

Implementing Authentic Materials with HOTS Concept in Promoting Oral Communicative Competence

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Abstract

Authentic materials are considered to be an essential component in language learning at all levels. At present, it is an important and well discussed notion. It reviews the history of using authentic materials, identifies the most suitable authentic materials for the learning purposes since it brings many advantages. This study adopts the descriptive research methodology which is appropriately convenient to describe the topic of research. The use of authentic materials creates a lot of interest and motivation in the learners because of that they do not feel bored and tired. Authentic materials reduce the dullness of contrived text material. It makes significant contributions towards meeting the learning objectives of a programme. The results of this study also expected to illustrate that the implication of authentic materials and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) have a positive impact on enhancing learners' oral communicative competence. The objective of the study is implementing authentic materials with HOTS concept in promoting oral communicative competence e.g., newspaper articles, weather reports, pictures, posters, etc.

Keywords: Authentic Materials, Promoting, Oral Communicative Competence, Motivation, Contrived Text Material, Integration, Awareness, Implementing, HOTS.

Introduction

The authentic materials are very important and effective in enhancing oral communicative competence which is the main objective of language learning. Nunan in his book *Language Teaching Methodology* states that success of mastering language is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the target language. It implies that speaking is an indicator of mastering the language which is considered to be as an achievement in acquiring second language. Learners who reached this level in developing skills in their native language are likely to have fewer problems in acquiring those skills in other languages, i.e. in second language learning. Teachers accomplish different pedagogical approaches and different teaching methods like behaviouristic, cognitive, and communicative related activities according to the needs of the specific groups of the learners. The activities encourage students

to use and access to authentic materials such as cable TV, Satellite TV, radio, newspaper clippings, magazines that provide them exposure to the use of authentic language to develop oral communicative competence and higher order thinking skills of the learners.

It is well known that the authentic materials are not prepared for the language teaching. The use of authentic materials in ESL has been an on-going demand. Regarding oral communicative competence, many authors indicate that there are sources that provide teachers and learners with authentic spoken materials. Some of these sources are videos, newspaper clippings, and posters. Being aware of this source, many teachers and researchers have used different types of authentic materials in their teaching and investigation of effective teaching and learning practices.

Definition of Authentic Materials

The term *authentic* is originally used to identify natural communication contexts. As Kramsch (*Context and Culture in Language Speaking*, Oxford University Press, Mass, Heinle and Heinle Publishers, 1993: 177), points out that authentic refers to everyday language used. It is not intended for academic purposes. The term of *authentic materials* or *authentic texts* refers to 'written or spoken texts' which are commonly not intended for language teaching (Tomlinson, *Materials Development in Language Teaching*, Cambridge University Press, 1998). Similarly, Wallace (*Reading Oxford*, Oxford University Press, 1992: 145) defines authentic texts as 'real-life text, not written for pedagogic purposes'. Therefore, these materials are likely not provided or designed for teaching English especially to non-native speakers.

Authentic materials in English language teaching are classified to use them as per the needs of a particular class. According to Gebbard, authentic materials can be classified into three categories.

- **Authentic Listening Viewing Materials:** TV commercials, quiz shows, cartoons, news clips, comedy shows, movies, soap operas, professionally audio-taped short stories and novels, radio ads, songs, documentaries, songs and documentaries.
- **Authentic Visual Materials:** Slides, photographs, paintings, children's artwork, stick figure drawings, wordless street signs, silhouettes, pictures from magazine, ink blots, postcard pictures, wordless picture books, stamps, and X-rays.
- **Authentic Text Materials:** Newspaper articles, movie advertisements, lyrics to songs, restaurant menus, street signs, cereal boxes, information brochures, maps, TV guides, comic books, greeting cards, and bus schedules.

The Advantages of Authentic Materials

Authentic materials play an effective role in both the teaching as well as the learning process. In terms of the learning process, they provide EFL learners with a number of aspects such as motivation, authentic cultural background, contact with the real language.

Nevertheless, in terms of the teaching process, they maintain an innovative teaching style. Richards, J. and Rodgers, T. in book *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*, mentioned that the main advantages of using authentic materials are:

- * They have a positive effect on learners' motivation
- * They provide authentic cultural information.
- * They provide exposure to real language.
- * They relate more closely to learners' needs.
- * They support a more creative approach to teaching.

Sample Study

Sample of the study consists of 25 students from the Zilla Parishad High School Gullapalli of Cherukupalli mandal and 25 students from the Government High School Guntur studying class X.

Tools Used for Study

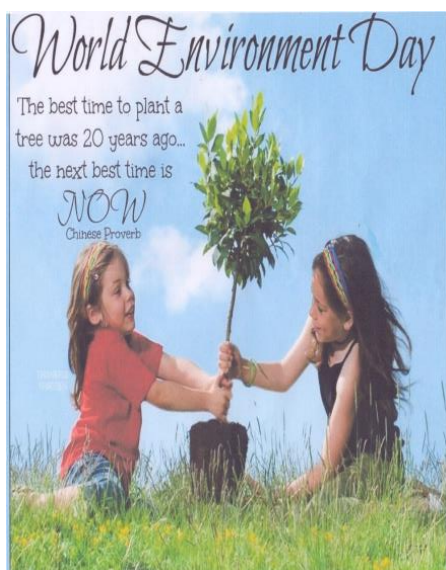
In the present study, quantitative data was collected by using questionnaire, which consisted of close ended questions. An analysis of the data, and its interpretation was presented to find out the efficacy of implementing authentic materials with HOTS concept in promoting Oral Communicative Competence after teaching the lesson *Environment*.

Transaction of a Lesson

The lesson *Environment* is an excerpt from the interview of Wangari Maathai with the Nippon, Hoso, Kyokai (NHK) radio Japan (2004 December, 19). Wangari Maathai is an Environmental Activist and Nobel Prize Winner. The lesson is about Maathai's contribution to the protection of Environment. At first, we showed a newspaper clipping of the famous Indian environmental activist Sri Sunderlal Bahuguna whose dream child is The Chipko Movement and a poster of Chipko Movement in which two women are hugging trees. Next we showed the students world *Environment Day* poster as a part of authentic materials.



Instructions given



- * Instructed the class to form into 5 groups.
- * Maintained 5 students in each group.
- * Instructed the students to think about the trees in their surroundings.
- * Advised the students to think about the uses of forests.
- * Instructed the children to share their ideas.

Questions posed

- * What do you see in the picture?
- * Explain why do the women hug trees?

movement?

- * Construct your plan of action on *Environment Day*?
- * Justify the statement– “save trees – save life?”

- * Simplify the message of the Chipko

Observations

We observed the following things while the lesson was going on.

- * The students began to understand the meaning of Environment.
- * The students came to know about Sundarlal Bahuguna and the Chipko movement.
- * The students learned the need of good environment.
- * All the groups shared their knowledge regarding the steps we have to take to protect our environment.
- * The children took part in the role play very enthusiastically as wood cutter and Chipko activist.
- * The students prepared some questions and answers before participating in the activity to act as interviewer and interviewee.
- * The students learned how to ask questions and how to answer the questions as a part of the interview in a role play. It provided good confidence and developed their oral communicative competence as per the HOTS of Blooms Taxonomy.

Data Analysis

The data used here is gathered from the questionnaire. The analysis and interpretation of the data was quantified based on the response from the respondents to know how far the use of authentic materials enhance Oral Communicative competence of the learners at secondary school level by using Blooms Taxonomy’s HOTS. The learners’ perception about the authentic materials to develop Oral Communicative Competence.

The data used for analysis as follows:

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Q.1. Are the authentic materials related to your lessons?

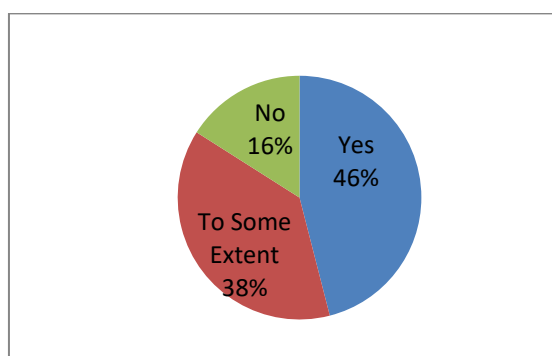
Table 1
Affinity of Authentic Materials to the Students' Lessons

Grades	No. of students	% of Respondents
Yes	23	46
To Some Extent	19	38
No	8	16
Total	50	100

Source: Data collected

Fig. 1

Affinity of Authentic Materials to the Students' Lessons.



Source: Data collected

Learners' Response

Table 1 indicates 46% learners of the urban and rural area considered 'yes' that the authentic materials are related to lessons. 38% learners of the rural and urban area agreed 'to some extent' that authentic materials are helpful to improve their grammar. Whereas 16% learners of the rural and urban area considered 'no' that the authentic materials are related to lessons.

Analysis

Highest percentage of learners agreed 'yes' that the authentic materials used in the experiment are related to their lessons. They understood the lesson very well after using authentic materials because the posters of 'Chipko movement' and 'World Environment Day' are connected to the hearts of the learners. The learners like growing trees very well. Recently 'vanam, manam', programme is introduced in our government schools. The government provided some saplings to our children to plant at their houses because of these authentic materials, the children easily connected to the lesson "Environment". So, they gave good percentage of willingness to the question posed.

Q.2. Are the authentic materials helpful to improve your vocabulary?

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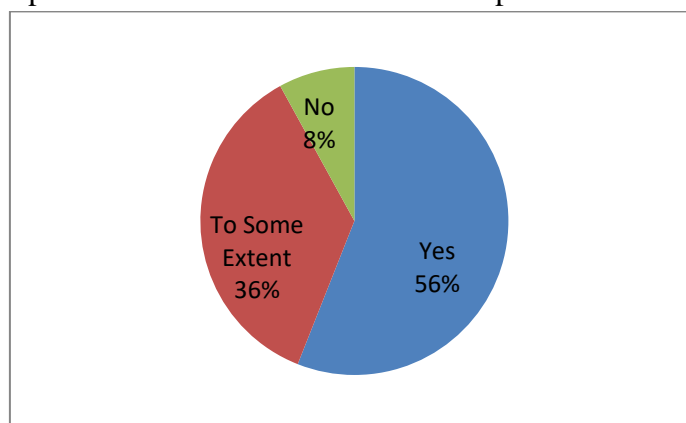
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Table 2
Helpfulness of Authentic Material to improve Vocabulary

Grades	No. of students	% of Respondents
Yes	28	56
To Some Extent	18	36
No	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Data collected

Fig. 2
Helpfulness of Authentic Material to improve Vocabulary



Source: Data collected

Learners' Response

The above table represents 56% learners of the rural and urban area considered 'yes' that the authentic materials are helpful to improve their vocabulary. 36% learners of the rural and urban area considered 'to some extent' that authentic materials are helpful to improve their grammar. Whereas as 8% learners of rural and urban area only considered 'no' that the authentic material are not helpful to improve their vocabulary. Most of the learners felt that they improve their vocabulary with the help of the authentic materials, because they came across with some new words while using the authentic materials.

Analysis

The *World Environment Day* poster helped the learners to learn vocabulary like, plant, tree, ago, next, time, and now. The poster on Sundarlal Bahuguna helped the learners to learn words like ecology, ecologist and Chipko movement, etc. The learners learn all these words and understand them when they came across in the lesson very easily. This helps them to mark 'yes' grade for the level of vocabulary they learned.

Q.3. Are the Authentic Materials helpful to improve your Grammar?

Table 3

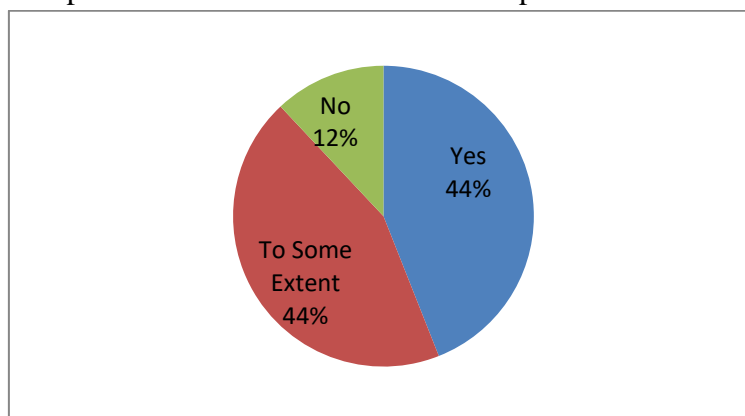
Aptness of authentic materials to improve grammar

Grades	No. of students	% of Respondents
Yes	22	44
To Some Extent	22	44
No	6	12
Total	50	100

Source: Data collected

Fig. 3

Aptness of Authentic Materials to improve Grammar



Source: Data collected

Learners' Response

The above table represents 44% learners of the rural and urban area considered 'yes' that the authentic materials are helpful to improve their grammar. 44% learners of the rural and urban area considered 'to some extent' that authentic materials are helpful to improve their grammar. Whereas 12% learners of the rural and urban area considered 'no' that the authentic materials are not helpful to improve their grammar.

Analysis

A good percentage of the learners understood how to use the 'be' forms of the past tense and the present tense Example: was, were and am, is. The learners also learned how to use adverbs of time 'ago and now'. The learners came to understand how to use superlative forms 'best' etc. The students grasped knowledge regarding the usage of 'be forms' adverbs, superlative degrees in grammar.

Q.4 Are you able to learn the Content of the lesson after working on the Authentic Materials?

Table 4

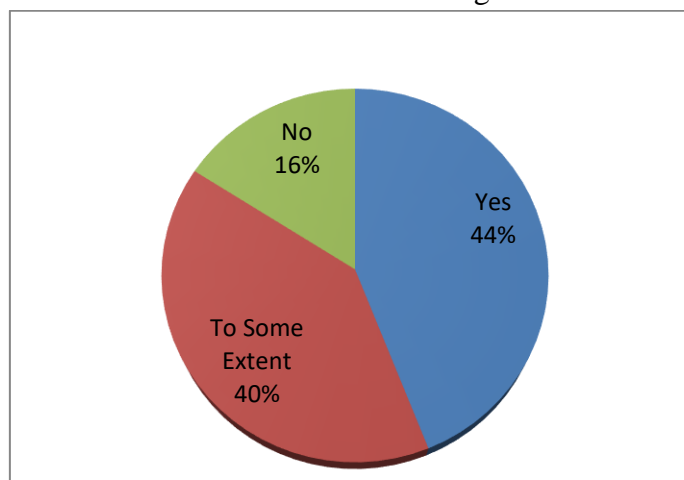
Ability to learn the content of the lesson after working on the authentic materials

Grades	No. of students	% of Respondents
Yes	22	44
To Some Extent	20	40
No	5	16
Total	50	100

Source: Data collected

Fig. 4

Ability to learn the Content of the lesson after working on the Authentic Materials



Source: Data collected

Learners’ Response

The above table 4 shows 44% learners of the rural and urban area considered ‘yes’ that they are able to learn the content while working on the authentic materials.40% learners of the rural and urban area considered ‘to some extent’ that they are able to learn the content after working on the authentic materials. Whereas 16% learners of the rural and urban area considered ‘no’ that they are unable to learn the content after working on the authentic materials. A great number of students are able to understand the content because the materials are very simple, attractive and inspiring.

Analysis

A great number of students are able to understand the content of the lesson because the vocabulary mentioned in the authentic materials are very simple to understand. The authentic materials are very colourful and attractive in appearance. The learners saw and understood the scene of the picture and about the ‘Chipko movement’. The students also understood the dedication of Sundarlal Bahuguna to protect ecology and his efforts as ecologist. The students

also understood the importance of ‘The World Environment Day’. So, it is analysed that the learners understood the lesson very well after working on the authentic materials.

Q.5. Are the authentic materials really helpful to develop oral communicative competence?

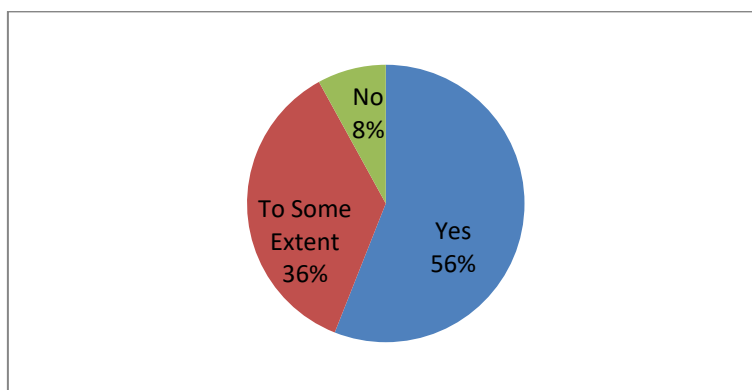
Table 5
The advantage of Authentic Materials to develop Oral Communicative competence

Grades	No. of students	% of Respondents
Yes	28	56
To Some Extent	18	36
No	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Data collected

Fig. 5.

The advantage of Authentic Materials to develop Oral Communicative Competence



Source: Data collected

Learners’ Response

The above table 5 represents 56% learners of the rural and urban area considered ‘yes’ that the authentic materials are helpful to develop oral communicative competence. 36% learners of the rural and urban area considered ‘to some extent’ that the authentic materials are really helpful to develop oral communicative competence. Whereas 8% respondents of the rural and urban area considered ‘no’ that the authentic materials are really not helpful to develop oral communicative competence. A great percentage of learners agreed that the authentic materials are really helpful to develop oral communicative competence, because while using the authentic materials the learners take part in conversations. This activity helps them to think and share their ideas in different situations. The learners can think well about vocabulary grammar, and different types of expressions related to their lesson.

Analysis

The tasks introduced here are related to the lesson ‘Environment’. We used here two activities, the first one is a role play of a wood cutter and a Chipko activist. The second one is

an interview with a Chipko activist in these two activities, the learners took part in conversation. These two activities helped the learners to understand and analyse the concepts of deforestation and environment. Understanding and analysing levels occupy top position in the 'pyramid' of Blooms Taxonomy. These two skills belong to Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) as per the Blooms Taxonomy.

Conclusion

Higher Order Thinking Skills help the children to develop their oral communicative competence. Benjamin Blooms is an American Educational Psychologist who developed 'pyramid' to define levels of critical thinking required by a task. The bottom level in the 'pyramid' includes the most basic cognition and the highest level includes the most intellectual. The main levels in the 'pyramid' of Blooms Taxonomy i.e., remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, revising and creating.

Questions are posed after using the authentic materials keeping in the mind regarding remembering, understanding, analysing, evaluation and creating to develop the children's higher order thinking at the end of the transaction of the lesson.

Activities like conversation between a wood cutter and a Chipko activist and interview with an ecologist really help the students to think and develop their abilities and make them to achieve their highest potentials. Slow learners benefit more because of the use of the authentic materials. The learners develop the higher level of thinking skills and become good problem solvers. The graded authentic materials which were used at both the LOTS and HOTS levels helped the learners to develop their Oral Communicative Competence very well.

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