the perspectives of teachers. For gaining thick information, the researcher used the methods of survey questionnaires and interviews with teachers of TTC (Teacher Training Course). Interpretations of data showed that teachers highly attracted in the employment of authentic video materials in the EFL classroom due to certain reasons. Based on the findings of data analysis, the study offers a number of implications and suggestions that are of value for teachers who are involved in the process of ELT.

Keywords: authentic atmosphere, material development, authentic video materials, listening/speaking skills, EFL classroom, criteria selection of authentic videos;

INTRODUCTION

Video materials nowadays are not only part of everyday life activities, but they are shown as an effective method in teaching English language as a foreign language for all learners both inside and outside the classroom. A great advantage of the video materials is that they provide original and authentic input as they are produced originally for native speakers such as films, different TV programs, songs, podcasts or special programs for teaching young learners. Videos can be used in variety of instructional and teaching sets in classroom, as a way of presenting content, organizing discussion, for providing illustration for a certain topic and content, self-study and evaluation situations. When teachers bring authentic video materials into their English classrooms, students can directly acquire a great amount of cultural background information and emotional attitudes about the learning materials. Therefore, they

could employ their autonomy in language learning. While viewing the video materials, students can put themselves in the vivid atmosphere created by the video materials and understand the pragmatics of the language used by the characters.

Li and Hart (1996) advance the Internet, with its multimedia capabilities and interactive functions, as an attractive medium to conduct instruction, while Meloni (1998) cites increased student motivation, authentic language, and global awareness as reasons for its use in language learning. According to Paulsen (2001), the effective use of online materials may provide positive spin-offs for learners much the same as if they were immersed in the language and culture while studying abroad. Two important reasons cited for such positive performance are authenticity and motivation. She proposes that, "It is no longer a question of whether to take advantage of these electronic technologies in foreign language instruction, but of how to harness them and guide our students in their use (p 10-14)". On the other hand, according to Crystal (1997, p. 215), attitude towards language is the attitude which speakers of different languages have towards each other's languages or to their own language.

Examining the literature review and empirical research regarding the pedagogical use of authentic video materials as an instructional tool, it has been noticed that the main focus has been on examining the effects of authentic video materials on certain skills. To put it in another way, the main focus has been on understanding or examining the role of authentic video materials on a particular subject that might be speaking, listening, reading comprehensions, writing, or grammar. However, this study attempts to understand and examine the idea of integrating video materials in two kinds of subjects including listening and speaking.

LITERATURE REVIEW

An authentic classroom atmosphere can motivate students to take control over their own learning, thus encouraging a move toward learner autonomy. Communicative approach has brought a need to develop students' skills for the real world to language teaching since the mid 1970s (Widdowson, 1979). Teachers should transfer or transmit real-world situations in the classroom by using authentic materials in classroom instructions. Authentic materials not only bring learners closer to the target language culture but also affect students' attitude and motivation. There have been many studies into the methodology and effects of using authentic

texts and video materials on EFL/ESL learners (Gilmore, 2007; Herron & Seay, 1991; Kim, 2000; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; McCoy, 2009; Morrison, 1989; Morton, 1999; Peacock, 1997; Sun, 2010; Swaffar, 1985; Zhu, 1984). These ELT professionals have experimented with practical methods to teach English courses with authentic materials and they show overall positive outcomes both with respect to motivating learners in learning the target language and in terms of developing in them communicative competence. The idea of incorporating video materials into EFL classroom is not new. Many teachers and experts are familiar with the advantages of authentic video materials in language classrooms. Also, the students are very experienced with films and television and YouTube shows. In EFL, the focus on using authentic materials, which video medium is part of, has been associating with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) that emerged since the 1980s. According to the CLT approach, language teachers need to think about using a variety of using authentic materials in the EFL classroom for the purpose of encouraging communication and interaction among students (Richards, 2007; Nunan, 2004, Knapp, & Antos, 2009). Many scholars have emphasized the importance of incorporating video materials into EFL classroom as a source of exposure to the foreign language (e.g. Richards, 2007; 2006; Gilmore, 2007; Roberts & Cook, 2009; Sherman, 2003). Sherman presents a persuasive argument with regard to incorporating video material into language classroom (2003). For this purpose, she provided activities showing how to use video to bring the real language and culture into the EFL/ESL classroom. A great advantage of bringing video materials into the classroom is exposing students to the culture of the target language. Moreover, by watching movies and videos students can learn aspects, customs, and values of the English speaking countries. Furthermore, using movies in EFL classroom helps provide students with "multi-sensory input that is close to real-life communication" (Ishihara & Chi, 2004, p. 30).

THE STUDY

Purpose of the Study: The essential purpose of this study is to elicit the attitudes of English language teachers, towards the role of using authentic video materials in their classes. The study focuses on receptive and productive skills: listening and speaking.

Research questions:

Would you prefer to use authentic video materials in your classes?
Why do not you prefer to use authentic video materials?
Why do you prefer to use authentic video materials?
In which class(s) would you use such materials?
At which level(s) would you use authentic video materials?
What are the sources that you would use to obtain authentic materials?
What criteria of selection would you follow?
Do you think you need training in dealing with such materials?
What type of training do you need?

METHODOLOGY

Participants - The researcher, as an assistant of teacher training course had asked colleagues to participant in this study. Initially, 105 female and male English teachers who had passed teacher training course (TTC) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan were asked to participate. The participants were randomly selected without regard to their nationality, teaching experience, or academic degree. Only 57 agreed to participate; all were passing TTC. Four had studied abroad in countries where English is the native language. Their experience in teaching English as a foreign language ranged from nine to twenty- nine years.

Procedures and Instruments

A quantitative method was employed to carry out the research. The survey questionnaire (was used by Soliman E. M. Soliman, Malaysia, 2013) was distributed to TTC teachers in order to find out EFL teachers attitudes and believes regarding the use of authentic video materials within their English classes. Besides, the questionnaire consists of selected and open-response items. Both types of items may collect information on (a) personal profile (including years of experience, nationality, academic degree and (b) attitudes toward using authentic video materials in class (see appendix B). After passing the last section of TTC, the questionnaire was distributed to all 57 initially selected potential participants. The questionnaire consisted of nine items in the form of open and multiple-choice questions. Participants were allowed to choose more than one answer according to their opinions. In addition, they were allowed to

add their own comments regarding any item. All 57 participants who agreed to answer the questionnaire returned the surveys within the required timetable. Then the questionnaires were analyzed in terms of frequency and percentage by using SPPS package.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As stated earlier, this study required to determine TTC English teachers' attitudes toward using authentic video materials in the language classroom. The outcomes of the teachers' responses to the questionnaire are provided in Table 1.

Table 1
Analysis of Teachers' Responses to the Questionnaire

№	Questions	Answers	Frequency	%
1	Would you prefer to use authentic video materials in your classes?	Yes No	57 0	100 0
2	Why do not you prefer to use authentic video materials?	Time consuming Difficult for the students Syllabus constraints	0 0 0	0 0 0
3	Why do you prefer to use authentic video materials?	Exposure to real language Motivate the students Improve the students' skills Administration requirement	56 34 57 0	97.3 58 100 0
4	In which class(es) would you use such materials?	Listening Speaking	55 56	76.7 95.3
5	At which level(s) would you use authentic video materials?	Beginning levels Intermediate levels Advanced levels	22 56 44	53 98.3 78.3
6	What are the sources that you would use to obtain authentic materials?	Newspapers and Magazines TV/Video Radio Internet	55 56 15 50	85.7 99 28 88.3
7	What criteria of selection would you follow?	Language level Length of the text and speech Students' needs and interests Course objectives	53 21 38 47	92.3 38 67.7 84.3
8	Do you think you need training in dealing with such materials?	Yes No	35 19	63.7 35.3
9	What type of training do you need?	Selecting the materials Designing the activities	31 56	55 99

As shown in Table 1, the analysis of the data indicated a general concord among English teachers in TTC concerning the positive effect of using authentic video materials in teaching EFL.

The results show that teachers have positive attitudes toward using authentic materials in FL classes. They consider authentic materials as important input for improving students' skills and exposing them to real language. Many teachers consider that implementation of using authentic videos enhance mostly speaking and listening skills which are the most crucial requirements of acquiring the language. Obviously, many teachers of the survey claim that using authentic video materials create authentic atmosphere in the classroom, reinforce students to imitate the language and equally, eases to digest huge chunks of materials. Starting from elementary level students to upper-intermediate and above prefer watching videos by native speakers which confirms the fact that authentic videos are truly motivating to acquire the language. Besides that, teachers also assert that in order to use authentic video materials first of all they need special training course or master classes to prepare video lessons for their students. The reason is that not all authentic video materials can be suitable for students' age, level, cultural and knowledge background. In addition, chosen authentic video materials should be adapted and adopted by the teachers before the lesson with the purpose of not to distract students by culturally inappropriate scenes.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the attitudes of teachers toward the role of using authentic video materials in EFL classroom in Tashkent. The study was conducted in TTC (Teacher Training Course, one of the centers in Tashkent, Uzbekistan). The results revealed that all of the teachers had positive attitudes toward providing authentic input in their classes, regardless of their nationality, teaching experience, and academic degree. The reason for such an attitude was to improve students' skills and expose them to the real English language. In addition, teachers indicated that they would tend to use more authentic video materials in listening and speaking rather than reading or writing classes. Furthermore, the results indicated that the internet and TV would be the most used sources for obtaining authentic materials. Finally, most participants indicated a need for additional training in using authentic video materials,

particularly in designing appropriate tasks. The results of this study could be viewed as a starting point for further exploration into the use of authentic materials in EFL teaching.

Limitations and Recommendations

The present study has several limitations that can be noticed for future researches on teachers and students attitudes toward using authentic materials. First, the small size of the sample population (N=57) sheds hesitation on the validity of the results. The same study may be conducted with English teachers at colleges or university rather than high schools, elementary, intermediate, or secondary schools. Third, the study focused on just teachers' attitudes. On the other hand, students also can be interviewed in order to be aware of their needs and expectations from authentic classroom.

Hence, future research should elicit English learners', whose target languages differ, attitudes toward authentic input as well. Finally, teachers' opinions about how authentic video materials can develop productive skills or how to plan instruction that incorporates such materials effectively are as additional aspects of authenticity that can be explored in future investigations.

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Appendix A

A survey at the ESL Magazine Site Adopted from Miller (2003)

What medium do you use most often to obtain authentic video material for ESL/EFL instruction?

35% TV

11% radio

14% films

37% Internet

(Akbari, O., & Razavi, A., 116 *Consortia Academia Publishing*.)

Appendix B

The Questionnaire

Name: ……………………………. Years of teaching English: ………….

Authentic materials are texts or video materials produced by native speakers for non-teaching purposes. These materials reflect the real world language. Such materials include TV commercials, films, news items, weather forecasts, radio talks, interviews, articles, train timetables, advertisements, brochures, and application forms.

1. Would you prefer to use authentic video materials in your classes?

………. Yes ……….. No

If your answer is 'Yes', move to item no. 3.

2. Why do not you prefer to use authentic video materials?

…… time consuming (in terms of selection and preparation)

…… difficult for the students to comprehend

…… due to syllabus constraints

Others……………………………………………………………………..………………………

………………

3. Why do you prefer to use authentic video materials?

……. expose students to real language ……. motivate the students.

……. improve the students' skills ……. administration requirement.

4. In which class(s) would you use them?

……… Listening ………. Reading………..Speaking…………..Writing…………

5. At which level(s) would you use authentic materials?

…… beginning levels …… intermediate levels …… advanced levels

6. What are the sources that you would use to obtain authentic materials?

………Newspapers and Magazines ………TV/ Video

……… Radio ……… Internet

7. What criteria of selection would you follow?

…….. Language level. (Vocabulary & grammar)

……… length of the text and speech

……… students' needs and interests

…….. course objectives

Others   …………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………

8. Do you think you need training in using such materials?

……..Yes ………. No

9. If so, what type of training do you need?

…………. selecting the materials ………….. designing the activities

Others…………………………………………………………………………………………

……………

Comments:

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