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EFL/ESL Materials, Media, and Technology

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❖ What are Authentic Materials? What Types Are Available?

Authentic Materials: Basically, authentic materials include anything that is used to communicate. Here is a partial list of some authentic materials EFL/ESL teachers have used.

1. Authentic Listening / Viewing Materials

silent films TV, commercials, quiz shows, cartoon news comedy shows, dramas, movies and soap operas; radio news dramas and ads, professionally short stories and novels; pop. rock, country, film, and children's songs, home videos; professionally videotaped travel logs, documentaries, and sales pitches.

2. Authentic Visual Materials

slides; photographs; paintings; sketches; drawings by children; stick-figure drawings; wordless street signs; silhouettes; calendar pictures; pictures from travel, news, and popular magazines; ink blots; postcard pictures, wordless picture books; stamps; X – ravs.

3. Authentic Printed Materials

newspaper articles, cartoons, advertisements, movie advertisements, astrology columns, sports reports, obituary columns, and advice columns; travel magazines, science math, and history books; short stories; novels; books of photographs; lyrics to popular, rock. folk, and children's songs;

restaurant menus, street signs; postcards; currency; cereal boxes, candy wrappers; tourist information brochures and tourist guidebooks; university catalogs; department store catalogs, telephone books; world, city, and relief maps; calendars, TV guides: driver's licenses; comic books. greeting cards; business cards, bank checks and deposit forms, grocery coupons; hotel registration forms; pins with messages bus, plane, train, taxi, and jitney schedules; teletext subtitles for the hearing impaired.

4. **Realia Used in EFL/ESL Classrooms**

dolls, puppets, currency, key rings, scissors, folded paper, toothpaste, toothbrushes, combs, stuffed and toy animals wall clocks, balloons, walkie-talkies, candles, fly swatters string, thread, chewing gum, glue, rulers, tacks, paper clips rubber bands, trains, aprons, plastic forks and spoons dishes, glasses, bowls, umbrellas, wallets, purses, balls phones, fishing reels, furniture, people, cars, bus collections, play money, stones, plants, sand, clay, ink, sticks jars, coffee cans, chalk, credit cards, hats Halloween masks, mannequins.

❖ **What are the Disadvantages and Advantages of Using Authentic Materials and Media?**

One disadvantage is that it takes time and effort to locate authentic materials. It also difficult to make authentic materials and media comprehensible to the students. Also, some students will not accept authentic materials and media as being a valuable learning source.

Nevertheless, there are reasons to use authentic materials because they can "reinforce for students the direct relation between the language classroom and the outside world".

In addition, they offer a way to contextualize language learning. When lessons are centered on comprehending a repair manual, a menu, a tv., weather report, a documentary, students tend to focus more on content and meaning than on language. This offers students a valuable source of language input, since they can be exposed to more than just the language presented by the teacher and the text.

❖ What Kinds of Technology Do EFL/ESL Teachers Use?

Technology: is scientific and industrial know-how or expertise.

- The transportation system.
- The communication system (telephone).
- The agricultural system.
- Other systems that provide people with the means to live.

❖ What Problems Do Some EFL/ESL Teachers Have with Materials, Media, and Technology?

The "I Am Forced to Teach from the Book" Problem

Sometimes actual lesson plans are provided, and supervisors make sure, they are followed. When this happens, teachers can feel helpless in the face of being creative with materials and media. Other teachers find ways to incorporate additional materials while adapting to the prescribed lesson. They might bring in photos or pictures that correspond on the required reading to make it more vivid.

The "Let the Textbook Do the Teaching" Problem

Following a text has certain advantages. It saves time, and novice teachers can learn something about teaching from following a text, studying the accompanying teaching manual, and using materials from companion websites. Not all teachers accept the constraints imposed on them by the text. Some teachers want to be more than technicians doing more than mindlessly following a text and its accompanying materials.

They realize that texts are meant to be blindly plodded through and that teaching guides are only other teachers' ways to teach lessons.

The "How Do I Locate Useful Websites for My Students?" Problem

There are so many websites that some teachers find it almost overwhelming to know which ones they can recommend to EFL/ESL students.