

The role of teaching experience in the use of authentic materials in EFL teaching

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Marianne Peltola

University of Jyväskylä
Department of Languages
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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Autenttisten materiaalien käyttö vieraiden kielten opetuksessa on ollut kielitieteellisen tutkimuksen kiinnostuksen kohteena jo vuosikymmenien ajan. Tutkimus on kuitenkin pääasiassa painottunut autenttisuuden käsitteen määrittelyyn ja autenttisten materiaalien hyötyihin. Erityisesti opettajien autenttisten materiaalien käyttöä ja koulutuksen sekä opetuskokemuksen vaikutusta opetusmateriaalien valintaan on tutkittu hyvin vähän. Tällainen tutkimus on kuitenkin erityisen tärkeää, kun halutaan selvittää kieltenopettajien saaman koulutuksen sekä kokemuksen mahdollista vaikutusta kielten opetuksessa tehtäviin valintoihin.</p> <p>Tämä vertaileva tapaustutkimus pyrkii selvittämään kokemuksen roolia lukion englannin opettajien autenttisen materiaalin käytössä. Tavoitteena oli tutkia vastavalmistuneen englannin opettajan ja kokeneiden englannin opettajien välillä esiintyviä mahdollisia eroavaisuuksia autenttisen materiaalin käytössä lukion englannin kielen opetuksessa. Tutkimusmenetelmäksi valittiin haastattelu, ja tutkimuksen aineisto koostuu yhden vastavalmistuneen opettajan ja kahden kokeneen opettajan haastatteluista.</p> <p>Tulokset osoittivat, että sekä vastavalmistuneen että kokeneen opettajan kokemukset autenttisen materiaalin käytöstä lukion englannin kielen opetuksesta olivat hyvin samankaltaisia. Autenttisten materiaalien käyttöä pidettiin tärkeänä, mutta lukion rajalliset aikaresurssit rajoittivat usein autenttisen materiaalin johdonmukaista ja kattavaa käyttöä. Merkittävimmäksi eroavaisuudeksi opettajien kesken nousi kokeneiden opettajien suurempi mieltymys tekstikirjan käyttöä kohtaan ja vahvempi käsitys lukion opetussuunnitelman asettamista aikataulupaineista.</p> <p>Pienestä aineistostaan johtuen tutkimuksen tulokset eivät ole yleistettävissä, joten lisää tutkimusta opettajien autenttisen materiaalin käytöstä kaivataan. Lisätutkimuksella voitaisiin saada tarkempaa tietoa autenttisten materiaalien painotuksesta kielten opettajien koulutuksessa sekä nuorten että kokeneiden opettajien autenttisen materiaalin käytöstä.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Authenticity in foreign language (FL) learning is not a recent phenomenon: the benefits of using authentic texts instead of texts specifically designed for learning purposes in FL teaching were discovered as early as the 19th century (Gilmore 2007: 97). However, FL teaching based on authentic materials was overshadowed for a long time by more contrived methods, such as the audiolingual method. It was not until the 1960s that the interest in teaching languages through more communicative methods and authentic materials truly began to gain momentum (Mishan 2004). Consequently, the idea of providing FL students with more natural input and language that has not been modified too extensively has been one of the rising trends in FL teaching and research for the past decades.

Even though authenticity has been one of the major interests in the field of FL research for the past years, research has still been very much restricted to defining the concept of authenticity and the benefits of using authentic materials in FL teaching. Little attention has been paid to how teachers actually use authentic texts in their teaching. The purpose of this study is therefore to discover what authentic materials English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers choose to use, what are their motives for their choices and how they use authentic materials in their teaching. More specifically, the present study is interested in comparing teachers who already have several years of teaching experience to recent graduates who have just started working as EFL teachers. This makes it possible to consider and study the role of teaching experience and teacher training and to what extent and how authentic materials are used by different teacher generations. This study therefore aims to answer the question of whether experience influences the use of authentic materials between different teacher generations.

First, background information on the definition of authenticity, its role and perceived benefits in EFL learning will be discussed together with how authenticity is taken into account in The Finnish National Curriculum. Some previous studies on novice and experienced teachers will also be presented. Second, the research questions of the present study will be presented together with the data and the methods of analysis. Third, the results of the study will be presented and discussed. Fourth, conclusions from the results and suggestions for future research on authentic materials will be presented.

2 AUTHENTICITY IN EFL LEARNING MATERIALS

The concept of authenticity in EFL teaching and materials is promoted and discussed extensively nowadays. Alongside the communicative approach to language learning and teaching, it is an issue that is seen to benefit students' language learning. However, as Lewkowicz (2000: 43) points out, the definition of authentic texts is not as one-dimensional or straightforward as it may sound. In fact, the definition of authenticity has been the subject of debate ever since the term was first introduced in the 1970s and consensus has still not been reached.

In this chapter I will present some propositions for the definition of authenticity, one of which I will be applying in the present study. Then I will present some examples of what is meant by authentic texts. I will also discuss some of the best-known benefits of using authentic texts in EFL teaching. Finally I will discuss the situation of authentic material use in Finnish high schools and how the goals of foreign language teaching in the Finnish National Curriculum can benefit from the use of authentic materials.

2.1 Definition of authenticity

To define such a multi-dimensional concept as authenticity, the present study will discuss two views on authenticity that have come to be considered as the main theories of authenticity (Mishan 2004).

In the first view authenticity is seen as something residing within the text and its characteristics. Morrow (1977, as cited by Gilmore 2007: 98) and Little et al. (1993: 45) define an authentic text as a text that is produced by a real speaker or writer to fulfill some social purpose or to convey a message within the language community it is produced in. Authentic texts are therefore viewed as texts that have a real communicative purpose for a real audience. Their main function is to convey meaning and even when they contain grammatical structures that can be viewed in teaching, they are not designed for pedagogical purposes or to illustrate grammar points like learning materials are (Mishan 2004: 11-12).

In the second view the issues of context and the reader's response are considered crucial when defining whether a text is authentic or not. According to Widdowson (1978, 1979 and 2003), authenticity cannot be seen as something that emerges only from the text itself and its characteristics. Instead, he argues that authenticity of a text is lost once the text is taken out of its real context and brought into the classroom (Widdowson 2003: 112). The main reason for this is that the sociocultural conditions which made the text authentic in the first place cannot be modelled in the classroom. Even though texts can be viewed as genuine examples of authentic and communicative language use, the fact that they are presented as extracts imposed on the learner immediately makes them lose their authenticity (Widdowson 1978: 80). Moreover, he emphasizes the role of the learner's response in defining the authenticity of a text. Again authenticity cannot be viewed as emerging only from the text but rather from the learner's relationship with and response to the text. In short, the passage can only be considered authentic when the learner recognizes it and responds to it as such (Widdowson 1978: 80 and 1979: 165).

From the two views discussed, the present study will be following the definition of authenticity presented by Morrow (1977, as cited by Gilmore 2007) and Little et al. (1993). In other words, the idea that authenticity is created through the writer's or speaker's intention to convey a message for a real audience. One reason for choosing this view is that it was also the definition favoured by the majority of Finnish teachers and teacher trainees who participated in a study conducted by Rossi (2013). In her study she discovered that most of the teachers and teacher trainees interviewed defined authentic materials similarly to the first view on authenticity. Even though the issue of the learner's response to and personal contact with the text was also raised by some teachers in the findings, the definition provided by Morrow (1977, as cited by Gilmore 2007) and Little et al. (1993) can be seen as the dominant one and therefore also suitable to use when conducting the present study.

According to the chosen definition, there are a variety of texts that are considered authentic and can be used in EFL teaching as authentic learning materials. Authentic texts can be divided into different kinds of 'cultural products' or authentic language extracts drawn from, for instance, corpora. Mishan (2004: 95) categorises cultural products as literature, broadcast media, newspapers, advertising, music and songs, films and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Also different handbooks, manuals and recipes are defined by Little et al. (1993: 45) as cultural products. Real-life language extracts or discourses sometimes used in language teaching are another example of authentic texts. For

instance, Hughes and McCarthy (1998) argue for the teaching of more discourse-based grammar where the learners would be exposed to grammar structures and extracts drawn from real-life communication. In effect, authentic texts used for foreign language teaching can be either cultural products or language extracts and discourses drawn from real-life communication.

2.2 The benefits of the use of authentic texts in EFL teaching

There are many benefits to the use of authentic texts in EFL teaching. I will discuss three main categories of benefits in this section. Firstly, I will present Gilmore's (2007) three communicative competencies which highlight the benefits of authentic materials on learners' linguistic, pragmalinguistic and discourse competence. Secondly, I will move on to the beneficial role of authentic materials in learners' motivation and interest in foreign language learning. Thirdly, I will discuss how the use of authentic materials supports students with different learning styles.

2.2.1 Gilmore's three levels of communicative competencies

The first competence to gain from the use of authentic texts in EFL teaching is linguistic competence. Gilmore (2007: 99) points out how the teaching of linguistic knowledge has largely been based on the classical notion of grammar and has only examined the written form and sentence-based grammar. However, this kind of standard grammar taught in textbooks fails to account for the different features of spoken discourse. This had led to a situation where EFL learning materials do not present adequate models of spoken grammar that is being used in real life (Gilmore 2007: 99). For instance, Hughes and McCarthy (1998) discuss how language textbooks often teach structures that are rarely needed in spoken language communication. One instance of this is the structure *be + infinitive* that is sometimes used when referring to the future (*I am to be at the airport at 8.30*). Despite this structure often being taught in EFL classes it is, according to the corpus, rarely found in spoken discourse (Hughes and McCarthy 1998: 274). As a solution Hughes and McCarthy (1998: 278-279)

suggest teaching grammar beyond the sentence level by using actual discourses as input for the students. Mishan (2004: 58) supports this by stating that by accessing authentic samples of spoken English, for instance, in television or radio, the teacher can help promote more colloquial and natural grammar for his or her students. Authentic language materials would therefore provide the learner with a better example of the grammar and structures that can genuinely be found in English conversations.

The second competence benefitting from authentic materials is pragmalinguistic competence, i.e. knowledge about the meaning beyond the linguistic form (Gilmore 2007: 100). As Mishan (2004: 49) notes, comprehension of a foreign language is not only about being linguistically competent but it is also a function of the cultural knowledge that the speaker has. In other words, to communicate successfully in a foreign language, the learner needs to have an understanding of the meanings that are not linguistically expressed but that arise from the context and culture surrounding the language. However, Vellenga (2004) found out in her study into the pragmatic models taught in ESL textbooks that even though the books had a fair amount of pragmatics in them, most of the pragmatic models presented could be considered impolite and not acceptable in the target culture. One such instance is the utterance "*What? You must be kidding!*", which was taught as one option for refusing a request. Despite the utterance effectively conveying the intended message, it would result in pragmatic tension because of its rudeness (Vellenga 2004: 11). Mishan (2004: 47) points out how authentic texts usually carry the target culture within them and therefore also teach about the culture's values and attitudes as well as different behavioural and interactional patterns that are characteristic of the culture's linguistic environment. As a result, the learner becomes a more competent communicator in the target language than if he or she would learn language only through inauthentic texts.

The third competence that Gilmore (2007: 101) argues is achieved through the use of authentic texts as learning materials is discourse competence. It is common in foreign language teaching to teach language on a sentence-level while ignoring the social context in which the interaction takes place. For example, language teaching materials often focus on structured dialogues and rarely promote more interactional and casual conversation that occur in real-life language situations (Gilmore 2007: 102). It is exactly for this reason that Gilmore (2007: 101) and Widdowson (2003: 23) emphasize that developing learners' ability to cope with natural language calls for using authentic materials drawn from natural contexts.

2.2.2 Motivation

Authentic materials can have a more positive influence on learners' motivation in comparison with textbooks. This has not always been as straightforward a matter as generally thought and, for instance, Peacock (1997: 145) points out that some of the studies (see Gonzalez 1990, Kienbaum et al. 1986) conducted on learner motivation in relation to authentic learning materials have shown that using authentic materials, in fact, had no visible impact on learners' motivation in FL learning.

However, there have also been arguments and studies for the use of authentic materials. For example, Peacock (1997) found out in his study on South Korean EFL students that students' motivation and on-task behaviour increased when authentic texts were used in EFL teaching. Moreover, Little et al. (1993: 46) argue that because authentic texts are originally created for a communicative purpose, students are more likely to find them interesting and therefore motivating. In conclusion, authentic materials in their communicativeness have a better chance at motivating learners.

2.2.3 Learning styles

As is commonly acknowledged, language learners prefer different ways and methods of learning a language. Consequently, learners with different methods are likely to benefit from the use of authentic materials (Mishan 2004: 29-31). Especially the target culture media has a lot of choices that different types of learners will find suitable for their preferred style of learning (Mishan 2004: 31). For instance, auditory learners will prefer listening to English-speaking songs whereas audio-visual learners benefit from watching films and television series. The number of choices within authentic materials is bigger than within language textbooks and therefore serves different kinds of learners better.

2.3 Authentic materials in EFL teaching in Finnish high schools

English is the most common foreign language studied in Finland. This means that the majority of Finnish high school students study it as their A-language. In short, English as an A-language is the first foreign language introduced to students in primary school and therefore the foreign language in which students are expected to reach the most advanced level of proficiency. According to the Finnish National Curriculum (2003), the goal for students studying English as their A-language in Finnish high schools is to achieve level B2.1 in the language. It is because English is usually the first foreign language introduced that the present study will be focusing on English as an A-language in Finnish high schools and the role of authentic materials in that context.

The Finnish National Curriculum (2003) does not give strict rules for foreign language teaching in Finnish high schools but there are points in the curriculum that can be seen to be in support of the use of authentic learning materials in foreign language teaching. Firstly, the curriculum outlines skills that students should acquire in their language studies. One of these skills is defined as students' ability to communicate in a way that is characteristic of and appropriate for the target language and culture. Secondly, the content of the courses is briefly discussed in the curriculum in regard to how teaching could be implemented in different courses. The role of authentic materials, for instance, in teaching and comparing the different ways of communicating in students' first language and the foreign language being learned is recognized and emphasized. In conclusion, in The Finnish National Curriculum (2003) there are goals and skills listed that require using authentic texts in FL teaching.

Authentic materials and their use in English teaching in high schools can be further argued for by looking at how the common reference levels in The Finnish National Curriculum (2003) define the goals of EFL teaching in Finnish high schools. The B2.1 level in English that students are supposed to achieve during high school is defined as the level where they can use English independently without any significant help. By taking a closer look at the common reference levels, one can find many points which can be argued to benefit from the use of authentic texts in language teaching. For instance, by the end of high school the student should possess listening skills in a foreign language that allow him or her to follow interesting and detailed narrative such as news, interviews, movies and lectures. Teachers could therefore be encouraged to provide their student with authentic texts and input in order to help them acquire the listening skills required. Moreover, according to the

common reference levels, students' communication skills should develop to a level where they can interact with a native speaker without intentionally seeming funny or rude. This emphasises the need for authentic materials that present as realistic language as possible. As discussed in section 2.3.1, inauthentic language materials and textbooks often teach language patterns and expressions that are rarely met in real life and can therefore contribute negatively to the communicative fluency and competence of the language learner.

In conclusion, even though the use of authentic materials in FL teaching is not explicitly required in The Finnish National Curriculum (2003), it is recommended as a way for students to receive authentic FL input. Moreover, the goals of FL learning in high school can be seen to benefit from the use of authentic materials. Exposing students to as natural and authentic language input as possible helps them achieve the level that is the goal of EFL learning in high school.

3 EXPERIENCED AND INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS

There has been extensive research into the differences between inexperienced and experienced teachers. Mostly these studies have focused on the characteristics and perceptions of teaching of young teachers in comparison with those of more experienced teachers. For instance, Meyer (2004: 972) describes experienced teachers as having well-developed knowledge bases and organisational skills that allow them to be flexible in class organization and problem solving. On the one hand, Meyer (2004: 981) found first-year teachers to be mainly focused on content and instructions as well as the organization and content of their day whereas experienced teachers already handled the content and teaching strategies, which in turn allowed them to focus more on students and their needs. On the other hand, Tsui (2009: 425-426) discovered that novice teachers were more concerned with students and their interests. According to Tsui (2009), inexperienced teachers' major concern was to make activities and teaching interesting for the student, sometimes even at the expense of learning.

These studies suggest that there are indeed differences between teachers with experience and teachers who have recently started teaching. Inexperienced teachers can, for instance, be struggling with the overall organization of their teaching and the courses, which can lead to a hypothesis that they lack in capacity of bringing anything that is not in the textbooks, in the case of the present study, authentic texts, into classroom. Experienced teachers, however, are usually so practiced with how to teach and organise the class that more time is left to focus on the actual content and heterogeneous learning groups with different needs. However, as Tsui (2009) found out, some novice teachers are actually very concerned with meeting their students' needs and making their tuition interesting, which is why they could be assumed to actively seek new and motivating ways to teach and materials to use. In addition, recently graduated teachers are also part of a teacher generation that has been studying TEFL that emphasises more descriptive and communicative approaches to a language, which can encourage them to use more authentic materials than experienced teachers from an older teacher generation.

4 THE PRESENT STUDY

4.1 Research questions

Authenticity in texts and FL teaching has been a popular topic among language researchers and experts lately yet the variety of topics researched has been fairly limited. Researchers and studies have mainly focused either on the definition and the ambiguity of the term ‘authentic’(Gilmore 2007; Mishan 2004; Widdowson 1978, 1979, 2003) or how authentic texts affect the FL learning process, for instance, by influencing learners’ motivation (Gilmore 2007; Mishan 2004; Peacock 1997). Some attention has been paid to the learning materials themselves (Vellenga 2004) but so far there have been many topics within the area of authenticity that have not been properly researched.

One such topic, which has not been studied extensively so far, is the teacher’s role in the use of authentic texts in FL teaching. More specifically, there has not been research conducted about the possible differences between how inexperienced, recently graduated language teachers and more experienced language teachers make use of authentic texts in their tuition. The comparison between these two teacher groups is important when trying to find out if the shift in language teaching trends can be seen in the ways that the two teacher generations teach English. For example, conducting this kind of study would provide important information about whether or not teachers are moving away from the more prescriptive ways of teaching language and how inexperienced and experienced teachers’ views on language teaching and especially authentic materials may differ and consequently influence their use of it. For this reason, the present study intends to compare these two teacher groups in their use of authentic materials in EFL teaching. The research questions of this study can therefore be formed as follows:

1. What authentic language materials outside the textbook do EFL teachers use in Finnish high schools? Why?
2. What differences and similarities are there in the use of authentic language materials between experienced and inexperienced EFL teachers?

4.2 Methods

4.2.1 Data collection

The chosen method for data collection in the present study was an interview. The reason for choosing to collect the data through interviews was that the present study was conducted as a qualitative study, the aim of which was to discover the differences and similarities in the use of authentic materials between experienced and inexperienced EFL teachers. In order to be able to analyse the similarities and differences between novice and experienced teachers, teachers' perceptions and underlying motives for the use of authentic materials in EFL teaching had to be studied in detail. In short, an interview made it possible to find out and analyse the possible effects of teaching experience on the use of authentic texts more thoroughly than any other method would have.

The interview questions were created to meet the goal of the present study. After carefully revising the interview questions, the data was collected in January 2014. The interviews lasted for approximately 30 minutes and were recorded.

4.2.2 Research participants

The participants of the present study were three EFL teachers who taught English on high school level in Central Finland. Because of the nature of the research questions and the aim of the present study it was essential that the participants were in different phases of their teaching career. To be able to compare the possible effect of the teaching experience on the use of authentic materials, it was important to interview recent university graduates who had not been teaching for a long time and compare their answers with the answers of EFL teachers who had been teaching for 10 years or longer.

Consequently, the data consists of answers from one inexperienced teacher with four months of EFL teaching experience and two experienced teachers who had been working as EFL teachers for 10 and 23 years. The participants are referred to according to their teaching years as Teacher 0, Teacher 10 and Teacher 23.

4.3 Methods of analysis

The main themes arising from the interviews are discussed by using the methods of a comparative case study. A comparative case study is a study the goal of which is to discover possible similarities and differences between the cases (Campbell 2010: 175). A comparative case study examines two or more instances of a specific phenomenon, in the case of the present study, different kinds of teachers' use of authentic materials.

The interviews were first transcribed and then analysed by organising the answers into themes. Within these themes the teachers' answers were analysed by drawing both similarities and differences between the teachers and their ways of using authentic materials.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter I will present the results of the present study and discuss them in further detail. First, I will present what authentic materials were favoured by the two teacher groups. Second, I will move on to discussing the motives and attitudes of the interviewees towards authentic materials that arose during the interview. Third, I will present some of the ways in which the teachers use authentic materials in their EFL teaching. Fourth, I will discuss the role of teacher training and teaching experience in the use of authentic materials.

5.1 Authentic materials used by the teachers

In the interview the research participants were asked whether they use authentic materials and what authentic materials outside the textbook they usually choose to bring into the classroom. The teachers reported using mainly videos, music and online articles in their EFL teaching. Especially YouTube videos were popular among all the interviewees mainly because of their diversity and multimodality.

Example 1

Opettaja 0: No esimerkiksi YouTubesta tulee näytettyä paljon videoita. Ihan sen takia, että videoissa, yleensä niissä puhuu esim. englantia joku natiivi, eli he saa sen eli he kuulee natiivin puhumaa kieltä ja sitten myös siihen, videoissa on hyvä se, että siihen puheeseen liittyy myös se visuaalinen aspekti. Eli oppilas ei vaan kuule sitä natiivin ääntä vaan näkee myös, miten hän elehtii esimerkiksi. Kehonkieli tavallaan tulee siinä esille siinä videossa eri tavalla.

Teacher 0: Well, for example, I show a lot of videos from YouTube. Mainly because there is usually someone speaking English, for example, some native speaker, so they [the students] get that they get to hear a native speaker speaking the language and also, what is good about videos is that there is the visual aspect to them. So the student not only hears the native speaker speaking but also sees how he or she, for example, gestures, so the body language is present, as well.

Example 2

Opettaja 23: No sitä YouTubea tietysti, koska siellä on niin monenlaista. että kun sieltä löytyy tietysti musiikin lisäksi siellä on kohtauksia esimerkiksi elokuvista. Sieltä löytyy tän tyyppisiä, sieltä löytyy esimerkiksi Shakespearen näytelmistä semmosia niinku mini mitä ihmeen animaatioita, ja sit tota aika paljon semmosta, että jos on teksti jostakin no vaikka elokuvasta tai ohjaajasta, niin sitten näyttää hänen haastatteluaan et kyllä se YouTube on sillä lailla aika hyvä.

Teacher 23: Well YouTube of course, because there is so much there so that you can find not only music but also, for example, movie scenes from there. You can find sort of, you can find those so-called mini

animations from, for example, Shakespeare's plays from there and also if you have a text about a movie or a director, you can show his or her interview so YouTube is quite good in that sense.

Newspaper, magazine and online newspaper articles were also popular and one of the most used materials among the teachers interviewed. Especially the experienced teachers, Teacher 10 and Teacher 23, reported often using online articles about different topics related to the course content. Teacher 0, however, seemed to show more preference towards the above mentioned videos and music.

One of the goals of the present study was also to survey what authentic materials the interviewees did not use in their teaching. Authentic materials typically not chosen by the teachers had more to do with the content and length of the text than the medium. For instance, Teacher 0 said she rarely chooses texts that are very long. On the contrary, Teacher 23 reported avoiding authentic materials that are too short or light in content. According to Teacher 23, the level of English as an A-language in Finnish high schools is already pretty high and texts that are too short are therefore not challenging enough and are more suitable for beginner learners. For example, she mentioned advertisements as a case in point of texts that lack in length even though they can sometimes be analysed for their language and other aspects.

5.2 Motives and attitudes

One of the aims of the present study was to discover and analyse not only what authentic materials the teachers use in their teaching but also the underlying attitudes towards and motives for using them that the teachers have. For this reason, the teachers were asked to give reasons for why they use or do not use authentic materials in their EFL teaching.

The main motive mentioned by all the interviewees for bringing authentic materials into the EFL classroom was the benefits that authentic materials offer for high school students. In line with the results that Peacock (1997) got in his study on authentic materials and student motivation, all the teachers agreed that authentic materials tend to be motivating and interesting for the students as well as more up-to-date and recent than the textbook. All the teachers were also of the opinion that authentic materials are rich in, for instance, cultural knowledge as well as vocabulary and language that have not been modified or made easier for pedagogic purposes. For instance, Teacher 0 pointed out how videos function as a way of

promoting authentic use of English and the conversational culture by combining spoken language with body language that is characteristic of the native speakers of the language. The teachers' answers therefore reflect the importance of communicative competencies and cultural knowledge that students are able to develop when authentic learning materials are used (Gilmore 2007). Moreover, because of the unmodified nature of authentic texts, Teacher 10 emphasised how the use of authentic materials activates students to think more independently than texts that have been designed for EFL purposes. For example, when students try their skills at comprehending texts that have not been modified for learning purposes, they are forced to develop new strategies for interpreting meanings of new words and expressions. In short, the teachers considered authentic materials beneficial because they tend to influence students' FL learning positively by making it more interesting, motivating and proactive.

Despite mostly agreeing on the benefits of authentic materials, the novice and experienced teachers differed in how much emphasis they put on the fact that the teacher uses authentic materials outside the textbook. Throughout the interview, Teacher 10 and Teacher 23 said that even though they regarded authentic materials as important and tried to implement them in their teaching regularly, they did not always use them as much as they probably should have. For example, Teacher 23 pointed out that EFL textbooks these days are already rich in authentic materials. For this reason, she did not necessarily regard authentic materials chosen by the teacher to be crucially better or more beneficial and thus often used the materials available in the textbook. Teacher 0, however, pointed out that the authentic materials chosen by the teacher can sometimes be better than the authentic materials in the textbook because the teacher knows the students and can therefore provide them with materials that are clearly targeted at them.

Example 3

Opettaja 0: No sillon kun opettaja ite tuo jotain autenttista materiaalia luokkaan, niin yleensä opettaja on varmasti jo miettiny sitä, että vetoaako se sen luokan oppilaisiin. Elikkä kun meillä on kirja, missä on autenttisia materiaaleja, niin pitää kumminkin ottaa huomioon se, että se on tehty massoille se oppikirja, mutta sitten taas ope, joka tuntee sen oman luokkansa ja sen oppilaat ja voi ehkä sen takia tuoda semmosta niinkun oikeasti semmosta heitä oppilaita kiinnostavaa autenttista materiaalia sinne luokkaan, jos hän tuntee oppilaitaan yhtään tietysti.

Teacher 0: Well when the teacher themselves brings some kind of authentic materials into the classroom, they have probably already thought about whether the material is going to be interesting for the students or not. When we have a text book that contains authentic materials, we still need to take into account the fact that the book has been made for the masses. A teacher who knows their own class can therefore be able to provide them with authentic materials that genuinely interest the students, if the teacher knows their students at all, of course.

The novice teacher seemed therefore to be more determined to regularly use authentic materials outside the textbook whereas both Teacher 10 and Teacher 23 seemed to be more inclined to use the textbook and the authentic texts that it provides.

Lack of time was one common theme arising from the answers of both the novice teacher and the experienced teachers. For instance, Teacher 0 pointed out that the effort of creating a vocabulary for longer or more difficult authentic texts was a factor sometimes preventing her from using authentic materials because it was too time-consuming. Similarly, Teacher 10 and Teacher 23 reported that they did not always simply have enough time or imagination to search authentic materials that would suit both the content of the course and the students' level of proficiency.

Even though all the interviewees mentioned lack of time being one of the major factors preventing them from using authentic materials, it was the experienced teachers who seemed to be emphasising it more than the novice teacher. The longer teaching experience that Teacher 10 and Teacher 23 have could be argued to be the reason for this. Because the novice teacher had only been teaching for some months, she obviously did not have the experience that comes with long-term teaching. For instance, the experienced teachers have more knowledge and experience of what it is like to teach English on high school level where one of the main goals is to pass the matriculation examination. The experienced teachers therefore recognise the tight schedule and the challenges that it poses for regularly using authentic materials. Moreover, as Teacher 10 notes, having worked as an EFL teacher for a decade now, she knows that also students are so focused on passing the matriculation examination that they sometimes resist materials that deviate from what they are used to because they think they do not prepare them for the examination.

Example 4

Opettaja 10: Abeissa huomaa sen vastarinnan, et jos siellä yrittää abikurssilla jotain vähän luovempaa, niin ne heti toivoo, et palataan siihen perinteiseen, et tästä ei oo meille hyötyä. Eli sen oon huomannu ja ne toivoo jo niinkun alussakin, et ei sit mitään lautapelejä esimerkiksi. Tai se nyt ei oo niin autenttista, mutta me halutaan just niitä yo-harjoituksia ja me halutaan just sitä kuuntelua ja just sitä aineen kirjotusta ja se johtuu siitä et se on niin me ollaan niin iskostettu tai iskostuneet niin siihen yo yo juttuun, että se on se painajainen siellä.

Teacher 10: You can notice the resistance in the older students when you try to be more creative in the revision courses. The students instantly wish that we would go back to the traditional way of learning because it [authentic materials] is not going to be of help for them. So that I have noticed and the students wish right in the beginning that we would not have, for example, any board games. Well I am not sure if that is an authentic material but the students only want exercise, such as listening

comprehension or essay writing, that prepare them for the matriculation examination. It is because we are so focused on the matriculation examination that is this kind of nightmare looming there.

Example 5

Opettaja 10: Mut et aika on rajoitettu tietysti lukiossa, että ku pitäis, aattelee aina, et pitäis käydä nää ja nää asiat ja jos jää aikaa, niin sit tehään jotain. Se on, mä myönnän tai tiedän, et on huono lähtökohta, et pitäis niinkun suunnitteluun integroida se jo lähtökohtaisesti enempi se autenttisten materiaalien käyttö, koska se on sitä omaa ajattelua, mitä me halutaan.

Teacher 10: The time is of course limited in high school because you always think that you should be able to cover all of these topics and if there is time, then we will do something else. I admit and know that it is not a good way of doing things and that you should integrate authentic materials already in the planning because we want students to be able to think more independently.

Having taught for only four months and a few courses, the novice teacher might not be conscious of the tight schedule of the high school syllabus and how it affects the use of authentic materials. The experienced teachers, however, seem already aware of how the limited amount of time of EFL teaching in high school, the emphasis on the matriculation examination and students' attitudes can affect the use of authentic materials negatively.

5.3 The ways of using authentic materials

In order to study the use of authentic materials in more detail, the teachers were asked to describe what they usually do with the authentic materials that they bring into the EFL classroom. The interview questions were aimed to find out the patterns of using authentic materials that the interviewees have and the similarities and differences between these patterns.

All the teachers reported choosing authentic materials according to the theme of the course that they were currently teaching. The curriculum as their frame for the topics taught and the textbook as their main source of material and topics, teachers said they choose authentic materials that support and add to the themes and grammar points discussed.

Example 6

Opettaja 0: Sitten käytän paljon just noita esimerkiks just noita TED Talk –videoita, että yleensä ne on sit semmosia, että semmosissa teemoissa, jotka kuuluu siihen kurssiin eli mitkä OPS:ista tulee kurssin teemoiks niin jotenkin siihen liittyvästi.

Teacher 0: Then I use a lot of those, for example, TED Talk –videos and they are usually then related to the theme of the course that is defined by the Finnish National Curriculum.

Both the novice and the experienced teachers therefore considered it important to use authentic materials outside the book that discuss or present all topics that are relevant in the course.

Authentic materials were often used by the interviewees to introduce, for instance, a new grammar point or a chapter in the textbook. The interviewees described how they usually use authentic materials, such as videos and music, as a warm-up when starting a new topic. Teacher 23, for example, describes how she sometimes shows students video clips or photos of the topic that the chapter is related to before moving on to the actual text in the textbook. In other words, the teachers saw authentic texts as being effective in catching students' attention and preparing them for a new theme.

There was a difference between whether the teachers created tasks or exercises around authentic texts and this way developed them further. Whereas both Teacher 0 and Teacher 10 said they also created tasks and exercises around authentic texts, Teacher 23 reported rarely coming up with tasks of her own that would be based on the authentic materials that she brings into the classroom.

Example 7

Opettaja 23: Taas omalla kohdalla voin sanoa, että se semmonen jatkotyöstäminen, et sitä mä en ihan hirveen usein niinku tavallaan kerkeekään tekemään. Että käytän sitten sitä autenttista tekstiä, että loisis siihen ite vaikka kysymyksiä aika monta, niin tota enemmän ne on semmosia ”glimpsejä” siellä.

Teacher 23: When it comes to me, developing the authentic text further by creating exercises around it, I rarely have time to do that. So the way I use authentic texts, rather than creating, for example, questions about them, I prefer to have them as sort of glimpses here and there.

Teacher 10, however, mentioned often creating especially longer projects around authentic texts. For instance, she had often asked students to search for news articles and comment on them every week throughout the course. Teacher 0 also reported often designing tasks that require students to analyse the authentic text in more detail. In short, even though all the teachers reported actively using authentic materials in their EFL teaching, Teacher 0 and Teacher 10 showed more interest and motivation towards elaborating on authentic texts whereas Teacher 23 reported rarely doing that.

5.4 The role of education and teaching experience

Even though the effect that education and teaching experience have on the use of authentic materials was visible in the teachers' answers throughout the interview, the teachers were also asked about their views on the topic in more detail. The teachers were asked how extensively they thought authenticity had been discussed in their teacher training and how their use of authentic materials would change in the future or had already changed because of teaching experience.

The content and current trends of teacher training naturally influence the way that teachers from different teacher generations teach. Teacher 23, for instance, did not recall that authentic materials or authenticity in FL teaching would have been mentioned when she was in teacher training in the late 1980s. Teacher 0 and Teacher 10, however, remarked that authenticity in FL materials and teaching was discussed when they were studying in the early 2000s. According to Teacher 0 and Teacher 10, authenticity was not, however, emphasised or discussed extensively but rather mentioned a few times throughout their studies. Even though there has been development towards teacher training where authentic materials in FL teaching are emphasised, authenticity still seems to remain as something vague and poorly defined in FL teacher training. The teachers interviewed reported using authentic materials but the inspiration for that did not seem to stem from their teacher training.

The role of teaching experience in the use of authentic materials was regarded important by the interviewees in many ways. Teacher 0 estimated that the teaching experience she is going to gain in the future will most likely help her become more efficient in finding authentic materials for her EFL teaching. Teacher 10 and Teacher 23 both pointed out that during their teaching career it has not only been the teaching experience that has changed their use of authentic materials but also the internet and new technology have strongly influenced how they use authentic materials. However, Teacher 23 also mentioned that through her teaching experience she had gained more confidence in her use of authentic materials. She recalled that as a novice teacher she was sometimes scared to use authentic materials in her EFL teaching because she was not confident about her own language competency and was scared of mistakes and not knowing, for instance, all the vocabulary in the texts. Having taught for over 20 years, she reported being more confident and relaxed about using authentic materials. According to her, the teaching experience has therefore not only made her more

efficient with finding and using authentic materials but it has also allowed her to take more risks with them.

6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this comparative case study was to explore the use of authentic materials by different teachers. More specifically, the interest of the present study lay in what kind of similarities and differences there were in the use of authentic materials in EFL teaching between a novice teacher and experienced teachers. In order to be able to analyse and compare the use of authentic materials by these two teacher groups, an interview was designed to reveal not only what authentic materials the teachers preferred and how they used them but also what attitudes they held towards authentic materials in FL teaching and what their motives were for using them.

The results of the study showed that the differences between the novice teacher and the experienced teachers were not as significant as might have been expected. All the teachers were of the opinion that authentic materials were important and they reported using them as often as possible but not as much as they would have liked. The novice teacher and the experienced teachers used similar kinds of authentic materials and also the teacher with over 20 years of experience reported using, for instance, technology and ICT. The most concrete differences between the novice and the experienced teachers seemed to arise from their views on the textbook and time. It seems that the teaching experience brings with it not only confidence but also knowledge of the tight schedule and along with that scepticism towards regularly having enough time to search for authentic materials outside the textbook.

The results of the present study are important because they not only reveal ways and patterns of using authentic materials among Finnish EFL teachers but they also draw attention to the fact that authenticity still remains rather a vague topic in teacher training. Even though the results show that authenticity is discussed more nowadays in FL teacher training than it was 20 years ago, it still fails to be presented as an important part of FL teaching. The study was therefore successful because it was able to point out not only in which ways novice and experienced teachers might differ from each other but also the current status of authenticity in FL teacher training. Even though the results of the study cannot be generalised, they still give us valuable information about that the role of authenticity in FL training could be developed.

There were some challenges with the present study. It was sometimes difficult to know whether the choices in the use of authentic materials made by the interviewees were the result of their teaching experience or lack of it or just a matter of personality. It might be that some

of the decisions made by the research participants did not result from the teaching experience or their education but simply from their personal preference of a certain way of doing things. Certain improvements for this problem could be suggested. In order to have made the distinction between what choices are made on the basis of experience and what on the basis of personality clearer, the interview questions could have been modified to focus even more on the aspect of teaching experience.

There are many ways how teachers and their views on and use of authentic materials could be studied further in the future. Due to the restrictions of the bachelor's thesis, the amount of data and number of people interviewed was rather small and the results cannot therefore be generalised. In order to be able to draw conclusions that could be generalized, a similar study would have to be conducted with more participants. One interesting aspect for future research could also be the use of authentic materials in different languages and whether there are differences in how teachers of different languages choose to use authentic materials in their teaching.

Further study is also especially important when we want to promote FL teaching that provides students with more natural and authentic input and this way gives them better tools for becoming independent communicators who are used to a foreign language that does not always go according to the text book rules. As seen from the results of the present study, EFL teachers regard authentic materials as important but struggle with finding the time and resources for implementing them in their teaching. Authenticity is therefore clearly a concept recognised as important by teachers but one that would require clearer and better integration into the FL teacher training and high school curriculum.

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APPENDIX: THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

YLEISTÄ

1. Onko autenttisen materiaalin käsite sinulle tuttu?
2. Miten määrittelet autenttisen materiaalin kielen opetuksessa?
3. Mitä konkreettisia *esimerkkejä* osaat antaa autenttisista materiaaleista?
4. Mitä hyötyjä koet autenttisen materiaalin käyttöön liittyvän?
5. Kuinka tärkeäksi koet autenttisen materiaalin käytön kielten opetuksessa?
6. Mitä mahdollisia haittoja/rajoitteita koet autenttisen materiaalin käyttöön liittyvän?
7. Mitä mieltä olet autenttisista materiaaleista suhteessa oppimateriaaleihin, oppikirjoihin, kustantajien materiaaleihin?

OMA AUTENTTISEN MATERIAALIN KÄYTTÖ

8. Käytätkö autenttisia materiaaleja omassa lukion englannin kielen opetuksessasi?
9. Kuinka usein/säännöllisesti käytät autenttisia materiaaleja opetuksessasi?
10. Mitä autenttisia materiaaleja suosit omassa opetuksessasi? Miksi?
11. Mitä autenttisia materiaaleja et juuri käytä opetuksessasi? Miksi?
12. Kuvaile, miten yleensä käytät näitä materiaaleja opetuksessasi. Millaisissa tilanteissa? Mihin aiheisiin/teemoihin liittyen?
13. Mitkä tekijät vaikuttavat autenttisen materiaalin käyttöön opetuksessasi? (esim. aika, ryhmä)
14. Missä kieleen liittyvissä asioissa (esim. kielioppi, sanasto, kulttuurin opetus) koet autenttisen materiaalin käytön erityisen hyödylliseksi oppimisen kannalta?
15. Onko asioita, joita koet autenttisen materiaalin voivan opettaa paremmin kuin oppikirjan?
16. Onko tilanteita, joissa koet oppikirjan käytön hyödyllisemmäksi kuin autenttisen materiaalin käytön?
17. Onko lukion opetussuunnitelmassa jokin kurssi, jolla käytät enemmän autenttisia materiaaleja? Miksi juuri tämä kurssi?
18. Entä onko kurssi, jolla et juuri käytä autenttisia materiaaleja? Miksi et?
19. Koetko, että opettajan koulutuksessa painotettiin autenttisten materiaalien ja tekstien käyttöä kielen opetuksessa?
20. Koetko, että esimerkiksi koulun tai muiden kielten opettajien keskuudessa on painetta autenttisten materiaalien käyttöön opetuksessa?
21. *Kokenut opettaja*: Onko autenttisten materiaalien käyttö opetuksessasi muuttunut vuosien saatossa? Miten? Miksi? / *Noviisiopettaja*: Miten arvioisit, että autenttisen materiaalien käytösi tulee muuttumaan tulevaisuudessa? Miten? Miksi?