

THE USE OF ONLINE AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN EFL INSTRUCTION: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract. This study investigates the use of online authentic materials in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, focusing on the types of materials used, teachers' perceptions, and challenges encountered during implementation. Findings indicate that teachers utilize a variety of online resources, including YouTube videos, podcasts, digital articles, news items, and web-based short stories. Teachers generally perceive online authentic materials as comparable to traditional materials, differing mainly in delivery format. They also emphasize the importance of adapting materials to align with learning objectives and students' proficiency. Nevertheless, face-to-face instruction is often preferred due to fewer technical difficulties and easier classroom management. Key challenges include limited internet access, classroom management issues, and students' variable language competence. The study highlights the potential of online authentic materials to enhance motivation, learner autonomy, and exposure to real-world language.

Keywords: online authentic materials, EFL, teachers' perceptions, classroom challenges.

Аннотация. В данном исследовании рассматривается использование онлайн-аутентичных материалов при преподавании английского языка как иностранного (EFL). Основное внимание уделено типам материалов, восприятию их учителями и возникающим трудностям при внедрении. Результаты показали, что учителя используют разнообразные онлайн-ресурсы, включая видео на YouTube, подкасты, цифровые статьи, новости и короткие рассказы. Учителя считают онлайн-аутентичные материалы сопоставимыми с традиционными, отличающимися в первую очередь способом подачи. Они подчеркивают важность адаптации материалов под цели урока и уровень владения языком учащихся. Тем не менее, очные занятия часто предпочтительнее из-за меньшего числа технических проблем и удобства управления классом. Основные трудности связаны с ограниченным доступом к интернету, сложностями в организации урока и различным уровнем языковой подготовки учеников. Исследование показывает, что онлайн-аутентичные материалы способны повысить мотивацию, развивать самостоятельность учащихся и знакомить их с живым, реальным языком.

Ключевые слова: онлайн-аутентичные материалы, EFL, восприятие учителей, трудности в классе.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'rgatishda onlayn autentik materiallardan foydalanishni o'rganishga qaratilgan. Tadqiqotda asosiy e'tibor materiallarning turlariga, ularni o'qituvchilar qanday qabul qilishlariga va joriy etishda yuzaga keladigan qiyinchiliklarga qaratilgan. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatdiki, o'qituvchilar turli onlayn resurslardan foydalanadilar, jumladan YouTube videolari, podkastlar, raqamli maqolalar, yangiliklar va qisqa hikoyalar. O'qituvchilar onlayn autentik materiallarni an'anaviy materiallar bilan solishtirganda, ular asosan taqdimot shakli bilan farq qilishi mumkin deb hisoblaydilar. Shuningdek, ular materiallarni dars maqsadlariga va talabalar til darajasiga moslashtirish muhimligini ta'kidlaydilar. Shunga qaramay, yuzma-yuz darslar texnik muammolar kamroq bo'lgani va sinfni boshqarish osonligi sababli ko'pincha afzal hisoblanadi. Asosiy qiyinchiliklar internetga cheklangan kirish, sinf boshqarishdagi murakkabliklar va talabalar til darajasidagi farqlardir. Tadqiqot onlayn autentik materiallarning motivatsiyani oshirish, o'qituvchilarning mustaqilligini rivojlantirish va real til bilan tanishtirishdagi foydasini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: onlayn autentik materiallar, EFL, o'qituvchilarning qarashlari, sinfdagi qiyinchiliklar.

Introduction. Advances in digital technology have expanded access to real-world resources, enabling language teachers to incorporate materials not originally designed for education. In language learning, such resources are often referred to as authentic materials, which Nunan (1988) defines as texts or resources created for real communication rather than instructional purposes. Authentic materials expose learners to natural language in meaningful contexts, increasing motivation and engagement while providing insight into real-world communication.

Despite their benefits, integrating authentic materials into English classrooms presents challenges. Teachers must select resources that align with learners' proficiency levels and learning objectives, and often adapt content to ensure comprehension (Harsono, 2007; Pinter, 2006). With online platforms, teachers can supplement textbooks with authentic resources such as videos, podcasts, digital articles, and interactive media, supporting diverse learning styles (Hanson-Smith, 2000; Erbaggio, 2012). The combination of online learning and authentic materials has gained prominence in recent years (Alfa, 2020; Ghali, 2020; Morat et al., 2017), yet for many teachers, integrating these resources remains a novel practice. Understanding teachers' experiences, perceptions, and challenges in using online authentic materials is essential for optimizing instructional strategies and enhancing learner outcomes.

This study addresses three research questions:

How are online authentic materials implemented in EFL teaching?

How do teachers perceive their use in online classrooms?

What challenges do teachers encounter when using online authentic materials?

Literature Review. Authentic materials have been recognized as essential in language teaching since the 1970s, as they provide exposure to natural language and real-life contexts, enhancing learners' linguistic competence and motivation (Kilickaya, 2004; Apsari, 2014). Authentic resources include audio materials (podcasts, radio programs), visual materials (videos, images), printed texts (newspapers, brochures), and real-life objects. They allow learning to extend beyond the classroom, offering meaningful exposure to the target language and culture (Kozhevnikova, 2013; Foppoli, 2006). Teachers must carefully select and adapt authentic materials based on learners' proficiency levels to ensure effectiveness. Simplified or highly complex materials may impede comprehension, particularly for beginner learners, while appropriately adapted content supports engagement and language acquisition (Crossley et al., 2007; Day, 2004; Richards, in Khaniya, 2010).

Types of Authentic Materials

Authentic materials can be classified into two main groups: printed and web-based (Benavent & Peñamaría, 2011; Laniro, 2007). Printed resources include newspapers, menus, and literary texts, while online materials encompass videos, podcasts, digital

stories, news websites, and interactive platforms. Online authentic materials offer flexibility, accessibility, and immediate integration into digital classrooms, making them increasingly relevant in contemporary EFL teaching (Ciornei & Dina, 2014; Hussein, 2014).

Criteria for Selecting Authentic Materials

Effective authentic materials should meet three key criteria (Nuttall, 1996; Tomlinson, 2010): Suitability: materials should be interesting, relevant, and aligned with learners' needs. Exploitability: materials must be usable to support language development through meaningful activities. Readability: language complexity should match learners' proficiency to maintain comprehension and motivation. These principles guide teachers in selecting and adapting online resources to ensure positive learning outcomes.

Research Design. This qualitative study explored teachers' perceptions and experiences in using online authentic materials. Purposive sampling selected two EFL teachers with prior experience integrating online materials into their instruction. Data were collected through interviews and observation checklists, and analyzed using the three-stage model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014): data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The study focused on implementation strategies, teacher perceptions, and challenges faced during the use of online authentic resources.

Findings and Discussion. Implementation of Online Authentic Materials. Both teachers emphasized the importance of authentic materials in enhancing meaningful learning beyond textbook exercises. They reported using YouTube videos, online news articles, podcasts, digital stories, and visual materials to develop language skills and maintain student engagement. One teacher preferred synchronous Zoom sessions for real-time interaction and monitoring, while the other primarily used Google Classroom and WhatsApp to organize materials and conduct small-group oral activities, adapting her approach based on students' technological access. Both demonstrated careful selection and adaptation of materials to match lesson objectives and students' proficiency levels.

Suitability. Teachers ensured that materials were relevant to students' needs, aligned with lesson objectives, and adapted to learners' abilities. This practice increased motivation and engagement, demonstrating the importance of considering suitability in online instruction (Harsono, 2007; Pinter, 2006).

Exploitability

Online authentic materials supported diverse learning activities, facilitated vocabulary development, and promoted learner autonomy. Students could access materials independently, enhancing self-directed learning while engaging with real-world language (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Tanasavate, 2013).

Readability

Teachers reported that students generally understood the language in selected materials due to careful adaptation. While some materials (e.g., podcasts) were initially

challenging, they were modified to match students' proficiency, consistent with Harsono (2007).

Teachers' Perceptions. Teachers acknowledged that online authentic materials are similar in quality and purpose to traditional materials, differing mainly in delivery mode. They demonstrated a strong understanding of how to implement these resources effectively. Both teachers preferred face-to-face instruction for its ease of classroom management and minimal technical disruptions, although online materials were seen as flexible and engaging.

Challenges. Key challenges in using online authentic materials included: Internet Access: Poor connectivity and limited devices hindered participation. Classroom Management: Monitoring student engagement and comprehension was more difficult online. Language Difficulty: Some materials were linguistically challenging, requiring adaptation for learner comprehension (Day, 2004; Crossley et al., 2007). Despite these challenges, teachers successfully adapted resources, providing additional time and support to ensure comprehension and engagement.

Conclusion and Implications. The study indicates that online authentic materials can be effectively integrated into EFL instruction when adapted to students' proficiency and lesson objectives. Teachers viewed these materials as motivating, versatile, and supportive of learner autonomy. Nevertheless, face-to-face instruction was preferred due to fewer technical issues and better classroom management.

Challenges such as unstable internet, limited devices, and language complexity were mitigated through careful material selection and adaptation. Teachers' perceptions highlight the importance of training and support in using online authentic resources effectively.

Overall, online authentic materials are a valuable tool in modern language instruction, offering real-world relevance, fostering engagement, and supporting autonomous learning. Future research could explore the direct impact of these materials on student learning outcomes and compare the effectiveness of online versus face-to-face implementation in diverse contexts.

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