



## AUTHENTIC AND NON-AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN TEACHING LISTENING SKILLS

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**Abstract:** *In this article I want to show using authentic and also non-authentic materials during the teaching listening. There are many potential benefits to using prescribed curricula or materials to teach. However, these resources are not provided by every institution and even when they are, they often lack an authentic context in which students can practice English. In cases where these resources are not provided for a course, or where instructors wish to expose students to highly engaging opportunities to practice English, using authentic materials is an excellent option.*

**Keywords:** *Authentic materials, non-authentic materials, views of Gilmore, Scripted texts, teacher Corner's thoughts, Lindsay Clandfield, Adrian Underhill, David Nunan, Jeremy Harmer.*

As we know that learning English is spread all over the world. For example, taking IELTS or CEFR certificates gives more opportunity in their works and studies. We know in this examination has 4 parts, likewise, reading, speaking, listening and writing and also lots of students face to face a myriad of problems in these sections during preparation. Now I want to pay attention to listening part.

During teaching listening skills teacher use from variety of materials, for example, textbooks, audiobooks, lots of tracks, newspapers, TV shows or radio recordings and others. In teaching listening field these materials are classified which are authentic and non-authentic materials. Gilmore (2007), in his review of authentic materials, provided several definitions that were used over the years but eventually settled on one from Morrow (1977, cited in Gilmore, 2007), which defines authentic materials as “a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort” (p. 98). Noting that this definition includes a wide variety of language (including teacher-talk in the classroom), we opt for this modified definition: Authentic materials are those created for some of real words purpose other than language learning, and often, but not always, provided by native speakers for native speakers.<sup>1</sup> This

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definition, too, is not without problems for two reasons. First, words like authentic, real, and native speaker tend to be evaluative. The point of this book is not to argue that non-authentic materials (i.e., those created for language learning purposes) are without merit, but rather that authentic materials are essential and can be used much more broadly than most teachers might envision. Materials created by proficient non-native speakers are quite common in some contexts where English is a lingua franca (i.e., where it is used as a common language among speakers who have other first languages) and are therefore included in our definition of authentic materials. Second, even with this definition, gray areas exist, and it is important to discuss the possible benefits of such materials for language teaching. On a final note, we will use the terms text and materials interchangeably throughout the remainder of this book. However, text generally refers to any spoken or written language that is part of a set of materials. Materials is a slightly broader term that includes texts but also, for example, may simply be a set of pictures without any language.<sup>2</sup>

One description of authentic materials says that their purpose is to communicate meaning and information and that they are produced for real communication rather than to teach language.<sup>3</sup> Authentic materials for the English language classroom are often free and very easy to find online or perhaps in certain locations in your communities. Here are some examples:

- TV shows, news segments, TV shows, news segments, documentaries, movie clips and trailers, online videos, and commercials
- Photographs, artwork, signs, postcards, maps, and advertisements
- Magazines, letters and emails, news articles, brochures, websites, blogs, and social media posts
- Recipes, food labels, bus and train schedules, menus, and price tags and product descriptions

This month in the Teacher's Corner, we will discuss different types of authentic materials and the benefits and challenges of using them. We will also explore teaching strategies to use with these materials in the English language classroom. Activities will focus on activating and building students' background knowledge, increasing vocabulary, supporting comprehension, and including summative tasks. Ideas presented can be adapted to use with any type of authentic material you choose for your students.<sup>4</sup>

Non-authentic materials are adapted for language learning and include textbooks, workbooks and videos. They present language in an easier way and focus on specific learning objectives. Both materials have advantages depending on learner needs and the teaching goals. Non-authentic materials are resources that have been specifically created for educational purposes rather than for genuine communication or practical use in the real

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<sup>3</sup> (Thomas, 2014)

<sup>4</sup> <https://americanenglish.state.gov/>



world. These materials often include textbooks, worksheets, and exercises that are designed to teach language or skills, rather than materials that reflect actual language use in real-life contexts. Here are a few definitions and perspectives from various educators and scholars in the field of language teaching:

1. Lindsay Clandfield (2012): Clandfield distinguishes between authentic materials, which are created for native speakers, and non-authentic materials, which are designed to cater directly to the needs of learners. According to Clandfield, "non-authentic materials are those that are specially produced for learners, lacking the spontaneous and unfiltered nature of true communicative contexts."<sup>5</sup>

2. Adrian Underhill: Underhill suggests in his work on language teaching that non-authentic materials can sometimes lead to disengagement, as they do not mirror real-world language use. He posits that while these materials serve a purpose in structured learning environments, they may not adequately prepare students for real-life communication.<sup>6</sup>

3. David Nunan (1999): Nunan argues that non-authentic materials often fail to engage students with meaningful content. He notes that these materials may provide controlled practice but do not offer the genuine exposure learners need to develop fluency and comprehension skills in authentic contexts.<sup>7</sup>

4. Jeremy Harmer (2007): Harmer states that non-authentic materials sometimes lack the richness of real communication, as they are often simplified or modified for instructional clarity. He emphasizes the importance of incorporating authentic materials whenever possible to provide students with exposure to genuine language use.<sup>8</sup>

In summary, non-authentic materials are generally viewed as educational resources that do not reflect real-world language practices. While they can provide structured learning opportunities, an over-reliance on them may limit students' exposure to the complexities and nuances of actual language use.

Non-authentic materials are often simplified and tailored to suit learners' proficiency levels, making them more accessible for beginners or lower-intermediate students. These materials can focus on specific language points, vocabulary, or grammatical structures that teachers want to emphasize, enabling targeted practice and reinforcement. Non-authentic materials often present language in controlled contexts that help learners understand the usage of certain phrases or structures without the distractions of real-world complexity. They provide consistency in terms of language use and context, which can help learners build confidence before they encounter more unpredictable authentic materials. Non-authentic materials are often designed with specific educational goals in mind, making it easier for teachers to align lessons with curriculum standards.

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<sup>5</sup> "Teacher Development: A Hidden Hook" (2012)

<sup>6</sup> "Sound Foundations: Learning and Teaching Pronunciation"

<sup>7</sup> "Language Teaching Methodology" (1999)

<sup>8</sup> "The Practice of English Language Teaching" (4th edition, 2007).



In conclusion, Incorporating authentic materials into listening instruction not only enhances language acquisition but also prepares students for real-world communication in English. While there are certainly challenges associated with their use, the benefits greatly outweigh them when implemented thoughtfully. By employing targeted teaching strategies, educators can effectively utilize these materials to develop learners' listening skills while fostering a deeper connection to the language and culture surrounding English. Non-authentic materials play a significant role in language learning by offering structured, tailored resources that cater to learners' needs and proficiency levels. While they provide essential practice in specific language points and help build foundational skills, it's crucial to acknowledge their limitations in reflecting real-world language use. Educators should strive for a balanced approach that incorporates both non-authentic and authentic materials, ensuring that students not only develop their language abilities in a controlled environment but also gain exposure to the complexities of real-life communication. This comprehensive strategy will better prepare learners for effective interaction in diverse contexts, ultimately enhancing their overall language competence.

#### **REFERENCES:**

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