

## SCHOOL LIBRARY AS AN AUTHENTIC RESOURCE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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### Abstract

*The twenty-first century witnessed tremendous change in all walks of life. Along with the other areas, new technology has brought a great change in education. There have been several innovations in the field of Education and English Language Teaching (ELT). The concept of teaching English has changed drastically now. In the present-day language teaching-learning process, the learner has become the center of learning. The present generation of teachers of English has been using a variety of teaching resources to satisfy the needs and interests of their learners. Usage of authentic resources in addition to the prescribed textbook is the current trend in language classrooms. It is found that it improves the standards of learners and it also develops their language skills enormously in English language classrooms. Peacock (1997) states, "Authentic resources are more motivating for students, even lower-level students, than artificial resources". Briton (1991 cited in Qura, 2001) says, "Authentic resources relate more closely to learners' needs, for they build a connection between the language classroom and the outside world". The teachers use all the available authentic resources such as newspapers, magazines, storybooks, movies, radio, TV programs, songs, posters, and notices so that the learners show more interest in their learning. Authentic resources play a vital role in promoting learning and creating interest among learners to learn the English language naturally.*

*There are a lot of authentic resources available in English, but some of the teachers find it hard to identify suitable authentic resources for their class. Finding a suitable authentic resource is depending on the creativity and hard work of a teacher. It will be easy to identify an authentic resource from the school library and use it effectively in the teaching-learning activity. Almost all schools are having a simple library, but the question is how could teacher use it as a suitable authentic resource for enhancing learning. Most of the school libraries have been used for leisure time reading. The present paper brings to light the use of libraries at school as an authentic resource by the teachers in the English language classrooms. For this purpose, this paper initially discusses authentic resources and the advantages and disadvantages of authentic resources in the field of education. Then this paper brings out the importance of the school library as an effective authentic resource that is used in the English language classrooms. Later, this paper emphasizes how they assist the teachers of the English language in their teaching, and also how they help the learners to learn English in a better and easier way.*

Key words: School Library, English Language

### Introduction

The present era of technology gave a new dimension to almost all fields of knowledge. The field of education has highly benefited due to the changes in technology in teaching and learning. The

focus on teaching-learning has changed from focusing on what the teacher does to what the learner does and how the learner processes information during the lesson. The earlier teacher was everything in the teaching-learning process. Textbooks were considered the sole resource of knowledge in a classroom. The introduction of the internet and computers in education has made the process of teaching easy and accessible for all teachers and learners. The use of technology has become indispensable in learning today. The teachers have been using the internet to download resources for teaching, update their knowledge and get immediate solutions for their teaching. The Internet becomes a place of educational resources. After the introduction of smartphones, a big change is seen in the learning style of the learners. The pandemic Covid 19 has resulted in the introduction of hybrid and blended learning. The learners started using both online and face-to-face learning together. Studies conducted during the Pandemic time showed that there was a digital divide existed between learners. A large number of students were excluded from online learning. They did not have access to the internet and digital gadgets.

The present-day learners get the opportunity to use various sources for studying anything. The use of authentic resources finds to be a useful means for them to improve their learning skills. The teachers can use the authentic resource as an additional resource to develop the skills of their learners. The authentic resources help the teachers for reinforcing the learning items and can give additional tasks to their learners. The teachers use all the available authentic resources such as newspapers, magazines, storybooks, movies, radio, TV programs, songs, posters, and notices so that the learners show more interest in their learning. Authentic resources play a vital role in promoting learning and creating interest among learners to learn the English language naturally. The authentic resources create interest among the learners since the teachers select the resources with proper care by taking the needs and interests of the learners. Authentic resources are used in the teaching of English to attain better results in teaching the English language. Books in the school libraries can be used as a source of authentic resources in teaching English. Libraries at school are the centers of knowledge in any educational institution. All schools have libraries and the official records show that they have enough books in stock to support learning. Using library books as an authentic resource will not only improve the quality of teaching-learning of the English language at schools but also help in removing the gap created by online digital learning.

### **Authentic Resources**

A resource is authentic only when it contains authentic natural text. According to Tomlinson (1984), “An authentic text is a text which is not written or spoken for language teaching purposes. In general, authentic resources are those resources which are designed for native speakers, and not prepared for pedagogical purposes.”

There are lots of resources available to English language teachers today: from printed textbooks to online digital teaching tools. They can all support and enrich English lessons in the classroom. An authentic resource for the English language could be any resource written in English that was not created for intentional use in the English language classroom. Authentic resources could be newspapers, magazines, storybooks, movies, radio, TV programs, songs, posters, and notices. Using this resource to teach the English language can make the learning process even more

engaging, imaginative, and motivating for students. It could be useful to elicit genuine and natural responses from learners.

Newspapers, magazines, novels, stories, restaurant menus, and comics can be used as an authentic printed resource for the ELT classroom. Radio news, songs, phone messages, and podcasts can be used as an authentic auditory resource for the ELT classroom. Posters, signboards, and postcards can be used as an authentic visual resource for the ELT classroom. Films, documentaries, commercial advertisements, television programs, and video tutorials can be used as authentic audio-visual resources for the ELT classroom. Websites, blogs, Social networking posts, and games can be used as authentic online resources for the ELT classroom.

### **Advantages of Authentic Resources in the English Language Classroom**

An authentic resource provides rich language inputs to learners and helps them to get a much better output in English language learning. It fills the gap between the classroom and the outside world. Learners will be able to understand the real nature of the target language in a better way. It enhances the knowledge of grammar in the learner and it boosts the vocabulary of the target language effectively. It also improves the intercultural understanding of English and pronunciation.

Authentic resources allow learners to connect with the natural - real language of English native speakers. It improves the skills of English language learners as it gives a real-life experience to them in learning English. Authentic resources expose rich language inputs to the learners. It allows all the learners to become better listeners and better readers. It also helps the learners to connect with the real model of the target language naturally.

In any type of education, motivation is indispensable. The authentic resource motivates learners. Authentic resources help the learner to use the target language confidently like a native speaker. It gives a positive effect on learners' motivation. Learning a language means not only learning a language but learning a new culture. The authentic resource allows the learners to learn the native culture language along with the new language.

Authentic resources are to be selected only by looking at the need and significance of the topic discussed in the class. As it addresses the need of the learner it becomes significant in learning. It helps the learners to study English with a purpose. Authentic resources also help teachers to improve their creativity in teaching. Authentic resources are different from textbooks. It is up to the creativity of teacher in selecting and presenting an authentic resource in the class for language learning. As it is a useful tool teacher are benefited from using authentic resources. It is considered one of the effective methods for communicative English language teaching. Authentic resources will improve the language skills and linguistic knowledge of the teachers. It will also improve the intercultural understanding and creativity of teachers in teaching English.

### **Disadvantages of Using Authentic Resources in The English Language Classroom**

Even though authentic resources in English provide a natural and rich atmosphere for learning the English language in the English classroom, it has some disadvantages. An authentic resource is a natural material other than a text for language learning, it can frustrate a weaker learner from

learning English. It could contain difficult vocabulary and complex language structures. An average student may feel it difficult to understand the natural material of English in language learning. It may increase the burden on the teachers to identify suitable authentic resources for the class and adapt it to the level of the classroom. Only a creative teacher could make it more effective. As we use natural native authentic resources in the class, it would be culturally biased material for the learner.

The disadvantage of authentic resources could be overcome by choosing the resources carefully considering the age and level of the learners. Teachers have to be careful in selecting language elements according to the interest of the learners. It would help teach the English language by planning activities with the proper support of pedagogy in the classroom. Different tasks based on the authentic resource will be helpful for the learner to increase their interest in learning.

The teacher should select those resources that are readable to students. It should be at the level of the learner. The books should be relevant and have an adequate structure and vocabulary at the level of the learner. The selected resource should be helpful for the teacher and the learner to present in the class.

### **School Library as a Source of Authentic Resource**

Libraries are considered as the bank of knowledge. The library is inevitable in every school. The size of the library may vary from primary to higher secondary schools. Authentic resources could be available in every school library. It will be easy to identify an authentic resource from the school library and use it effectively in teaching-learning activities. Even though the schools are having a library many of them are using it as a place for reading especially leisure time reading. It is widely accepted that libraries are useful in improving academic excellence among students.

The School library is an easily available authentic resource repository of any school. In school libraries, one can see various printed authentic resources on any subject. The use of library books in academic activities is very important. Only a creative teacher can use the available resources in the library effectively in classroom academic activities. During the time of the pandemic, Covid 19 blended and digital learning became popular. Most countries including India practiced digital learning. But a large number of students were outside of the learning process due to the lack of resources helpful to achieve digital gadgets and internet data. If we use library books as a source of authentic resources it will be helpful for the students from lower-income sections to get a quality education.

An experimental study conducted by SCERT Thiruvananthapuram in 2020 proved that providing library resources as input in classroom activities could improve the academic quality of students. In the study, they planned the lesson creatively by including authentic resources as input for the class. They administered the study in five schools by preparing a library reference package for Basic science, Malayalam, and Social science in the fifth standard. The study proved that after the use of referencing packages remarkable changes had occurred in students in their performances and the product made by them. This finding revealed the effectiveness of the library on the academic quality of students. Another study conducted by Abdelghani Remache, Al Ain University of Science and Technology, United Arab Emirates found that in Communicative English language teaching authentic resources is very useful. Authentic

resources are found useful in raising students' interests and motivation and instigating the acquisition of an effective communicative competence in the English language.

### **School Library as a Source of Authentic Resources for English Language Teaching**

The authentic materials movement led by Krashen (1985), Nunan (2004), Ellis and Larsen-Freeman (2009), as well as other proponents of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) put forward the idea that authentic materials are carefully selected and creatively adapted for classroom instruction can help learners to develop English language acquisition and boost the motivation of learners. They strongly objected to the idea of language learning material writers who compose texts specifically to selected structural and lexical items. They had a belief that the passages do not take from the learner's real-world context and are thus bound to hinder language use and performance in the target settings.

The current trends in English Language Teaching methodology focus the attention on bringing real-life language to the classroom through incorporating authentic materials rather than materials that are simplified and presented in the textbooks. The simplified language materials will not give a rich real and natural experience to the learners. Authentic materials would link the learner to the real world. Using authentic materials has profound implications for classroom instruction, language acquisition, motivation, and language learning. When the classroom activities give importance to reading and reference books from the library will provide an opportunity for the learner to enrich their critical thinking and language skills. It is highly advisable to include authentic English library resources for English language learning. In school libraries, there would be various magazines, newspapers, novels, stories, poems, and even comics in English. Using these authentic resources creatively will be helpful for the teacher in an ELT classroom to provide a rich input to learners. When we compare authentic materials with online resources, printed materials have more pedagogical value in teaching language. If we print authentic materials of English and use them as input material, it will be helpful for the teachers to use them in their classes.

### **Conclusion**

In this thematic paper, there is an attempt made to focus on the effective use of authentic resources in English language classrooms. First, this paper has discussed authentic resources then it discussed the advantages and disadvantages of authentic resources in teaching-learning. After that, this paper has brought out the importance of authentic resources in English language classrooms. Furthermore, this paper has emphasized the effective use of the school library as a source of authentic materials and how they are useful to the teachers in their teaching. It also discussed how they help the learners to learn the English language easily and effectively. Authentic resources help bring up the desired learning skills in the learners. As authentic materials provide the opportunity for the English language teachers to adapt various strategies to teach the learners using library resources in their classrooms. The learners have a chance to learn the language in a positive way. Authentic materials in the library are more economical and easily accessible anywhere. If the teachers of English have started using them in their everyday classrooms it will be effective for English language learning. The teachers could also promote

their learners' language skills enormously by adopting the authentic materials that create interest among the learners.'

The teachers of English are advised to be creative in selecting authentic resources that concentrate on the needs and interests of the learners and use the school library resources effectively in improving the learning skills of the learners. Authentic resources are to be selected only by looking at the need and significance of the topic discussed in the class. As it is a useful tool, teachers are benefited from using authentic resources. It is considered one of the effective methods for communicative English language teaching. Authentic resources will improve the language skills and linguistic knowledge of the teachers. It will also improve the intercultural understanding and creativity of teachers in teaching English.

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