

USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN ESL CLASSROOM

A TERTIARY LEVEL SCENARIO

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the effect of using authentic materials in ESL (English second Language) classroom at tertiary level. It attempts to access the suitability of the alternative and untraditional way of teaching that is used in different universities and institutions of Dhaka by teachers. A questionnaire was designed with a combination of 6 questions with likert scale, 7 with multiple choice questions and 8 open-ended questions for collecting data from 20 teachers of 5 Universities and institutions of Dhaka city. All the teachers were from ELT and TESOL major and teach general English language composition at different universities. Findings show that all the teachers prefer using authentic materials in ESL classroom. Using authentic materials gives students real life experiences inside the classroom and teachers can easily motivate and encourage students to share their ideas, opinions and suggestions regarding the topics instantly. It also helps students to improve their creativity and imagination. This study aims to see the present situation, suitability and possibility of this alternative way of teaching implemented at tertiary level. This research will serve other practitioners and learners of ESL course to modify the use of authentic materials in classroom.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Introduction:

Authentic materials are real-life materials that students come across in everyday life as it is created for native learners of that language and uses in class in its original form and design. But it is not created for educational purposes. Using authentic material is an alternative and untraditional ways of teaching. The sources of authentic materials are Newspapers, menus, bills, magazines, the Internet, TV programs, movies, CDs, songs, brochures, comics, literature (novels, poems and short stories), catalogues, leaflets, tickets, postcards, bills, wrappings, recipes, business cards, labels, stamps, etc. There are infinite numbers of authentic materials using as sources. However, in this paper, newspaper, internet, TV and magazines have been used as major sources of authentic materials. For example, when one person goes to a restaurant and sees the menu card to order food that times the menu card is not an authentic material, it is an option to order food. However, if a teacher brings a Menu Card in class and gives the students appropriate tasks based on the Menu Card, it will become authentic material. So, a task will be considered as authentic if it has a clear relationship with real world needs.

From the mid 1970s language teachers wanted to make the classroom more communicative. To do so, researchers incorporate authentic materials in ESL textbooks and in classroom materials. It helps students to acquire an effective communicative competence in the target language. Moreover, the use of authentic materials in ESL classroom benefits the teachers to bridge the gap between the classroom knowledge and students capacity to participate in real life world. For example, a teacher teaches students a grammatical structure in class, later teacher will gives them

a newspaper article and asks them to find out the structure. It will help them to apply their knowledge in real life situations. It is not totally opposite of traditional class but a way to make the traditional classes more interactive and student-centered. Researchers like Nunan, Bacon and Finnemann and Martinez believed that authentic materials have not been produced for the purpose of language teaching. The authors who support authentic materials defined it as exposure where students can expose their language in real life situations. However, Widdowson (1990) differentiate the terms authentic and genuine material where authentic materials are designed for native speakers and genuine materials are used in artificial way. For example, a teacher can bring a magazine article and discuss with the whole class about the features of the article. Then it will be considered as authentic materials. However, it will be genuine materials if a teacher jumbles the sentences of the article and asked the students to rearrange it. Wolfson (1989) oppose his ideas and says that it is difficult to separate the data created for the L2 classroom from language data pick up from the real world. Moreover, it will minimize the use of authentic materials. So, it is not important for teachers to define whether the materials are authentic or genuine materials rather teacher should be careful and attentive when choosing authentic materials for a particular classroom.

1.2 The problems defined:

The main problem of using authentic materials is that there is no sufficient access of material regarding student's level, skill and interest. Moreover, it is time consuming from two perspectives. Firstly, teachers need a lot of time to find out a proper authentic text and design task according to their level. Secondly, a teacher needs more time when she or he is going to

present authentic text in the large classroom. Administration policies of some universities do not allow using authentic materials as it becomes very expensive to purchase the materials.

1.3 Significance of the Study:

Teachers follow traditional methodology to teach English as second language. Here, teachers come and give lectures and students silently listen to them. No interaction occurs between teacher and students. Most of the teachers try to avoid the use of authentic materials in classroom as they believe that it is time consuming and expensive. However, Prof. Larry M. Lynch, an ELT teacher and trainer, on the response of above statement, said that teacher can re-use the material over and over again with other group of students or in next course, next year, next institution. Some teachers also claim that it goes out-of-date easily like newspaper. In counter argument Larry says that some material never goes out-of-date like songs, videos and documents. Therefore, this study will be useful for future practitioners and researchers to get an idea of the scenario of using authentic materials in L2 classrooms in Bangladeshi tertiary academia. The author of the study believes it to be a stepping stone for further research in this field.

1.4 Methodology:

The methods employed for this study are:

- Teacher's interview

- Library and internet research to examine the theoretical developments in using authentic materials in L2 classrooms.

1.5 Objectives of the Study:

This dissertation aims to find out how teachers can make the classroom more interactive and interesting by using authentic materials at tertiary level. It also tries to access how appropriately teachers implement authentic materials with text books, and if necessary, develop their own creative ideas to select materials. Moreover, teachers could take it as a challenge for better teaching.

1.7 Conclusion:

This chapter focuses on the role of using authentic materials, the problems defined in ESL classrooms and the significance of the study. Next chapter will discuss a detailed review of theoretical developments in using authentic materials in ESL classrooms.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

According to Nunan (1989), “any material which has not been specifically produced for the purpose of language teaching” is known as authentic material. It is produced for the native speaker of that language. Guariento and Morley (2001) suggest that authentic materials should be used in accordance with students’ ability and adds that suitable tasks can be given to learners in which total understanding is not important (p. 348). Here, the trick is to set the task according to the level of the students, not to choose the material according to the students’ level. So, the material will be little bit difficult which will help them to lift up to the next level. Otherwise students can never learn new structure, vocabulary etc.

Many scholars and researchers defined authentic materials in a different way. Adams (1995) paraphrases it in his article ‘*what makes materials authentic*’. These are:

1) the writings of non-native speakers of English, but only if the materials were originally written in English; 2) writings from countries where English is spoken as second language; 3) speech from scripted films and reports prepared for radio broadcasts; 4) works that have been translated into English; 5) pieces that have been abridged or excerpted; 6) passages that were written hundreds of years ago and in consequence do not reflect contemporary usage; 7) passages that were written by native speakers, but primarily for a non-native speaking audience and 8) even writing samples from ESL students (p. 3).

All these above-mentioned items are considered as sources of authentic materials. As writing samples from ESL students are considered to be authentic materials, if any Bangladeshi student writes any story, poem or anything in English then, it will be regarded as authentic material for us and all the people who use English as a target language.

2.1 Advantages of Using Authentic Materials:

To motivate students, teachers use authentic materials which always inspire some students and the learner feels that he or she is learning the real language. In the tasks and activities of authentic materials teachers use real life interaction and it sometimes motivates students to practice target language outside the classroom. Some students also become motivated and encouraged to 'read for pleasure especially certain topics of their interest' (Martinez, 2002, p. 8). If teachers bring the news of sports, current events, festivals, which favored topic of maximum students in a class, students will actively participate in it. To keep them informed about what is happening in the world, Sanderson (1999) believed "authentic materials have an intrinsic educational value. As teachers, we are educators working within the school system, so education and general development are part of our responsibilities" (as cited in Martinez, 2002, para. 6). In addition, many researchers confirmed that empirical studies have obtained positive results by learners who have opportunities to interact with and utilize authentic texts. Moreover, Kim (2000) argues that authentic materials make a major contribution to overcome certain cultural barriers to language learning. For example, Bangladesh is a developing Muslim country and if teachers bring the topic of 'Christmas day', students do not usually interact freely as they are not accustomed to Christian culture. However, if teachers give some pre-task and then gives

the handout of 'Christmas day' including audio-video materials, images etc. based on students level and needs then students can easily understand elements of other cultures.

2.2 Disadvantages of Using Authentic Materials:

Contrary to the above ideas, some researchers do not see the value of using authentic materials. Dunkel (1995) pointed out that the terms like "authentic language", "authentic discourse" and "authentic materials" are all defined in "holistic, vague and imprecise ways"(as cited in Menasche, n.d.). McDonough & Shaw also supported the above view saying that the issue of authenticity has been somewhat controversial. (2003, p. 45). As authentic texts are taken from real life they are random in use of vocabulary, structures, functions, content, and length; thereby causing a burden for the teacher. The vocabulary used in authentic materials might not be relevant to students' immediate needs and learners may face problem due to a mixture of known and unknown vocabulary and structure. Moreover, if teacher uses difficult authentic text which goes beyond their level then they do not respond in "meaningful ways" and it also "leads them to feel frustrated, confused and most importantly demotivated" (Guariento & Morley, 2001, p. 348). It is better to give little bit difficult text considering students level so that it can improve their knowledge and vocabulary. Other than that, if teacher uses too much difficult text where most of the vocabulary is unknown to the students then, they will become confused and not participate actively in classroom activities. Students will stay silent when teachers will ask them questions or invite students for group discussion regarding the given text. Two researchers McNeil and Miller believed that teachers face challenges regarding access to authentic materials, the expense of purchasing them, and the time required to find an appropriate authentic text and design suitable pedagogical tasks (as cited in Musallam, 2006, p. 4).

2.3 Types of Authentic Materials:

Brown and Menasche (1993) suggest two types of authenticity. These are: a) task authenticity and b) input authenticity.

Task authenticity has two types like

- i) Simulated task authenticity or non-academic tasks like filling a form and
- ii) Minimal/incidental task authenticity considered as academic tasks. For example, giving students a classroom task (fill in the blanks) after a listening activity.

On the other hand, there are five types of input authenticity. These are:

- i) **Genuine input authenticity:** it is created only for the realm of real life, like a newspaper which is read for real life purposes and we can also use it in class
- ii) **Altered input authenticity:** originality change without changing meaning as when we watch a movie for five minutes and do a vocabulary task.
- iii) **Adapted input authenticity:** created for real life, for example a teacher can change the vocabulary and grammar to simplify the text.
- iv) **Simulated input authenticity:** written by teacher in an authentic way e.g. a conversation as spoken by real characters.
- v) **Minimal/incidental input authenticity:** created for the classroom but not in an authentic way (Nunan, 2003, p. 34).

However, Breen (1985) identifies four types of authenticity within language teaching. He said that when a language teacher is going to teach language lessons he will find that there is an interrelationship among them. These are:

- a) **Authenticity of the texts** which we may use as input data for our learners. In language learning whatever materials teachers use is just to help the learners to develop their understanding regarding the topic.
- b) **Authenticity of the learners'** own interpretations of such texts by using authentic materials in class. Learners become efficient and fluent to interpret meaning within the text.
- c) **Authenticity of tasks** conducive to language learning which means it will not only engage learners in communicative learning but also enable them to understand learning purpose.
- d) **Authenticity of the actual social situation** of the language classroom. Authentic materials help the learners to publicly share their problem, suggestions etc. in their target language.

2.4 Standards of Using Authentic Materials:

Authentic achievement occurs when

1) students construct meaning and produce knowledge, 2) students use disciplined inquiry to construct meaning, and 3) students aim their work toward production of discourse, products and performances that have value or meaning beyond success in class (Newmann & Wehlage, n.d., p. 1).

To define standards for authentic instruction, teachers focus on procedural and technical aspects. Standards can help them not to make the materials oversimplified or complex for the students. Each standard is conceptualized from 'less' to 'high' of a score from 1 to 5. Many researchers have defined standards from their perspectives. This paper has focused on the five standards for authentic instruction proposed by Newmann and Wehlage. In this paper, both high and low quality of all standards will be focused. These are given below:

- i. **Higher-order thinking:** In low- order thinking (LOT), students are required to recite pre-specified knowledge. In higher-order thinking (HOT), students can manipulate ideas in a way that they can synthesize, generalize, hypothesize or analyze any statements. It helps them to solve problems and manipulate new ideas. In HOT, interactional outcomes are not always predictable.
- ii. **Depth of knowledge:** Knowledge is superficial or shallow when students have trivial understanding of any important concept. In opposite, when students can solve problems, develop arguments and construct explanations of the central idea of any topic, the knowledge is deep.
- iii. **Connectedness to the world:** According to the third scale, a student has no connection with the world if his/her work has no impact on others and follows the normal forms of learning. However, if a student can address real life problems and experiences in their own learning then he has connectedness to the world.
- iv. **Substantive conversation:** In low substantive conversation, teachers deliver a preplanned body of information and make a list of questions and students tend to give very short responses. So, it makes the course very choppy. In transition, high substantive conversation includes considerable number of interaction and sharing of ideas

- v. **Social support for student achievement:** The last scale social support is low when teachers discourage to express their willingness, opinion, ideas or participation. The social support is high when teachers show good impression for all students. Here, mutual respect is an important element.

A teacher can select an authentic material for his/her class based on the standards. He/she can also categorize the low or high quality of a material through these standards. These standards will facilitate the teachers to make the classroom more successful by giving proper materials.

2.5 Classroom Environment for Authentic Discussion:

Authentic classroom discussions are a classroom based on speech genre where students have the opportunity to express their ideas, opinions and suggestions freely. In a classroom it is not only important to bring good authentic materials but also teachers need to shape the environment of the classroom. Otherwise students will not pay attention in classroom. Anderson, O'Flahavan and Guthrie (1996) found that participation in a variety of interpersonal interactions within different social contexts during class work appeared to bolster the student's involvement and success with their tasks (as cited in Hadjioannou, 2007, p. 374). In proper classroom environment students become motivated to work with peers when they see their teacher as supportive and caring and importantly gives value and respect to their ideas. Many scholars and researchers did a lot of study in this field to categorize the elements of classroom environment. However, Hadjioannou described seven aspects which will help the students to involve in classroom activities and to the social relationships among community members. They are:

- a) **Physical environment:** In physical environment, the researcher is concerned about how the institution building and specifically classroom looks like. If the environment is

peaceful, full of light, spacious and technologically advanced, then students will expose themselves to offer opinions, share their experiences and they can reflect all the characteristics that are common in authentic discussion.

- b) **Curricular demand and curriculum enacted:** In authentic discussion the curriculum does not demand too much examination pressure on the student. However, in traditional classroom, there is a high level of test pressure upon the students. In authentic instruction-based classroom students just need to remember that “[they] are not supposed to answer everything correctly on a standardized test” (Hadjioannou, p. 377). It is more important to explore and specialize in any area than obsessing with giving correct answers.
- c) **Teachers’ beliefs:** The teachers who support using authentic materials in classroom, they avoid to present ready-made knowledge to students. Teachers believe that active explorations of various problems are more exciting to students and happen to have a lasting impression on them. For example, when students do group works, they can remember the texts better than those who read individually. To analyze any literary text, teachers show openness to the interpretations of each individual. Some teachers also believe that the ideas of saliency, personal interest, involvement, showing respect and facilitating student learning are some essential factors in learning.
- d) **Students’ beliefs about authentic discussions:** Students can keep their minds focused on the topic when they take part in any authentic discussion. Lindfors’s (1987, p. 268) claims that when “re-presenting our understanding in spoken or written form, we render those understandings more precise, give our nebulous ideas a definite shape they did not

have before”. So, in authentic discussion students make their best use of knowledge and imagination as they present their ideas in front of the whole class.

- e) **Relationships among members:** The classroom community should create a relationship of friendliness and good intentions. To build good teacher-student and student-student relationship, teachers need to consider students as human beings not students only. Moreover, significant components of relationship in classroom are humor and playfulness. As Bakhtin (1986, p. 134) put it, “seriousness burdens us with helpless situations, but laughter lifts us above them and delivers us from them. Laughter does not encumber man, it liberates him” (as cited in Hadjioannou, 2007, p. 387). A good sense of humor makes class more pleasant, energetic and enhances students’ interest and motivation to do their work. Without humor and playfulness, class looks monotonous, boring and less motivating.
- f) **Classroom procedures:** Classroom procedure has two main subcategories as explicit rules and classroom management. In explicit rules, students respect others opinions and refrain themselves from the actions that violate the rights of others. If the teacher shares more friendly relationship with the students and there is transparency between the teacher and students in class then he/she does not need to spend time in classroom management. Then, teachers will just need to give them instruction for any activity.
- g) **Norms of class participation:** At the time of using authentic materials for classroom participation, students need to follow some norms and behaviors. The norms listed here are listening attentively and respectfully to others, raising related and interesting issues, expressing their opinions and ideas, supporting their opinions through textual evidence,

bringing their real life situation in classroom and finally producing humorous comments on the relevant topic.

After giving authentic materials teachers who wants to bring authentic discussion in classroom community, must have their own rituals, norms and balances because each classroom environment is not similar to each other. Considering all the elements in a classroom have to have a successful discussion among teacher and students.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction:

This chapter presents an insight into the research methodology used to conduct the research. The processes of data collection for this research were teacher's interview. This chapter also includes administration and universe of the study, process of data collection, sampling and validity and reliability of the research tool (the interview).

3.2 Objectives:

The fundamental purpose of this study is to observe ESL teachers' attitude, its advantages and disadvantages towards using authentic materials in classroom.

3.3. Method of Data Collection:

The researcher has used both primary and secondary sources to collect data for this research. Here primary data refer to the survey questionnaire while secondary data refer to internet, books, article, documents, journals etc. To collect primary data, the researcher had followed personal interview method. It was a structured interview where the researcher used formal lists of questions. All respondents were asked the questions in the same way.

According to Kothari (1985, p. 98-99), the chief merits of personal interview are given below:

- i. The researcher can gather more information in greater depth.
- ii. If there is any resistance then the interviewer can solve it by his/her own skills.
- iii. It can obtain personal information easily.
- iv. The interviewer can control samples more effectively.
- v. It will help to avoid misinterpretations.
- vi. The interviewer can also collect supplementary information about the respondent to interpret the result.

3.4 Ethical Considerations:

The researcher is doing the survey at university level by following all the rules and procedures of her institution. Seligar and Sohamy (1989) have mentioned a number of points to consider ethical issues in collecting research data.

- i. The interviewer should protect the welfare of the respondent.
- ii. Individuals will get respect even if they deny participating in the interview.
- iii. Privacy of research data must be ensured.
- iv. Individual researcher is responsible to maintain ethical standards.
- v. The researcher should try her best to minimize the risk of subjects.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of the Interview:

To assure the quality of data collection procedure, validity and reliability play a significant role. Seligar and Sohamy (1989) said that “reliability provides information on whether the data collection procedure is consistent and accurate”, (p. 185). They suggested a pilot study to make necessary changes before starting the main study. After making changes all data will be considered as accurate. It is obvious that the data collection procedure will be consistent and accurate also. According to Nunan (1992, p. 14) reliability refers to the “consistency of research”. Seligar and Sohamy says that “validity refers to the extent to which the data collection procedure measures what it intends to measure (1989, p. 188). At the time of structuring survey questionnaire more reliable and valid, some of the aspects have been taken into account, they are:

- Objectives of the study
- Theoretical discussion of the teaching
- Discussion with the supervisor of the research
- Survey

To make the survey more valid and reliable, the researcher has clearly stated the objectives of the study at the beginning of the paper. In the next chapter titled as ‘literature review’ she discussed the theories given by other researchers. Later, she discusses the research in research methodology chapter. Finally, she does the survey with different university teachers.

3.6 Universe of the Study:

Every item in any field of investigation represents a 'universe' or 'population'. The researcher needs to collect data from a large scale of population to maintain the reliability and validity of the study. But in real life it is not possible to conduct a large scale survey due to the limitations of time and money for an undergraduate study like the present one. So, the researcher technically selects the respondents who are known as 'sample' and "the survey so conducted is known as sample survey" (Kothari, 1989, p. 55). For the sample survey the researcher has chosen some particular respondents of the related departments in tertiary institutions. The universities were chosen keeping in mind time constraints, manpower and costs.

3.7 Sampling for the Study:

The researcher needs a specific sample design to collect information from the respondents. Sample design is structured before the data is collected. When a researcher designs a sample, he needs to pay attention to the following steps:

- i. Type of universe: The first step in developing a sample design, technically called the universe. It can be finite and infinite in numbers.
- ii. Sampling unit: The researcher has to select sampling unit before selecting the sample. Sampling unit could be more than one.
- iii. Source list: It is known as 'sampling frame' which contains the name of all items of a universe.

- iv. Size of sample: The size of the sample should be optimum which fulfills the requirements of efficiency, flexibility, representativeness and reliability.
- v. Parameters of interest: In determining sample design, the researcher considers the interest of specific population parameters.
- vi. Budgetary constraint: Practically, it has major impact on both the type of the sample and the size of the sample.
- vii. Sampling procedure: At the end the researcher will choose the type of the sample among several sample designs.

Following all the steps the researcher had designed a sample unit to collect data. The researcher chooses four private and one public universities and the number of subjects was 20. All of them were General Composition teachers of English.

Samples selected for the survey are shown in the following table:

Type	Number
Teacher's Interview	20

Detailed sampling plan

Department/Institute	Teacher's No.
English department, American International University Bangladesh (AIUB)	5
English department, South East University (SEU)	3
BRAC Institute of Language, BRAC University (BU)	4
Institute of Modern Language, Dhaka University(DU)	3
English department, North South University (NSU)	5

3.8 Data Collection:

A questionnaire was used to collect data from participants (See Appendix-1). Here, all the participants were different university and institutions teachers.

3.8.1 Instruments:

A survey was conducted to answer the questions of the study. A questionnaire was prepared to take into account the issues faced by the teachers. The questionnaire was distributed to all the participants. In the beginning of the questionnaire general information about the participants was asked and then the researcher defined what authentic materials are. In the questionnaire, there were three parts which include total twenty-one questions. In the first part, there were six questions with a likert scale of 1-5 in rating scale. In the second part there were seven multiple-choice questions. Some of the multiple choice questions had more than one

correct answer. Moreover, they were allowed to add their own comments. In the last part, there were eight open-ended questions. Participants answer this part from their own perspectives, using their experiences.

3.8.2 Participants:

Twenty English language teachers, working at different private universities and one public university were asked to participate in the survey. In the tertiary level, all of them teach English as second language. The research topic is related with ESL composition courses. And in Bangladesh there are only three language centers and the researcher has visited all of them and asked for permission to the teachers for survey. .

3.8.3 Procedures:

To conduct the survey, I have used mixed method of analysis where the data that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods. It helps the researcher to assemble deeper understanding on the relevant topic. Steve Currall said “mixed method research involves the sequential or simultaneous use of both qualitative and quantitative data collection and/or data analysis techniques” (as cited in Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007, p. 119). The first two part of the survey consists of quantitative methods. And the last part of the questionnaire includes qualitative method.

3.9 Administering Teacher's Interview:

The researcher has selected some universities to collect data and then contacted the teachers of those universities. The researcher starts survey from two private universities where she takes the interview of seven composition teachers. The first university is AIUB and she takes the permission from the chairperson of the department. The chairperson himself fills out one questionnaire and said other ESL teachers to take part in the survey. He also asked me to collect the papers in the next day. The next private university is South East University where two teachers gave the interview and others refused to participate.

Later, the researcher has visited three language institutes of BRAC University (BU), Dhaka University (DU) and North South University (NSU).

All the teachers who took part in survey were very cooperative and supportive. They not only filled out the questionnaire but also gave their valuable judgments and suggestions on the following study. It assist the researcher to gather more information.

3.10 Conclusion:

The results found from the teachers' interview has been analyzed and presented in details in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction:

In this part the questionnaire will be analyzed in chronological way step by step. Late, there will be overall discussion of the questionnaire.

4.2 Analysis of the Questionnaire (Part-I)

The tables given below show the teachers' response on the modified likert scale (See Appendix 1). Each of the questions had the following points against each of the statements on the scale:

5- Strongly Agree; 4- Agree; 3- Neutral; 2- Disagree; 1- Strongly Disagree.

If the total mean score of a statement is more than 3 among all the teachers, then the majority of them have supported the statement. If the score is less than 3, then it means that only a few of them have supported the statement. If the score on one side of the scale is 3.1 to 4, that means that teachers agree with the statement; if the score is between 4.1 to 5 that means teachers strongly agree with the statement. In opposite, majority of the teachers disagree with the statement if the mean score is between 2.1 to 3. If the mean score is 1-2, teachers strongly disagree with the statement.

Table 1

Authentic materials improve English proficiency more than non-authentic texts.						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Mean Score
Number of Teachers (Sample)	4	13	2	0	1	
	20	52	6	0	1	3.95
Weight (In %)	20%	65%	10%	0%	5%	100%

In table 1, it can be seen that 20% teachers 'strongly agree' and 65% teachers 'agree' that student's English proficiency can be improved if they use authentic materials in classroom. Here, 10% teachers stay neutral and one teacher believes that non-authentic materials can improve student's English proficiency. The mean score 3.95 on the likert scale means that the majority of teachers agree that authentic materials improve English proficiency more than non-authentic text in the classroom.

Table 2

Authentic materials motivate students to use English outside the classroom.						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Mean Score
Number of Teachers (Sample)	6	9	5	0	0	
	30	36	15	0	0	4.05

Weight (In %)	30%	45%	25%	0%	0%	100%
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According to table 2, 30% teachers strongly agree and 45% teachers agree that authentic materials motivate students to use English outside the classroom. And 25% teachers stay neutral in answering this question. The total mean score 4.05 on the likert scale shows that the teachers strongly agree that authentic materials motivate students to use English outside the classroom.

Table 3

Authentic materials should be included in the curriculum.						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Mean Score
Number of Teachers (Sample)	8	9	1	2	0	
	40	36	3	4	0	4.15
Weight (In %)	40%	45%	5%	10%	0%	100%

In table 3, 40% teachers strongly agree and 45% teachers agree that authentic materials should be included in the curriculum. On the other hand, 10% teachers disagree with the above statement. The total mean score 4.15 on the likert scale shows that majority of the teachers think that authentic materials should be include in the curriculum. So, all the teachers are bound to use it in classroom as it is included in the curriculum. And the teachers, who cannot use authentic materials because of rigid curriculum, enjoy more freedom to use it, if it is included in the curriculum.

Table 4

Authentic materials sometimes demotivate and frustrate students.						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Mean Score
Number of Teachers (Sample)	0	9	6	3	2	
	0	36	18	6	2	3.1
Weight (In %)	0%	45%	30%	15%	10%	100%

In the above table, 30% teachers stay neutral in answering the question whether authentic materials demotivate and frustrate students or not. It means that teachers become confused that whether authentic materials motivate or demotivate students. 15% teachers disagree and 10% teachers strongly disagree with the above statement. The total mean score is 3.1 and the result of the above table is contradictory with table 2 because here 45% teachers agree that authentic materials demotivate and frustrate students. However, in table 2, 45% teachers agree that authentic materials motivate students to use English outside the classroom.

Table 5

Authentic materials are difficult to access.						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Mean Score
Number of Teachers (Sample)	4	7	2	4	3	

	20	28	6	8	3	3.25
Weight (In %)	20%	35%	10%	20%	15%	100%

The results in table 5 reveal that 20% teachers strongly agree and 20% teachers disagree that authentic materials are difficult to access. So, mixed reactions came from teachers. The total mean score is 3.25 on the likert scale which means that authentic materials are difficult to access as there is a lack of standard sources of authentic materials based on learner's level.

Table 6

Some administration policies do not allow using authentic materials.						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Mean Score
Number of Teachers (Sample)	3	13	3	1	0	
	15	52	9	2	0	3.9
Weight (In %)	15%	65%	15%	5%	0%	100%

We can see from table 6 that a majority of the participants' (80% teachers) responses range from 'agree' to 'strongly agree' and 15% teachers remain neutral to the fact that some administration policies do not allow them to use authentic materials in their classroom. The total mean score is 3.9 on the likert scale which means that majority of the teachers agree that administration policy is the main hindrance between teachers and authentic materials.

4.3 Analysis of the Questionnaire (Part-II)

In the second part of the questionnaire, 7 multiple-choice questions are given to the participants. From this part participants are allowed to choose more than one option from each question.

Table 7:

Analysis of Teachers' Responses on the multiple choice questions.

Questions	Answers	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
1. Would you prefer using authentic materials in class?	a) Yes	20	100%
	b) No	0	0%
2. Why do you not prefer to use authentic materials in class?	a) time consuming (in terms of selection and preparation)	1	5%
	b) difficult for the students to comprehend	0	0%
	c) due to syllabus constraints	2	10%
	d) others	0	0%
3. Why do you prefer to use authentic materials?	a) expose students to real language	18	90%
	b) motivate the students	12	60%
	c) administration requirement	3	15%
	d) others	6	30%

4. What are the sources that you would use to obtain authentic materials?	a) newspaper and magazine	14	70%
	b) TV/ Radio	6	30%
	c) Internet	14	70%
	d) others	1	5%
5. What criteria of selection would you follow when choosing authentic materials?	a) language level (grammar and vocabulary)	14	70%
	b) length of the text	3	15%
	c) students needs and interests	17	85%
	d) course objectives	10	50%
6. Do you think you need training in using such materials?	a) Yes	10	50%
	b) No	10	50%
7. If yes what type of training do you need?	a) short-term in house training	8	40%
	b) Long-term special training	2	10%
	c) others		

Detailed analysis of this part is given in discussion.

4.4 Analysis of the Questionnaire (Part-III)

The researcher asked eight open-ended questions to the participants. And each question is discussed under themes.

Question 1:

Do you think your current educational context is appropriate for using authentic materials? (Curriculum, technology, classroom size, students attitude, level....etc)

Theme: Current educational context

Most of the teachers agree that their current educational context of teaching is appropriate to use authentic materials in classroom. One teacher said that he finds authentic materials often more useful and proper instead of traditional text. Another teacher also said that at tertiary level it should be included in every course. To some teachers infrastructural support is important as it makes the students reasonably motivated to use authentic materials. Two teachers said their academia encouraged them to use it in classroom. One teacher said, it makes his students fit for 21st Century. Teachers also suggest that as the context vary it may be difficult to use authentic materials in some uniform manner. However, teachers feel current educational context is helpful but authentic materials need to be modified according to the situation. A number of teachers point out that they face hurdles implementing it properly because of absolute curriculum, teaching methodology, insufficient and unavailable materials, and large classroom. Teachers feel they have very little space for experiments. One teacher said students are less motivated because of the nature of the course.

Question 2:

Do you think authentic materials have an advantage over non-authentic materials in terms of motivating students?

Theme: Motivate students

Almost all the teachers agree that authentic materials motivate students as they are very much related with real life and current issues and the students can relate themselves better and they find it interesting. They can think outside the box. Additionally, students would be eager to see the TL in its real use. The advantage of using authentic materials also depends on how skilful the teacher is. Students also consider those as reliable source of knowledge, hence they put more attention. It brings a good exposure of the variety of language aspects. Here, context is a big matter. Non-authentic materials sometimes become less enjoyable to the students. It also depends on how a teacher is going to use it in the classroom depending on the students' background knowledge and language knowledge.

Question 3:

Do your colleagues use authentic materials? If yes, then how many of them use authentic materials?

Theme: Number of colleagues

Participants said that most of their colleagues use authentic materials and the ratio is almost 70% out of the total. Teachers share their ideas with each other. However, some teacher said they have no idea about others. Teachers believe that some teachers never use it because they do not want to take the burden and pressure of using them. Or else, they do not want to explore the life of a student.

Question 4:

Do you ever worry that students might not open up to your use of authentic material?

Theme: Open up to new ideas

Majority of the teachers worry that students might not open up to their new ideas. One teacher said that material adaptation is a primary criterion of selecting authentic materials. To select appropriate material teacher also need to know the quality of the student. If he does not get proper time to work on that, he feels worried sometimes. And certain types of students never want to get away from rigid forms of materials. Teachers said that they consult with their senior colleagues if they have any confusion regarding the material. Conversely, one IML teacher, has an experience of teaching last 39 years, never become worry to introduce new ideas in classroom. He said that he knows the strategies to engage students actively in any teaching materials and can utilize them quite successfully. Some teachers said their new ideas always welcomed by the students.

Question 5:

How important is it for the materials to be culturally sensitive?

Theme: Cultural sensitivity

It is very important for the materials to be culturally sensitive. As it is a broad topic and affects language teaching. Cultural differences may sometimes create unwanted situations and disturb the teaching-learning environment. Culturally sensitive materials require special elaboration of topics. One teacher of IML, Dhaka University said it is also important to expose students to English culture to a reasonable extent and for this we need comprehensible materials only.

Question 6:

Why do some teachers prefer using authentic materials to non-authentic materials?

Theme: Teachers preference

Some teachers prefer using authentic materials because it is easy to get students response and positive feedback. Besides, classroom becomes more interactive and student-centered. Moreover, it can raise the interest-level of the demotivated students. Authentic materials are more relevant, contextualized and teachers have more freedom. Teachers also use it because they feel that they should come out from their boundary.

Question 7:

Do you think using authentic materials gives students more choice to use L2?

Theme: Facilitate students' use of L2

If a teacher can skillfully pick up authentic materials by keeping a balance of students demands and teachers teaching agenda, then it gives more choice to use L2. Students will always feel motivated if they are exposed to other sort of reading, similar to their own life, culture. For example, if a text on social networking is used on a reading comprehension, students not only get exposed to materials of their generation but also retain certain vocabulary from there for real life use. Students can also relate to the target language to communicative situations more appropriately. If teachers use authentic materials in a speaking focused class, students will definitely emphasize on the use of L2. One teacher thinks that depending on the student's language level, schemata and teachers' teaching style, the L2 class gives students more choice to use target language.

Question 8:

Do you face any difficulty when using authentic materials? (Size of class, mixed ability of students).

Theme: Face difficulty

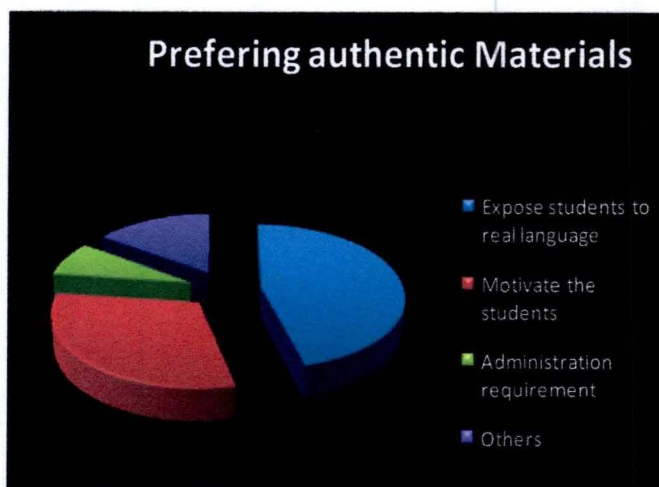
Almost all the teachers face difficulty because of mixed ability classroom and large size of the classroom. Two teachers of BIL (BRAC Institute of Language) of BRAC University said that there are some students who can understand things easily but there are also few students who are poor in language proficiency. Whenever they see any difficult paper, poor students get frightened. So, improvisation and adaptation is necessary for using materials in the classroom. Moreover, there are students of mixed abilities, narrow/open minded, introvert/extrovert types which might disrupt the normal flow of teaching. Sometimes language is not suitable for all students. Students struggle to understand the text as they are not prepared even if teacher brings interesting topic in classroom. One teacher points out that many students are not familiar with authentic text- they are very often accustomed to use TL only for academic purpose.

4.5 Discussion:

4.5.1 Preferring Authentic Materials:

It can be seen that authentic materials for classroom use is preferred by all teachers (100%). Teachers praise this alternative way of teaching where students get the exposure of real life experiences. It is totally different from the way teachers take their regular traditional classes. In traditional classes, teachers just come and give lectures and students only listen to the teacher. If teachers ask them question after finishing any topic students sometimes give very limited answer and sometimes stay silent. No interaction takes place between teachers & students and students & students. However, in the class based on authentic materials, teacher's main task is to

encourage students for interaction, group discussion. Most importantly most teachers (90%) prefer to use authentic materials because it exposes students to real language.

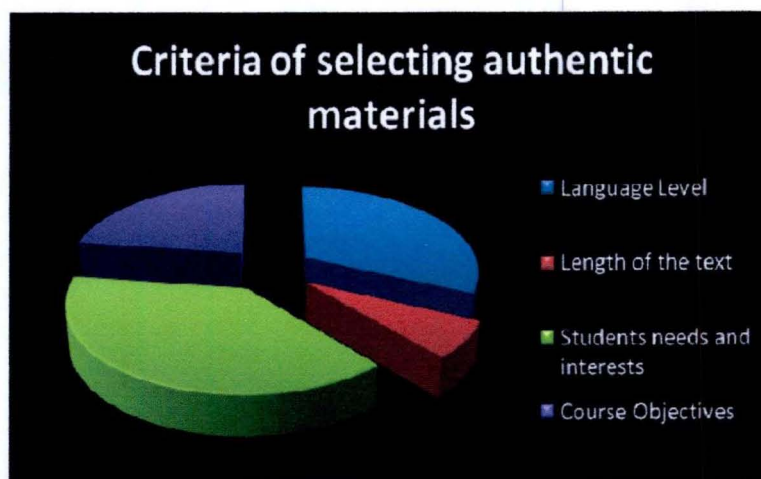


4.5.2 Criteria for Selecting Authentic Materials:

Moreover, I have observed that many teachers say that although they select materials by keeping the student's level, choice and interest in mind. Sometimes it does not work out in a successful way. As students choices vary in accordance with their level and interest. One teacher said that a topic interesting for one student or a group of students may not be liked by others. For example, some people may not like 'sports'. So, if the teacher brings this topic in class then the students, who not like it, will not respond the way they are supposed to react. Here, the teacher has to be very careful. Moreover, the teacher has to be very concerned and aware about culture before bringing any topic to the class. Especially the class is full of mixed background students. Otherwise every student is not going to accept every topic positively due to their diversified judgments about things. So, it is very important to know about culture as it affects language

teaching. For some culture some topics are considered as taboos. For example, in Bangladesh people feel shy to talk about sex, marriage etc. A teacher has to be careful about bringing a new topic into the classroom.

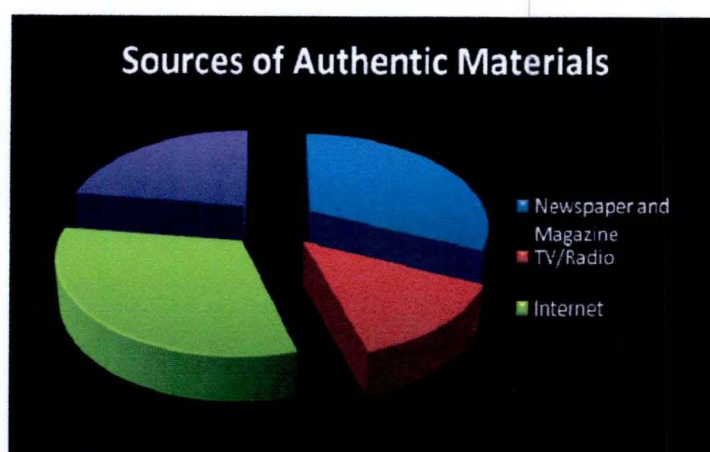
To select authentic text teachers have to think a lot about language level, length of the text, student's needs and interest and course objectives etc. Here, 17 teachers out of 20 believe that student's needs and interests are most important in selecting a material. Moreover, language level, where the teacher is concerned about grammar and vocabulary, is another important criterion for 14 teachers.



4.5.3 Sources of Authentic Materials:

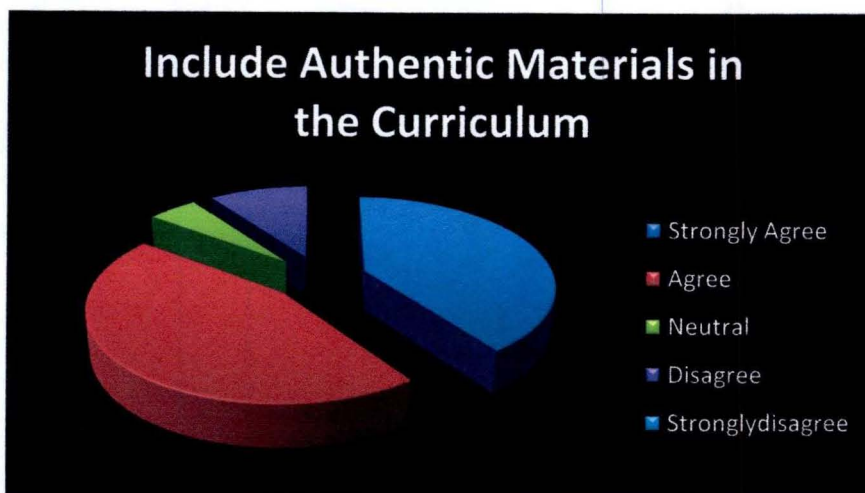
When participants are asked if authentic materials are difficult to access, 55% of them range from 'strongly agree' to 'agree'. So, teachers use some common sources of authentic materials. 70% teachers use newspaper and magazine as it is a very renowned source from the

previous time. At tertiary level equal number of teachers (70%) also use internet as a source of authentic materials. It is the latest and updated source which meets up the demand of young generation. Some teachers use TV and radio programs for authentic discussion in classroom.

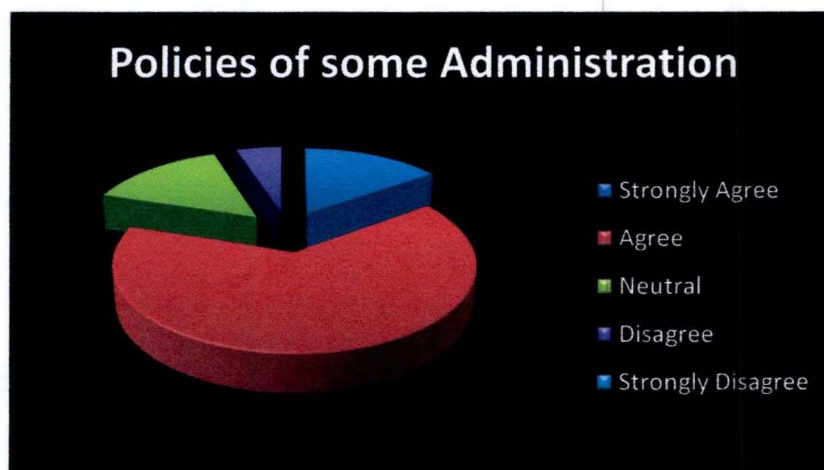


4.5.4 Include Authentic Materials in Curriculum:

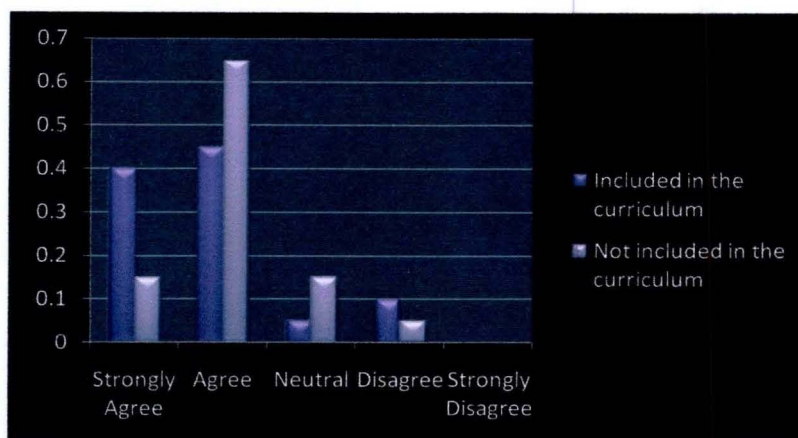
To designing a course curriculum plays an imperative role. While the researcher was doing survey, she observed that three language institutes design their curriculum in a way that they can use authentic materials in a limited way. In contrast, English departments have no particular space for authentic instructions in classroom. Teachers use authentic materials in classroom according to their own preference and choice. Sometimes their selection is not up to the level. According to the survey 85% teachers range from strongly agree to agree think that authentic materials should be included in the curriculum. And no teacher said they are strongly disagreeing with the statement. So, majority of the teachers understand the importance of applying authentic materials in classroom.



However, it is very sad to note that 80% teachers agree with the statement that their administration policies do not allow them to use authentic materials. And administration policies avoid authentic materials because it is time consuming in terms of selecting and preparing materials and course duration and administration has a rigid curriculum. One teacher said that at the beginning of preparing and selecting a material teacher may take some time. Once he becomes expert it won't take much time to select materials. Furthermore, teachers can use the same material again and again with different groups of students.



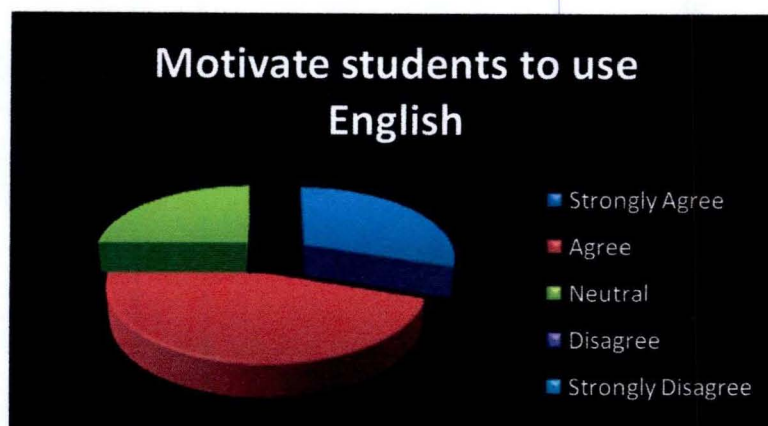
From this above two charts it can be said there are difference between teachers choice and administration policy. The comparison of these two charts is given below:



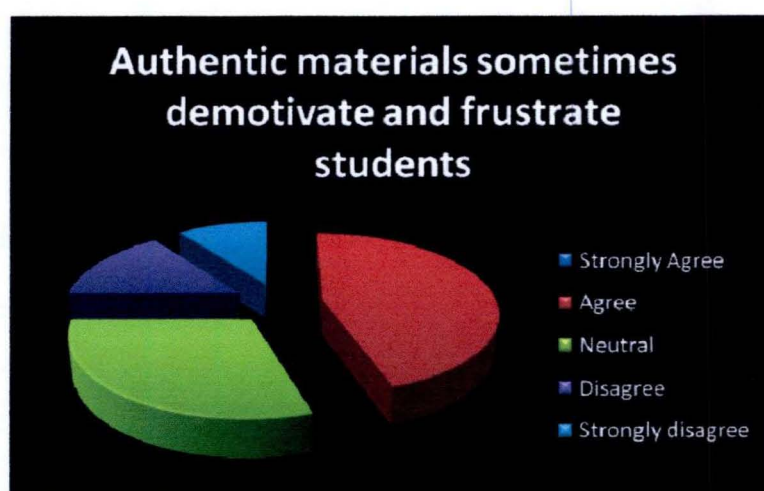
Here, it can be seen that teachers are strongly agree to include authentic materials in the curriculum. As it help the teachers to make the class more interactive. In opposite, it is visible that majority of the teachers agree that their administration policies do not allow them to include authentic materials in curriculum. From this comparison we can infer that teachers are not getting complete freedom in using authentic materials in classroom.

4.5.5 Motivation of Students:

The prime reason for using authentic materials in classroom is that it motivates teachers and students to bring real life experiences in classroom. Teachers always believe that authentic materials motivate ESL learners. One teacher notes that in local context to motivate students it is necessary to force them to receive new ideas. So, teachers need to be pro-active in this regard and wait for the positive results. In the survey 45% teachers agree that authentic materials motivate students to use English outside the classroom.

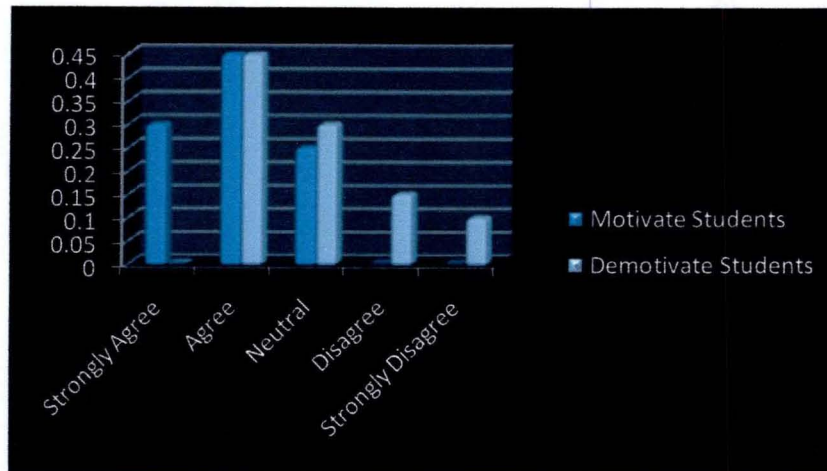


However, the researcher think it is not good to always force students as it can interrupt student's regular flow of communication. In addition, Peacock (1997, p. 144) said that "authentic materials reduce learners motivation because they are too difficult". So, it depends on situation and students quality, which procedure is appropriate. In the survey majority of teachers agree that difficult authentic materials demotivate and frustrate students shown in the chart.



In the above two chart, it is visible that some teachers think that using authentic materials motivate students towards learning new things. On the other hand some teachers believes that it

demotivate and frustrate students as it is not known to them. Comparison between these two charts is given below:



From this column we can note that there are equal numbers of teachers who support that authentic materials motivate students as well as demotivate students. Almost 0.3% teachers strongly agree that it motivates students. Also 0.3% teachers stay neutral in this aspect. And rest of the teachers who disagree and strongly disagree with the statement that it demotivate and frustrate students are indirectly supporting that it motivates students.

4.5.6 Teachers Training:

When it is asked to the teachers that whether they need training to use authentic materials in class more effectively, equals number of teachers said yes and others said no. The teachers who said no, think that they are experienced enough to use authentic materials in class by themselves. The researcher finds that it is little bit egoism of some senior teachers. Some teachers are open-minded and did not hesitate to say that they need training to specialize themselves in using

authentic materials. Rather teachers consider it will improve their students' quality. Most of the teachers choose long-term special training. It will be helpful for the teachers as sometimes they cannot select proper materials. If they get training they will have a clear idea about the selection of material.

Chapter Five

Recommendations & Conclusion

5.1 Limitations of the Study:

The present study on using authentic materials at tertiary level has several limitations. First of all the total number of population (n=20) is very small. If there were more population then the result could have been more valid. Moreover, the study is done with university teachers only. The survey could be done with the teachers of school, college and other institutions as well. It could also focus on students' perspectives on teachers' use of authentic material in classroom. The paper involves five universities located in one region of Bangladesh. We cannot take the decision of the research for all universities of Bangladesh.

5.2 Recommendations:

This chapter includes suggestions and recommendations based on the survey regarding the difficulties of using authentic materials in ESL classroom in Bangladesh.

- I. In every university, they have fixed syllabus. And the duration of each semester is 4 to 6 months. It makes the teachers bound to complete huge syllabus in a short time. So, they did not get enough time to experiment with students or to bring innovative ideas in the classroom. The administration should design the syllabus in a way that teachers get the opportunity to implement authentic materials in classroom.
- II. If it is an advanced level class; teacher's work-load is very high. Teachers take too many courses which become problematic for them. They do not get enough time to select and

prepare authentic materials or to explore the creativity of the students. Universities should recruit more teachers so that teachers will not feel too much work load upon them.

- III. As English is considered as second language in our country so enough time is needed to practice it. The duration of class time should increase where teachers will get time to use authentic materials and after that all students will share their opinion. Teachers need to realize students that it is not like other course. So, students also need to give more time to practice this language.
- IV. Before using authentic materials teachers can use pre-task in class. It will help the teachers to motivate students and raise their interest regarding the topic.
- V. Teachers can make the use of authentic materials more successful if he/she can bring the introvert students at the front of the class. Teachers can easily do it by giving them the task of group work, role play, discussion etc.
- VI. The sources of authentic materials are very limited in Bangladesh. Teachers can look at foreign curriculum and borrow ideas from them.
- VII. The teachers of Bangladesh do not get sufficient payment according to the workload of their profession. So, they become economical and part-time at other universities to back up their payments.
- VIII. Most important problem is the size of classroom. Due to large numbers of students teachers face problems to prepare authentic materials as it is very troublesome, time consuming and expensive.

- IX. Teachers should not give instant feedback to the students on their grammatical mistakes especially when they are sharing their opinions in front of the class. It may disrupt their normal flow of speaking.
- X. To implement authentic materials successfully in classroom, examination system must be changed. The question pattern mainly focuses on the knowledge of reading, grammatical rules, vocabulary which force students to memorize the text. They avoid the other skills of listening and speaking. Moreover, students lack creativity because same questions are asked every year. Teachers need to bring variety in examination pattern.

5.3 Conclusion:

This research is all about encouraging teachers to use authentic materials in ESL classrooms. It helps the teachers to make the class more interesting, joyful and lively. Students can learn the real life experiences inside the classroom. It can be said that a limited number of teachers have started using authentic materials in classroom and they got enormous success. From the questionnaire, it is observed that most commonly used sources of authentic materials are newspaper, TV and magazine but recently internet become a reliable source to many teachers. Teachers said they could bring more creative ideas to class if they got proper training from administration and they prefer long-term special training. They indicate that it should be included in the curriculum and administration policy. Teachers also points out that the materials have to be culturally sensitive. To conclude, in spite of certain limitations, this was a small scale exploration which reveals the partial scenario of classroom research. Its findings will contribute to the further research on ESL classroom using authentic materials.

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APPENDIX

General Information:

Name:

Sex:

Teaching qualifications:

Institution:

years of teaching English:

I am a BA student in applied linguistics in BRAC University conducting a study about teacher's perceptions' of the use of authentic materials. Authentic materials are materials that have not been specifically produced for the purpose of language teaching.

Thank you for giving your valuable time.

The Questionnaire

Part A: please read the statements and mark your level of agreement.

Rating scale:

5- Strongly agree; 4- agree; 3- neutral; 2- disagree; 1- strongly disagree; 0- don't know

1. Authentic materials improve English proficiency more than non-authentic text books.

5 4 3 2 1 0

2. Authentic materials motivate students to practice English outside the classroom.

5 4 3 2 1 0

3. Authentic materials should be included in the curriculum.

5 4 3 2 1 0

4. Authentic materials sometimes demotivate and frustrate students (difficult words, idioms and phrasal verbs).

5 4 3 2 1 0

5. Authentic materials are difficult to access.

5 4 3 2 1 0

6. Some administration policies do not allow using authentic materials (heavy workload, rigid curriculum and fixed syllabus).

5 4 3 2 1 0

Part B: Multiple choice questions. You can choose more than one answer from the options.

1. Would you prefer using authentic materials in class?

a) Yes b) No

(If yes then answer question no. 3)

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

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

b) difficult for the students to comprehend

c) due to syllabus constraints

d) others.....

.....

3. Why do you prefer to use authentic materials?

a) expose students to real language

b) motivate the students

c) administration requirement

d) others.....

.....

4. What are the sources that you would use to obtain authentic materials?
 - a) newspaper and magazine
 - b) tv/radio
 - c) internet
 - d) others.....
5. What criteria of selection would you follow when choosing authentic materials?
 - a) language level (grammar and vocabulary)
 - b) length of the text
 - c) students needs and interests
 - d) course objectives
 - e) others.....
6. Do you think you need training in using such materials to teach reading?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
7. If yes what type of training do you need?
 - a) short term in house training
 - b) long term special training
 - c) others.....

Part C: Open-ended questions.

1. Do you think your current context of teaching is appropriate to use authentic materials?
(curriculum, technology, classroom size, students attitude, level....etc)

2. Do you think authentic materials have an advantage over non-authentic materials in terms of motivating students?
3. Do your colleagues use authentic materials? If yes, then how many use authentic materials?
4. Do you ever worry that students might not open up to your new ideas giving as authentic materials?
5. How important is it for the materials to be culturally sensitive?

6. Why do some teachers prefer using authentic materials to non-authentic materials?
7. Do you think using authentic materials gives students more choice to use target language?
8. Do you face any difficulty when using authentic materials? (Size of class, mixed ability of students). Please mention some of them.