



Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Authentic Materials  
and Tasks in EFL Classrooms at Tertiary Level in Taiwan

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## **Abstract**

In the wake of the expansion of a communicative approach to English language teaching, the issue of authenticity of materials continues to be a concern which has received much attention from academia. Yet, it is unclear whether teachers would like to use authentic materials and tasks with tertiary students in EFL contexts, such as Taiwan. This exploratory study aimed at investigating English teachers' perceptions of using authentic materials and associated tasks as potential pedagogical approaches at the tertiary level of education, specifically universities of technology in the Taiwanese context.

Set within an interpretive paradigm, data collection included semi-structured interviews with fourteen teachers and questionnaires completed by thirty. The main findings revealed that the teachers made only sporadic use of authentic materials, although they had positive attitudes towards using authentic materials. The perceived benefits involved being facilitative to language learning through enhanced motivation and engagement of the students, linking to the real-world language, exposure to rich input, and developing cultural learning and awareness.

The activities or tasks in use ranged from less communicative pedagogic activities to more communicative authentic tasks. The teachers reported using more non-communicative or pre-communicative pedagogical activities than real-world tasks. As for the issues, more teachers prefer to use authentic materials with advanced learners although some argued that authentic materials can work with beginner students. The constraints on using authentic

materials included time stress, needing to follow shared curricula, having the common major school examinations for their students to sit for, and the labour-intensive factors related to selection and compilation of authentic materials.

Recommendations are that only sensible selection and proper presentation of authentic materials and associated tasks with mitigating factors involved can uphold an optimal learning environment and thus facilitate language learning. The findings of this study could shed some light on EFL teaching, and have implications for policy-makers, teacher educators, and material designers.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

The use of English language textbooks as the primary instructional input may be a very common practice for some EFL teachers. Textbooks are valued for providing a structured and functional framework for learning and teaching English language, and for being of immediate convenience to the teachers and learners (McDonough *et al.*, 2013). Textbook materials merit their values in scaffolding language learners and in lessening time needed for teachers' preparation. The framework embedded in the textbooks may encompass the author's assumptions about the nature of language teaching and learning, the roles that teachers and students are expected to perform and the specific learning styles in certain cultures (Hedge, 2000). In some contexts, textbooks may even imply a 'hidden curriculum' (Richards, 1998: 125). Textbooks may also involve what learning outcomes and teaching goals teachers and students are expected to achieve, how the target language is to be learned and taught, what kind of syllabi and sequence of lessons they need to follow (Richards, 1998). Hence, many EFL teachers would still capitalize on the availability of contemporary coursebooks to use with their learners.

Nevertheless, there are problems and limitations with the use of textbooks, since the language, topics and so on may be contrived and lack the characteristics of natural use. Language teachers need to equip the students with the language used in the real world (Hedge, 2000; Almusallam, 2015). One of the alternatives for the language teachers is to introduce authentic materials into the EFL classroom. Authentic materials refer to the materials which are neither contrived nor simplified, and which are not specifically designed for

language learning (Hedge, 2000). The languages and discourses used in authentic materials are usually genuine, natural, and of immediate 'currency' (Mishan, 2005: 55) to the interlocutors or the readers.

### **1.1 Nature of the Problem**

It is usual to use textbooks as the primary teaching materials in EFL classes in Taiwan. However, textbooks materials come under criticism in several areas. Firstly, there might be inconsistency between textbook presentations of certain grammatical structure and authentic materials (Anderson, 2007). Textbooks may provide a disproportionate view of grammatical form, over-representing certain forms at the cost of others (Goodall, 2010; Zyzik & Polio, 2017), which may fail to reflect the authentic language used in real-world contexts.

Secondly, the verbal discourse in textbooks may vary from that found in authentic spoken languages in terms of wording, lexical items, turn taking, and pragmatic use (Gilmore, 2007). The artificial listening textbook materials, it is argued, are 'in no way' equating to the authentic language spoken in the real world (Hedge, 2000: 67). The verbal discourse used in textbooks is generally very structured, coherent, and error-free; in contrast, authentic language may feature idiomatic usages, or sporadic utterances, allowing for the use of pauses, fillers, sentence fragments, or repetitions to confirm and negotiate meanings. For instance, turns are neatly taken one after another in texts (Gilmore, 2007), whereas in real-life conversation, the speaker may sometimes cut into others' conversation without pausing to wait for the next turn. Alternatively, speakers could all talk simultaneously so that their utterances overlap and become inaudible or indistinct. Therefore, real-world conversations are usually messy,

spontaneous, full of errors, rather than well-structured and error-free as presented in textbooks.

A third criticism is that whilst contemporary textbooks may become the main source of teaching materials for many language teachers (Richards, 1998: 127), it may be problematic if teachers rely on a single one-size-fits-all coursebook to teach all their learners. Yet, every classroom is composed of a group of diverse language learners with different learning needs and outcomes, with schematic learning backgrounds acquired from their past learning experiences and from other disciplines of subjects, as well as expectations towards specific learning and teaching cultures (Hedge, 2000). As a result, there is likely to be a poor match between the specific classroom and the textbooks which are expected to satisfy the diverse needs of individual language learners in specific socio-cultural settings.

The lack of authenticity in the textbooks in use in Taiwan may be due to the objectives and purposes with which textbooks materials are fundamentally different from those of authentic materials. Language textbooks aim to scaffold their learners with contrived language, activities, and settings for educational purposes, whereas authentic materials are intended to convey the messages to the intended readers or the audience in the real-world situation with an aim to communicate. Thus, most textbooks used in the Taiwan context contain inauthentic and contrived texts, providing language models and inputs which are unnatural and unreal to the learners.

## **1.2 Rationale for the Study**

In most EFL contexts learners may have little exposure to English input outside of the classroom. If we aim to enable our learners to deal with authentic language in the real world, we should give them opportunities to cope with authentic language in the classroom (Hedge, 2000). Unfortunately, most of the locally designed teaching materials used in the Taiwanese context of this study, especially textbook materials in particular, do not seem to reflect the ever-changing nature and authenticity of the different modes of texts and information. We are situated in a global society with fast-pacing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) where we are constantly required to process all kinds of data and models of texts; so are our learners. Given such realities, our teaching materials cannot turn away from our students' constant needs to process various modes of texts and data on a daily basis.

My commitment to undertaking the study stemmed from its high relevance to my teaching practice and personal interest. A former student of mine in a conversation with me once lamented that she and her classmates were unable to communicate with foreigners even though she had learned English for nearly ten years by mainly learning from textbooks and a test-driven approach. When it came to real-life conversations, she and her friends did not know exactly what to say and how to respond to different questions and situations in the real-world contexts. It was not until I used authentic materials, such as English picture storybooks, with her class that she came to realize that the situations depicted in the authentic materials may open up possibilities for her to understand and to acquire English language uses in the real world.

This student's insights into her English-learning experiences prompted me to reflect on my teaching practices and what I can do with the learners. It is clear that the use of contrived textbooks based on mostly traditional structural language teaching, and the test-driven approach prevalent in my context may not well equip the students with appropriate communicative competence that they need. The use of authentic materials and associated activities or tasks might better prepare the students to function outside of the classroom.

### **1.3 Research Aims**

The aim of this research is to explore teachers' perceptions of authentic materials and how they exploit them in institutes of higher education, especially universities of technology in a Taiwanese context. This research employs an interpretive enquiry to investigate how teachers from universities of technology in Taiwan report their views towards authentic materials, and the use of authentic materials and associated tasks to find out whether there is room for introducing authentic materials against the test-driven ethos. Insights from the participating teachers can be drawn and their voices can be heard to unearth whether there will be room in this context to adopt authentic materials and associated tasks.

I wish to find out the following:

- Teachers' perceptions of the use of authentic materials and the benefits;
- Teachers' perceptions of the use of associated activities or tasks;
- The issues and limitations incurred.



#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

There is a dearth of literature on how teachers adopt or exploit authentic materials to complement the textbooks especially in an EFL Taiwanese context with a test-driven ethos. A review of the literature could not identify any research that drew on the three threads of language teachers' perceptions of using authentic materials, associated tasks and constraints in EFL Taiwanese tertiary context. This research could serve to fill the gap in the literature. This area has been of relevance to and interest to me as an English language teacher for two decades in the Taiwanese context. It is also my hope that, through the interpretive study, this thesis may serve to illuminate our understanding of the extent to which authentic materials and associated activities or tasks, if any, can be used with their learners in an EFL context such as mine. It is also hoped that the research outcomes would shed some light to unearth language teachers' perceptions of using authentic materials in their language classrooms.

#### **1.5 Organization of the Thesis**

The thesis consists of seven chapters. Following the introduction, Chapter Two provides an overview of the Taiwanese universities of technology that contextualize the research, followed by a description of the curriculum and the role of tests, the use of textbooks, syllabus, and major school examinations, and finally the learners. Chapter Three discusses the relevant literature in the field of authenticity and authentic materials. Chapter Four maps out the research methodology, detailing the research designs, participants, the methods, and the ethical issues. Chapter Five presents the findings drawing on the questionnaires and interviews. Chapter Six discusses the findings and the

implications. Chapter Seven concludes the thesis, followed by suggestions for future study.

## Chapter Two: My Research Context

This chapter will give an overview of my research context, Taiwan. It begins with a description of the higher education and its institutes, followed by the curriculum and the role of tests, the use of textbooks, syllabus, and major school examinations, and finally the learners.

### 2.1 The Higher Education in Taiwan

Higher Education in Taiwan is stratified into universities and polytechnics (Ministry of Education, 2012), being funded by the government or private sectors, namely public or private universities and polytechnics, the numbers are summarized in Table 2.1 below.

Public			Private			
universities	universities of technology	subtotal	universities	universities of technology	subtotal	total
33	13	46	37	57	94	140

Table 2.1 Numbers of Universities and Polytechnics

Data from MOE (2019)

There are currently 46 national universities and universities of technology, and 94 private universities and universities of technology (Ministry of Education, ROC, 2020).

Polytechnics are further categorized into junior technological colleges and technological universities. The universities and the technological universities

offer a four-year program whilst the junior technological colleges offer two to five-year programs. Universities and universities of technology offer four-year bachelor's degree programs, one to four years master's degree program, and two to seven years doctoral degree programs (Educational System, MOE, ROC, 2020).

As there is a paradigm shift from “elitism to populism” (Ministry of Education, 2012), there is a prevalent growth of universities and technological universities in the last two decades. The students from universities are streamed mostly from upper secondary schools; whereas, the students from technological universities are streamed from both vocational high school and from upper secondary school graduates. Yet, the most competitive candidates would be streamed to national universities, secondly, to private universities, and finally, to polytechnics. Nevertheless, in terms of the numbers of the institutions, private universities outnumber public counterparts, and private polytechnics would outnumber the public ones. In other words, the majority of the less academically competitive students would go to private universities and technological universities.

These universities offer a wide array of programmes, such as liberal arts, science, social sciences, medicine, engineering, bioresources and agriculture, management, public health, electrical engineering and computer science, law, and life science (e.g. National Taiwan University, n.d.). The technical and vocational education has devoted itself to cultivating and equipping students with work prospects as specified below. The following industry clusters were

listed as key to the Taiwan prospective workforce: (NCEE, n.d.)

Six Emerging Industries: healthcare, bio-technology, sophisticated agriculture, leisure and tourism, cultural innovation, and green energy

Four Major Smart Industries: cloud computing, intelligent electric cars, intelligent green buildings, and inventions and patents

Ten Major Service Industries: cuisine, healthcare, pop music and digital contents, tourism, logistics, innovation and venture capital, urban renewal, telecommunications, electronic business, and higher education export” (Taiwan, Career and Technical Education, n.d.).

Thus, in addition to the “traditional agriculture, factory works, and business categories”, the vocational and technological education “offer curricula to match the needs of Six Emerging Industries, Ten Major Services Industries, and Four Major Smart Industries which provide students with wide employment opportunities” (Ministry of Education, 2014: p.24).

## **2.2 The Curriculum**

English is deemed as a foreign language (EFL) and a required subject for students at most of these institutes. EFL classes usually feature large class sizes consisting of 60 students, with stratified levels ranging mostly from beginner, pre-intermediate, intermediate levels, up to advanced levels. Non-English major students are roughly stratified into three groups based on their English proficiency, ranging from lower beginner, higher beginner, to pre-intermediate in the institute where I teach.

The school year consists of two semesters, eighteen weeks each, including two

weeks break for midterm and final examination. English is usually taught two hours a week, totalling 36 hours a semester, and 72 hours a school year. English is taught for the first two years for non-English majors at my institute.

### **2.3 The Role of Tests**

While Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach is imbricated in the language teaching in the West, East Asia seems to take a slightly distinctive path. When the commonly used textbooks do not reflect the real use of the language in the real world, the test-driven approach makes matters worse. Adopting the test-driven approach to maximize the academic performance and test scores of students has been prevalent in East-Asian countries (Yee, 1989), such as Japan, China, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan.

Under the encouragement of Taiwan's Ministry of Education, universities and universities of technology have implemented the English exit requirement as the benchmark for graduation since 2003 (Pan, 2013: 189). "The English graduation benchmark is also known as the English Exit Exam or the graduation threshold" (Tsay, 2013: 507). There has been a steady growth on the number of higher education institutes that implement the graduation benchmark policy. As a result, the percentage that implemented the policy had reached 90% in 2012 (Pan, 2013). Ministry of Education has offered funding and grants to HE institutions based on the percentage of students holding the English proficiency test certificates (Pan, 2009). A considerable sum of funding approximated to three million US dollars "was budgeted to encourage the institutions to achieve accountability" (Pan, 2009: 126). Thus, the benchmark policy has been adopted

by many comprehensive and technological universities as a criterion to monitor their graduates' English proficiency (Lai & Tu, 2020).

The vocational school systems in Taiwan are more or less inclined to spoon-feeding teaching modes (Tsai, 2010), and teacher-centeredness, which is based on test-driven approach in the context such as higher education that implement English language proficiency test as benchmark for graduation in Taiwan (Chern, 2002; Tsai & Tsou, 2009; Pan, 2013). Under the suggestion of the MOE, the universities of technology have adopted the A2 level as the benchmark for graduation (Hsieh, 2017: 2) for non-English majors. Aside from major school examinations, students are required to pass an accredited English proficiency test, such as the locally designed GEPT (General English Proficiency Test), or the internationally accredited TOEIC (Test of English as International Communication), or the CEFR (the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) A2 to B1 level for non-English majors, depending on the requirement of their disciplines, as the benchmark requirement for graduation. For example, the university where I teach requires all students to take the New TOEIC or other standardized examinations and pass with a certain score, such as New TOEIC 450 to 600, roughly equivalent to A2 to B2 levels according to the CEFR framework, depending on the students' major. Another example is a public university of technology (NTUT, 2020), which sets the minimum TOEIC score above 550, equivalent to CEFR B1 level, for non-English majors, and above 850, equivalent to CEFR C1 level, for English major. Without reaching the set score, students will not receive their diploma upon completion of their university degree program.

Even though there has been an awareness of developing students' communicative competence, teachers' and students' behaviours are still affected by the impending tests, in particular the English language proficiency test used as the benchmark for graduation. In short, teachers may teach to the test (Pan, 2013), whereas students may learn to pass the tests.

As the major school examinations, such as midterm and final examination, draw on accuracy of form, English instruction focuses on test-oriented approach, grammar decoding and rote memorization of lexical items, emphasizing more on the accuracy of forms rather than meaningful communication. One result is that many language learners may find themselves lacking language abilities and competence for them to cope with authentic language used in real-world communication.

#### **2.4 The Use of Textbooks within the Unified Syllabus**

It has been widespread teaching practice for textbooks and unified syllabi to be used at all levels of state education in Taiwan from primary and secondary, up to most of the tertiary levels. Many universities or technological universities adopt at least one single textbook on which their shared syllabus is developed. This is partly due to a common assumption that textbooks are regarded as an 'embodiment' of aims and objectives, as well as of methodologies to be in use in a specific context (Rubdy, 2003: 37), such as the EFL classroom.

#### **2.5 The Constraints on Teachers' Part**



I have been a lecturer for two decades in a university of technology located in Taipei, Taiwan. In the institute where I teach, most of my colleagues and I hold positive attitudes towards using authentic materials. However, due to the time pressure, such as having to follow the shared curriculum based on a mandatory textbook, we are left with very little time to use authentic materials.

## **2.6 The Learners**

The EFL learners in my research contexts are usually twenty years of age on the average. As these students were admitted mostly via vocational upper secondary schools, rather than from the mainstream upper secondary school, Taiwanese technological EFL students are perceived to feature lower interest and motivation in learning, and lower self-esteem (Su, 2005). Their teachers are perceived to be accountable for students' learning outcomes, e.g. to report to the school the number of English proficiency credentials that their students attain each semester. Underachievers would be interpreted as not working hard enough, and thus more tests would be given to push them to work harder.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

To summarise, teachers of English language in Taiwan usually resort to textbooks as main teaching methodologies and learning resources and stick to the shared structured syllabus as closely as possible. As such, teachers would take an exam-driven approach in order to meet the requirements from stake holders, such as administrators. As EFL teachers are perceived to be accountable for students' learning outcomes, students would be given tests to assess their academic achievement. Teachers would teach to the set book and

to the mandated test. The immediate teaching and learning objectives are to pass the English proficiency examination, rather than developing communicative competence.

The next chapter reviews the literature that guided this research.

## **Chapter Three: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to delineate the literature that has contributed to my understanding of the conception of authenticity and how it is related to the debate of authenticity in general with a focus on authentic materials. Firstly, I review the development of CLT and its implication on the issue of authenticity. Secondly, I discuss the issue of authenticity, focusing on authenticity of materials, followed by the rationale for the use of authentic materials, the types of activities and tasks that are exploitable.

### **3.1 The Rise of Authenticity**

The issues of authenticity have re-emerged ever since the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach prevailed in the theories of Second Language Acquisition in English Language Teaching (ELT) for the past few decades (Mishan, 2005). Through rejecting the previous focus on the structural approaches to language learning, the CLT approach has prioritized on the genuine communication rather than on the delineation of discursive structures for language teaching purposes as embraced by the traditional contrived discourse of coursebooks materials. As such, the CLT paradigm in ELT has culminated in the re-surfacing of the use of authentic texts, with much weight being put on the meaningful communication rather than on the traditional form-based language teaching, such as the analysis of syntactic and lexical items (Clarke, 1989; Mishan, 2005; Gilmore, 2007).

As mentioned in Section 3.1, the underlying premises of CLT have implications for materials development, which are expected to reveal the change from form to meaning in language learning and to reflect the language use in the real world (Clarke, 1989: 73). To mirror the communicative movement, the use of 'so-called' authentic materials to simulate, mimic, or approximate to authentic materials has been one of the typical features of materials development in the past decade (Clarke, 1989: 73). Consequently, not only the central premises of the CLT that take account of learners' needs analysis have paved the way for language learning and materials design (Clarke, 1989: 73), but also the current communicative approaches to the "real' language use" which CLT upholds have raised the concerns over the issues of what is "real, authentic" (Mishan, 2005: 11).

What makes the issue of authenticity and authentic text significant is that the issue of authenticity is situated in three inter-related threads, SLA research, CLT approach, and ICT (Mishan, 2005: 10-11). This authenticity-driven approach, emphasizing on the issues from "real" language use to what is "real, authentic" types of texts and resources to which learners can access (Mishan, 2005: 11), not only informs the materials design, but also has a bearing on ELT in terms of the preservation of authenticity throughout the pedagogical activities developed from the authentic input texts (Mishan, 2005: ix). According to Gilmore (2007: 97), the issue of authenticity surfaced in the 70s between the debates of Chomsky (1965) and Hymes (1972) resulting in the understanding that communicative competence encompasses beyond mere knowledge of the language structures and the approach of CLT began to take precedence over

form, leading to the introduction of authentic materials.

In the following sections, I will review definitions of authenticity.

### **3.2 Definitions of Authenticity and Its Issues**

Authenticity can mean different things for different people. Authenticity is a term that implies “as close an approximation as possible to the world outside the classroom, in the selection both of language material and of the activities and methods used for practice in the classroom” (McDonough et al., 2013: 27). Essential elements existing in this definition are language material and activities, and methods. Apart from the input and tasks, Pinner (2016: 64) includes output as well, another key element: “the language produced by a speaker”. As he concludes a widely accepted definition, “authentic language is something which was produced in a context where the language was meant for a ‘real’ purpose, and that this text or sample has not been modified in any way in order to aid language instruction” (Pinner, 2016: 64). As with many other authors, he points out that this definition still contains many controversies.

In addition, Breen (1985: 61) adds two other aspects (Items 2 & 4 below) when proposing four types of authenticity teachers encounter in classroom every day:

1. Authenticity of the texts which we may use as input data for our learners.
2. Authenticity of the learners' own interpretations of such texts.
3. Authenticity of tasks conducive to language learning.
4. Authenticity of the actual social situation of the language classroom.

(Breen, 1985: 61)

Four types of authenticity exist in areas of a teaching-learning process: content

(text), learners, tasks, and classroom contexts (Breen, 1985). Controversies lie in each type of authenticity.

### **3.2.1 Text Authenticity**

The first type is often referred to as text authenticity. Gilmore (2007), in line with Morrow (1977), defines text authenticity as “an *authentic text* is 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” (Morrow, 1977: 13). Gilmore aims for a working definition, which can be used to objectively determine “whether a text is authentic or not” through “referring to the source of the discourse and the context of its production” (Gilmore, 2007: 98).

Nevertheless, I believe authenticity should be something different from an authentic text. To me, authenticity can subsume the notions of authentic text, language, situation, and learner’s authentication whilst an authentic text is more like an origin or a provenance of an input authentic data or the “context of its production” (Gilmore, 2007: 98), which will be explained in the section on Relative Authenticity.

The notion of text authenticity can be applied to various aspects. For some, authenticity is an inherent quality in the text per se; for others, authenticity is given to a text by particular people in particular circumstances (Taylor, 1994). Authenticity can characterize a contextual text; and thus, in a strict sense, a text is inauthentic if it is taken out of its original context:

Authenticity is not a characteristic of a text in itself: it is a feature of a text in a particular context.... A text is a message from a writer to an assumed reader.... A text can only be truly authentic ..., in the context for which it was originally written (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 159).

Hutchinson and Waters continue that the issue lies not in the search for an abstract concept of authenticity, but in “the practical concept of ‘fitness to the learning purpose’” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 159), a position I agree with. I would argue that there is a pedagogical value for exploiting such a text. Whether a text per se is authentic, or the authenticity is given by a specific context, a textbook which contains contrived language is definitely inauthentic.

Although there is value to the use of authentic materials, other studies show that through different forms of adaptations, the result of the published textbooks is not as authentic as they claim to be. Furthermore, many of the texts do not favour a variety of Englishes, but rather focus on British English. Clavel-Arroitia and Fuster-Márquez (2014) have conducted extensive research through a sample of 60 texts used in six English textbooks, published between 2008-2011, for advanced learners from prestigious publishing houses. Their conclusion is “that recently published textbooks, even at higher levels, are not as authentic as some researchers argue they should be” (Clavel-Arroitia & Fuster-Márquez, 2014:133). In comparing ten texts per book, they show that through adaptations, such as cropping and linguistic substitution, the texts included are far from being authentic. Cropping refers to “reducing the quantity of text”, a quantitative change whilst linguistic substitution refers to “qualitative changes in a text” (Clavel-Arroitia & Fuster-Márquez, 2014: 129). Cropping and substitution serve to simplify the text for students (Clavel-Arroitia & Fuster-Márquez, 2014). Also,

most of the texts under scrutiny represent a single variety, e.g. British English: there is under-representation of other varieties of English (Clavel-Arroitia & Fuster-Márquez, 2014). The real texts incorporated in the B2 and C1 textbooks have been systematically modified to a certain extent. Texts belonging to other varieties of Englishes have been modified and changed into British English. Also, argumentative texts are under-represented (Clavel-Arroitia & Fuster-Márquez, 2014).

In addition, Siegel (2014) examined authentic topics through comparing topics in 11 commercially published textbooks with topics that Japanese L2 learners engaged in with their friends. She discovered that there was a great discrepancy between what textbooks used and what topics L2 learners actually conversed about.

### **3.2.2 Learner Authenticity**

Whether a text is authentic is inseparable from 'for whom' the text might be 'authentic' (Breen, 1985: 61). Breen argues that an authentic text might be the basis for genuine communication (Breen, 1985: 61). Therefore, whether a text is authentic or not depends on whether 'authentic communication' can be established between the text, which conveys the intended message of the writer, and the interpretation of the reader (Breen, 1985).

This is not an innovative idea. Widdowson (1979: 165) argues that authenticity is not a 'quality residing in instances of language' use but a 'quality' being



“bestowed upon them, created by the response of the receiver”. He continues that authenticity is only realized in the act of interpretation and by virtue of appropriate response of the receiver in interpreting the intended message of the discourse produced by the writer or the speaker (Widdowson, 1978; 1979). Authenticity is achieved only when there are positive or affective responses from the learner to the text, known as learner authenticity (Lee, 1995; Tomlinson, 2017); or the appropriate response derived from the language learners to the text (Widdowson, 1978).

Widdowson further expanded that authenticity is realized through appropriate response in the very ‘act of interpretation’ (Widdowson, 1979: 165). In the same line, authenticity functions as the ‘interaction’ between the reader and the text that subsumes the ‘intentions of the writer’ (Widdowson, 1979):

Authenticity... is a function of the interaction between the reader/hearer and the text which incorporates the intentions of the writer/speaker. We do not recognize authenticity as something there waiting to be noticed; we realize it in the act of interpretation (Widdowson, 1979: 165).

Widdowson (1978) also points out that authenticity should not be something that the learner needs to start with, but rather something that needs to be achieved ultimately because authenticity manifests itself in the learners’ ultimate behaviour (Widdowson, 1979). In other words, authenticity is not the means, but it is the aims and objectives.

Recently a critical view on learner authenticity has come to light. Roberts and

Cooke (2009, cited in Ramezanzadeh & Rezaei 2019: 796) argued that putting great emphasis on authentic materials “can produce curricula which are too narrowly functionalist and which do not provide affordances for learners to be themselves in the new language” and thus marginalized EFL learners’ voices. Therefore, Roberts and Cooke highlighted the importance of cultivating authentic voice (p.622). Roberts and Cooke asserted that learners’ authenticity should be reconceptualised into authentic voice rather than a feature of materials provided by the native speakers, the mainstream voice. Ramezanzadeh and Rezaei (2019) further suggest that EFL scholars should write materials. In order to explore EFL teachers’ perception of such an idea, Ramezanzadeh and Rezaei (2019) conducted a study in which all 30 participants were non-native English language professors from different universities in Iran. The study explored the teachers’ experiences in nurturing their learners’ authentic voice. “In fact, hearing the voice of non-native English language professors can provide a new possibility for understanding authenticity” (Ramezanzadeh & Rezaei, 2019: 796).

Indeed, we should aim at cultivating our learners' authenticity; thus, this does not necessarily mean having to use materials written by native scholars and teachers, as Ramezanzadeh and Rezaei (2019) asserted. “There is a strong need for materials to be written by non-native scholars and teachers if we aim at cultivating our learners’ authenticity” (Ramezanzadeh & Rezaei, 2019: 813). As McKay (2013, cited in Ramezanzadeh & Rezaei, 2019: 795) argued, to cultivate English language learners’ authentic voice, teachers play a key role to facilitate the possibility for learners to express their authentic voice.

### **3.2.3 Task Authenticity**

As stated at the beginning of this literature review, authentic materials are embedded in the CLT approach which has stood out from all other methodologies and approaches within the second language acquisitions theories for decades (Mishan, 2005; Gilmore, 2007). CLT hinges on meaningful communication, rather than on attending to linguistic forms as emphasized by other methodologies in second language acquisition theories. Therefore, task authenticity should contain the elements of meaningful communication, real communicative purposes and real-life tasks (Tomlinson, 2017).

Though in the literature the connotation of authenticity usually means good and that of contrivance usually means bad, these terms remain value-laden and may not be appropriately defined: “terms such as ‘authentic’, ‘genuine’, ‘real’ and ‘natural’ and their opposites ‘fake’, ‘unreal’ or ‘contrived’ are emotionally loaded and indicate approval or disapproval whilst remaining ill-defined” (Cook, 1997; cited in Gilmore, 2007: 98). In pedagogical practice, Gilmore argues that there is no use debating authenticity and contrivance; instead of this, we should pay more attention to good fitness to the learning purpose (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Clarke, 1989; Gilmore, 2007).

Widdowson (1979) further proposes the importance of using appropriate ‘contrived’ language teaching methodology as long as this methodology can enable learners to engage the learners’ interest, develop their intellectual domain, and create an authentic response (Widdowson, 1979).

It is suggested that we can use any means of language teaching methodologies in order to create the authentic response from the learner even though the methodologies themselves are contrived. In fact, Widdowson (1979) brings to our attention that too much concern for authentic language behaviour as CLT upholds may risk the danger of disregarding of principled methodologies on which language teaching should rely (Widdowson, 1979: 163). Secondly, for those who are pre-occupied with the merits of exposure of the learners to authentic texts, Widdowson (1979) reminds us that it is misleading to think that merely exposing learners to authentic texts, illustrated by genuine instances of discourse, can prepare the learners with language abilities that they need to acquire in order to meet the communicative purposes (Widdowson, 1979: 166-167). For one thing, authenticity cannot be activated without the active interpretation of the discourse by the receiver unless he is capable of giving authentication to the activity required of him to interpret the text or discourse as authentic (Widdowson, 1979: 167). For another, any pedagogical procedure used to prepare the learners towards communicative language behaviour is essentially contrived by nature (Widdowson, 1979: 167). Here Widdowson seems to imply that the pedagogical procedure itself may not need to be authentic because the intervention of pedagogical methodologies is contrived by nature.

Authenticity does not necessarily mean something good whilst contrivance means something bad (Widdowson, 1979: 165-167; Clarke, 1989: 74; Gilmore, 2007: 98). In fact, Widdowson (1979) insists on the necessity of using 'contrived' teaching methodologies as intervention in different learning stages in order to

guide learners to acquire the capability of authenticating activities to interpret the text as authentic and create an authentic response (Widdowson, 1979: 167). Hence, authenticity is more of the interpretation of the learner than a textual authenticity.

On the other hand, Gilmore (2007) indicates that a real speaker or writer produces the language for a real audience, conveying a real message. Banegas et al. (2019) suggests adding authenticity of audience to L2 writing tasks, as a means to motivate learners. Noticing that contrived writing tasks for imaginary friends or tutors is deemed as a demotivational factor to their Argentina teacher-trainee students. Banegas et al. (2019) conducted a study giving a group of four tutors and their students the task of writing for publication. They identified three sources of motivation through this publication project: "(1) the task itself, (2) process writing and feedback as a unit, and (3) authenticity of audience" (Banegas et al., 2019: 35). They found that the first two sources are more influential than expected and the third source was restricted to year 2 and 3 student teachers. They concluded that all three sources did increase student's motivation, especially with the most advanced student-teachers.

#### **3.2.4 Context Authenticity**

Whether the methodology implied in the language textbooks can be consistently coherent to the local specific socio-cultural contexts in which the English language classroom is situated is known as authenticity in context (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996).

According to Breen (1985), the authenticity of the classroom lies in its potential as a classroom for learning and problem-solving to take place. It is crucial for the classrooms to provide the conditions in which the participants in the classroom can make public the process of language learning that is socially sustained and motivated and share their problems towards language learning (Breen, 1985: 68). The selection of authentic text and tasks used in the language classroom should create such actual social situations to prepare learners for the “real-world” communication (Mishan, 2005: ix).

To conclude, Breen (1985) does not suggest that these four types of authenticity need to exist simultaneously. He brings to our attention that as language teachers we should not focus on authenticity to the target language and attend to authentic quality of the text only (*ibid.*), but rather, we should take into consideration all elements that are constituent of demands for authenticity (*ibid.*). In particular, the main concern should focus on the merits of exposing our learners to “authentic examples of target language use” (*ibid.*).

From the discussions above, authenticity has relative perceptions and notions rather than an absolute quality, depending relatively on our purposes and the viewpoints that various learners bring to the language classrooms, and as a result, the criteria to realize authenticity is something relative rather than arbitrary (Breen, 1985).

### **3.3 The Notion of Relative Authenticity**

Now the focus is turned to the notion of relative authenticity. In line with Breen, I argue that we might need to approach authenticity as a broad spectrum in which authenticity is deemed not as something absolute, but something relative. In terms of how we should be in alignment with authenticity, Breen argues for relative authenticity (Breen, 1985).

This notion of relative authenticity is echoed by subsequent researchers (Clarke, 1989: 73; Taylor, 1994: 2-3; Mishan, 2005: 17; Gilmore, 2007: 98; Pinner, 2016: 71). For example, Clarke (1989) comments that:

the notion of authenticity has become increasingly relative, being increasingly related to specific learner needs and less concerned with the 'authentic' nature of the input materials themselves (Clarke, 1989: 73).

In the same line, Taylor (1994) argues that different aspects of authenticity can exist to certain extent and that authenticity is a matter of relativity, not necessarily requiring all the four types of authenticity to co-exist: "authenticity is clearly a relative matter and different aspects of it can be present in different degrees" (Taylor, 1994: 2). Echoing Breen's (1985) argument, Taylor (1994: 2) maintains that authenticity is neither a 'global' nor an 'absolute' notion as one may conceive of it. Authenticity is a relative notion and the realization of authenticity needs not call for all types of authenticity to exist at the same time (*ibid.*). Different elements of authenticity can be present in different degrees. (Taylor, 1994).

Referring to the shift from authenticity of the texts to that of language use, Taylor

(1994) argues that the issues of relativity and interpretation will emerge: “Even if we move away from looking at the authenticity of language texts toward considering the authenticity of language use, the question of relativity and interpretation come in” (Taylor, 1994: 3).

In considering texts and tasks, “teachers are entitled to use any means at their disposal, regardless of the provenance of the materials or tasks and their relative authenticity or contrivance” (Gilmore, 2007: 98). In line with previous literature, Pinner (2016: 1) argues that authenticity is fluid and dynamic, rather than static; constantly changing, social-contextually dependent, and relative, rather than something absolute. Thus, authenticity must be relative to ‘learners’ interaction with the text’ (Pinner, 2016: 71). Pinner (2016) states that:

Authenticity is not something absolute, but rather it is relative to the learner and their unique and individual beliefs. Therefore, any discussion of authenticity needs to take place within a flexible framework, one which can bend itself to meet the ever-changing identities of learners and teachers in a rapidly evolving social environment (Pinner, 2016: 1).

Authenticity is a “relative matter” and it can exist in different degrees (Taylor, 1994: 2). The focus of the concerns lies in authenticity of texts in relation to being “genuine” (Widdowson, 1978: 80) or “fitness to the learning purpose” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 159). Language teachers need to consider different factors of authenticity interacting simultaneously, such as the authentic content, interpretations of the learners, activities, as well as the social and cultural contexts pertaining to the language classrooms. These should be taken into account so as to eliminate tension or contradictions and to aim for a balance



between all the elements involved (Breen, 1985: 61).

### **3.4 Authentic Texts or Materials**

There has been a pre-occupation in favour of the use of authentic materials, in particular 'unadulterated' authentic texts (Clarke, 1989: 75) because it gives the learners a dip into the real world so that learners can have opportunities to rehearse in a secured environment, such as the classrooms (McGrath, 2002). It is thought that the more authentic materials we use with the learners, the better our learners can be equipped for the real world (McGrath, 2002). Although we can devise certain features in the contrived materials to resemble the features of authentic language through the aide of discourse analysis, it is argued that there is no way for them to be the "real thing" (McGrath, 2002:105). Although some argue that there is no point looking for absolute authenticity as mentioned in the authenticity section, others would think that it matters a lot to them as Nunan put it: "The problem is that comprehending and manipulating scripted dialogues does not readily transfer to comprehending and using language in real communicative situations" (Nunan, 1988: 100). This is important because, as McGrath maintains, "the less authentic the materials we use the less well-prepared learners will be for that real world" (McGrath, 2002: 105). Therefore, there is the necessity of exploiting authentic texts in the language classrooms.

I will now draw my discussion to definitions of authentic texts or materials in the following section.

### 3.4.1 Definitions of Authentic Texts or Materials

Authenticity in text is subsumed under different terms as ‘text authenticity,’ ‘authentic text,’ ‘authentic materials,’ and ‘textually authentic materials’ (Lee, 1995). The terms, ‘authentic text’ and ‘authentic materials’ will be used interchangeably throughout my thesis. An authentic text refers to “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” (Morrow, 1977: 13). This implies it is possible for us to evaluate whether a text is authentic or not by looking at the source of discourse and the context from which authentic texts are derived (Gilmore, 2007: 98). Harmer defines that an authentic text, whether it is written or spoken, is constituent of any real text designed for the speakers of the target language, not for language learners (Harmer, 1983). In the same line, authentic materials refer to any kind of texts or materials ‘taken from the real world and not specifically created for the purpose of language teaching’ and no alteration should be made in any way (Ellis & Johnson, 1994: 157):

Authentic material is any kind of material taken from the real world and not specifically created for the purpose of language teaching. It can be text, visuals, or audio material; it can be realia such as tickets, menus, maps, and timetables; or it can be objects such as products, equipment, components, or models (Ellis & Johnson, 1994: 157).

In the strictest sense, when a piece of authentic text has been changed in any way, it has lost its authenticity and cease to become authentic any more (Ellis & Johnson, 1994: 157). However, Ellis and Johnson also argue that learners’ needs can account for modification (Ellis & Johnson, 1994: 157):

Some people say that as soon as a piece of authentic material has been altered in any way (for example, by cutting, selecting, simplifying, or transferring from one medium of communication to another), it immediately ceases to be authentic. However, any of

these strategies may be applied if it can be justified in relation to the needs of learners (Ellis & Johnson, 1994: 157).

This justification for the use of pedagogical methodology as made by Ellis & Johnson (1994) has echoed the idea of the use of contrived principled methodologies to help learners achieve communicative aims as argued above by Widdowson (1978; 1979) in Section 3.2.1.

Still, for others, authentic texts refer to “those which are designed for native speakers: they are real texts designed not for language students, but for the speakers of the language in question” (Harmer, 1983: 146). This definition may have limitations as it fails to subsume the construct of English as an international language or a lingua franca as it is used nowadays by native and non-native speakers worldwide. Hence, Nunan’s definition may be more to the point: “A rule-of-thumb definition for ‘authentic’ here is any material which has not been specifically produced for the purposes of language teaching” (Nunan, 1989: 54). Simply speaking, an authentic text refers to any input data not designed for pedagogical purposes. That is to say, an authentic text refers to any text intended for a real-life communication, rather than for a teaching purpose (Lee, 1995; Nunan, 2004).

Authentic communication is taken as the ‘process of *interpretation*’ (italics emphasized in Breen, 1985: 61) between the nature of the text and the particular reader’s approaching, or the learner’s contribution to the text (Breen, 1985: 61). Therefore, the specific nature of the text, and with what points of

views or approaches the learner brings to the text are highly related to what underlies the authentic communication (Breen, 1985: 61).

In distinguishing an authentic text from an inauthentic one, Breen (1985) uses the example of poetry to explain his position on intended meanings and interpretation, and he discusses the concept of 'genuine' communicative purpose. Taking an authentic poem for an example, Breen demonstrates to us what is being conveyed through the poet's exploitation of the "language codes" to engage the reader's feelings and thoughts so as to facilitate the reader's interpretation of the poet's intended message (*ibid.*). In contrast, the primary communicative purpose in the piece of inauthentic language teaching material is to 'highlight,' 'illustrate' and 'exemplify' certain discursive and grammatical features of the language code (Breen, 1985: 62). Hence, what is deemed as an authentic text lies in its potential to provide the basis for genuine communication from which the reader can draw, and of which the reader can make an interpretation (*ibid.*). As a reader, we are experiencing the 'textual world' where we are engaged in interpreting the intended meanings of the poet through his exploitation of a particular language code to amuse or entertain, and to awaken ourselves with a new understanding or perception of things (*ibid.*). The language code here serves as a means in order to share with us the author's intended message (*ibid.*). By inviting our contribution to interpreting the text, the genuine communicative purpose is achieved (*ibid.*). It is through achieving genuine communication purpose, authenticity is reached. Whereas in the example of an inauthentic text, Breen argues that the communicative purposes of the exploitation of a language code in a piece of language learning materials

is to present us with 'meta-communicative purposes' through recurrent use of lexical items (*ibid.*).

Widdowson argues that as a reader we read what is relevant and appealing to our interest when we encounter discourse in the form of complete rhetorical units, such as essays, articles, newspaper reports and so forth (Widdowson, 1978: 80). To require students to read extracts for language learning purposes, rather than to read them for their own interests or immediate relevance, is to misrepresent the normal language use to a certain degree (Widdowson, 1978: 80). In this situation, we may not expect the learners to activate authenticity to interpret the text as authentic even though the extracts are genuine instances of use. This means authenticity has been reduced to a certain extent (Widdowson, 1978: 80). Thus, Widdowson (1978) suggests that language teachers should opt for the thematic approach to the text considering learners' needs so that they can relate the text to their own domain of knowledge and activate authenticity through learners' response to the text.

Nevertheless, Breen argues that no matter how genuine communicative purposes that the producer of the text may have had, the learner may still perceive the text in "meta-communicative" or "meta-linguistic terms" (Breen, 1985: 62). As language teachers we need to understand this primary position and role of the learners, since: "The learner will redefine any text against his own priorities, precisely because he is a learner.... Indeed, if we are aware of the learners' frames of reference, then considerations of a text's authenticity become a relatively misty matter" (Breen, 1985: 62).

Breen also explains that the more fluent the learners are, the more likely they are to respond to the author's intention (Breen, 1985: 63), but states that the 'point of entry' to the text will be 'relatively more distant' than the fluent reader of the text in the target language (*ibid.*). It is thus argued that we need to take into account for whom the text is authentic (*ibid.*). Here Breen proposes that teachers can mediate learning with whatever means can be provided to enable the learners to '*eventually* interpret texts' (italics emphasized as the original text by Breen) in the likely manner as shared with the fluent users of the target language (*ibid.*). Hence, Breen suggests that we can exploit any text brought to the language classroom as long as it can help the learners to "*develop* authentic interpretations" (italics emphasized in Breen, 1985: 63). The guiding criteria for teacher's selection and use of the text are not residing in the authenticity of the text or the input data, but in the learners' needs (*ibid.*).

Just as there is relative authenticity, so there is relative authentic text. It is argued that a teacher's primary concerns about relative authenticity of the text should actually be shifted to pedagogical issues, such as how the learners' interest and schematic knowledge about the meaning, structure, and the working of the language can be 'activated' by this text (Breen, 1985: 63). Therefore, learners' participation in various entry points to the text in the learning process should be valued and justified (*ibid.*). What matters most is the consideration of how the learners may approach the text in their own way as the learners may "'authenticate', or give authenticity to a text" based on their own schematic knowledge and "frame of reference" (Breen, 1985: 64). Once we focus on the learners' interpretations of a text, the text can only be regarded

as “potential means” required of the learners working towards “authentic communication in the target language” (Breen, 1985: 64). This is the starting point for the pedagogical focus to be shifted towards considerations of authenticity of the activity. In other words, the shift of the focus is from the text to the task, i.e. “how the learner may work with or act upon the language data” in the language classroom (Breen, 1985: 64).

Following the previous researchers, I come up with a working definition which in part is more in line with Hedge (2000) that authentic materials refer to materials which are neither contrived nor simplified, and not specially designed for language learning (Hedge, 2000: 67), but intended for the communication purpose in the real world. Hence, authentic materials contain by no means fabricated or artificial languages and discourses. Rather, the languages and discourses used in authentic materials are usually genuine, natural, and of immediate ‘relevance’ (Mishan, 2005) to the interlocutors or the readers.

### **3.4.2 The Debate about Real Language**

Furthermore, with the development of electronic corpora of natural spoken English discourse, such as COBUILD, the British National Corpus and the development of CANCODE (Carter, 1998a), applied linguists have appealed and debated about incorporating the corpus-based descriptions of language into textbooks in order to expose students to ‘real’ discourse. Both Carter (1998b) and Cook (1998) assert that “materials should be influenced by, but not slaves to, corpus findings” (Cook, 1998: 57) and reject extreme forms of

“corpus linguistics and of corpus-driven language teaching” (Carter 1998b: 64). Carter (1998a) believes that there is a need to encourage more corpus-based language description as he believes that not including corpora is the more disempowering. However, Cook (1998) asserts that the use of computer corpora should only contribute to the understanding of effective language teaching. Both agree that materials should include text modification and modelling, “but at the same time to ensure that the dialogue is structured more authentically and naturalistically by modelling on real corpus-based English” (Carter, 1998a: 52-53). Materials writers and teachers need to consider “whether we can generate and teach materials which help learners to choose and interact appropriately” (Carter, 1998a: 44).

Another criticism raised by Cook (1998) is that computer corpora are not a complete record. Cook thinks frequency and corpora are but data. Corpora do not reflect the interests of language learners. Cook feels that corpus is only a collection of what has happened, not what is happening. Textbook developers have to modify and simplify the corpus data.

EFL learners can perceivably benefit from corpus-based language description. “Native speakers acquire, represent, and process language in lexicalized chunks as well as grammar rules and single words” (Cook, 1998: 60). Corpus, which records real exchanges, can be extended to incorporate the sources of models of Englishes in international contexts of use for ESL and EFL learners (Carter, 1998b). As a result, corpus-based language description is necessary.



Some researchers argue that “roughly 80 percent of all spoken interaction in English is between non-native speakers.... For most learners, therefore, interactions with native speakers will be rare” (Carter 1998a: 50). Carter argues that non-native speakers should not be expected, nor is it necessary, to acquire real native-speaker English. Even though learners might not wish to be native-like EFL speakers, their awareness needs to be raised as to how native speakers use the language.

Carter (1998a) sees the weaknesses of collected data. None the less, he feels strongly that researchers and linguists should work more closely together with textbook developers and language teachers. Language learners need to be exposed to real language based on what is discovered in corpus data, such as CANCODE conversations (Carter 1998a).

Cook (1998) thinks that corpora are incomplete collection of facts and record as it does not include international Englishes. He does not agree that description should become prescription for TESOL. Cook (1998) does not think that corpus linguistics should dictate language teaching, nor should it drive textbook development.

Gilmore (2004) in his research compares seven different textbooks chapters related to service situations. He discovers that most of these textbooks published between 1981-1997 did not incorporate many natural discourse features, such as false starts, hesitations, or repetitions. The turn-taking in most contrived dialogues in these textbooks was very "neat and tidy" (Gilmore, 2004: 363). But he proceeds to look at three textbooks that were

published after 1996 and discovered that they were much improved. He concludes that material writers "are beginning to acknowledge the existence of some of these discourse features in their dialogues" (Gilmore, 2004: 370). Gilmore (2004) supports corpora in the writing of textbook materials. Learners must be shown the true nature of conversation.

Cullen and Kuo (2007) examine 24 EFL textbooks published in the UK since the year 2000, focusing on the grammar aspects of 'real' discourse and conclude that "common syntactic structures peculiar to conversation are either ignored or confined to advanced levels as interesting extras" (Cullen & Kuo, 2007: 361). Cullen and Kuo's stand is that this does not help many learners, especially for developing oral fluency in informal encounters with native speakers (Cullen & Kuo, 2007). In other words, if ESL educators don't teach grammar, learners cannot speak English fluently. Cullen and Kuo (2007: 361) think that "much greater attention should be given to spoken grammar in materials for EFL teaching and learning". Spoken grammar can be found through corpora and corpus data as corpus data is a collection of what happens in real language exchanges.

### **3.5 Rationale for Using Authentic Materials**

Having discussed the relevant issues of authenticity, this section specifies the rationale for using authentic materials, including a discussion of advantages and disadvantages of using them.

#### **3.5.1 For Meaningful Communication**

As mentioned above, the influence of CLT has rekindled the debates about authenticity (Mishan, 2005; Gilmore, 2007) in the domain of ELT. One of the concerns is that if we aim to equip our learners with language abilities to cope with the authentic language of the real world, they should be given opportunities to familiarize themselves with authentic materials through meaningful communication in a safe environment, such as the language classrooms through gradually introducing them to authentic materials and engaging with them in ways that build their learners' confidence (Hedge, 2000: 67) and language competence. The premise of CLT is the belief in developing communicative language ability as the aim of language learning through communicative practice as "part of the process" (Hedge, 2000: 57). This has given rise to the development of communicative language abilities in language learners as well as informing material developers. What lies in the core premises of language materials development is the debate of exactly what kind of practice will help to develop language learner's communicative language abilities (Hedge, 2000). In line with this, it is not difficult to envision that there is a strong urge to adopt real-world authentic materials.

It is argued that there is a gap between the target language used and the language presented in many current textbooks. Proponents who prioritize authentic materials over textbooks claim that textbook materials "do not adequately prepare learners" to cope with the language abilities required of them to hear and read "in the real world" beyond the classroom (Nunan, 1989: 54). In order to fill the void, it is essential to use authentic texts to which language learners can be exposed and learn to communicate effectively and

competently (Gilmore, 2007: 98).

Empirical studies also set out to understand whether authentic materials can contribute to language learning. Some have concluded that they would be conducive positively to learners' language proficiency. Gilmore (2011) studied the effect of using authentic materials, in comparison with textbook, to develop Japanese EFL learners' communicative competence during a one-year experiment. In this quasi-experimental ten-month study, sixty-two Japanese university students were randomly assigned to an experimental group and control group. The experimental group received authentic input whereas the control group received textbook input. Eight different tests were used to measure students' communicative competence. The findings indicated that experimental group achieved higher scores than the control group in five out of the eight tests. The results showed that authentic materials and their associated tasks were more effective than the textbook in developing students' communicative competence.

### **3.5.2 For Increasing Learners' Motivation**

A growing body of literature argues the merits of using authentic materials for a variety of reasons, of which motivation is a recurrent theme. Authentic materials are inherently more interesting and motivating than the contrived or non-authentic teaching materials produced for language learning (Lee, 1995; Peacock, 1997; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Richards, 2001; Tomlinson, 2001; Mishan, 2005; Berardo, 2006; Guo, 2012; Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014; Almusallam,

2015; Mestari & Malabar, 2017). Students will be motivated if they feel that they are learning a real language used beyond the classroom (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004). Authentic materials will bring them closer to the target culture, and make the students' learning process more enjoyable, and thus more motivating (Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014). The use of authentic materials can make learners feel that they are learning the real language and thus motivate the learners (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004; Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014). In line with Chomsky's argument that interest is essential to motivation, Mishan (2005: 55) proposes that it is the "motivating factor" that is associated with using authentic texts.

Empirical studies indicate that the use of authentic materials is conducive to enhanced motivation in the students. Some studies investigated on teachers' perceptions; whereas others explained students' views. Mestari and Malabar's (2017) qualitative study explores six university teachers' perspective of using authentic materials to teach grammar in the Indonesian EFL context. The findings revealed that all teacher participants agreed that authentic materials were more inclined to motivate and increase students' interest. Other studies explored students' views. Marzban and Davaji (2015), on the other hand, compare the motivation of intermediate EFL learners in Iran between authentic group and simplified group before and after reading authentic texts. The findings suggest that the authentic group was more motivated. Parmawati and Yugafiati (2017) study on university students in West Java. They concluded that the use of authentic material not only increased the students' reading scores, but also improved students' reading interest.

### 3.5.3 For Enhancing Engagement

The concept of engagement is a key factor in language teaching and proponents for using authentic materials in language classrooms, which argues that language learners can benefit from being exposed to authentic texts which may increase their engagement. By attributing the advantages of 'currency' to using authentic materials, which refers to immediate 'topicality' and 'up-to-datedness' (Lee, 1995), authentic texts have the potential to engage and motivate the language learners; authentic texts derived from newspaper or magazines featuring current and most-up-to-date issues and topics have potential for pedagogical use due to their immediate relevance (Mishan, 2005: 55). Learners can thus be engaged in communication through the use of authentic texts which are of direct interest and relevance to them. The proponents maintain that if our learners are required to understand aural and written texts from the real-world context, then they should be given opportunities to engage in the "real-world texts in class" (Nunan, 1989: 54). By providing the learners with authentic texts, language teachers can not only engage their students in learning authentic language, but also help them to achieve the aim of communicative teaching (Lee, 1995). When given an authentic text appropriate to their capability, learners' schematic knowledge and interest will be aroused to facilitate access to engaging with the text (Lee, 1995: 324).

Sheu (2008) in her empirical study also mentions that stories are of great value to engage the readers. Moreover, authentic materials have the potential to engage the language learners in a context that requires meaningful

communication and also helps raise their language awareness through attending to the features of the lexical and syntactic items used by target language users, and eventually achieve the goals of language learning.

#### **3.5.4 For Promoting Learners' Language Proficiency**

Authentic materials can help promote language skills and learning (Kilickaya, 2004; Huang, 2005; Berardo, 2006; Guo, 2012). Authentic materials can develop students' language skills, orient students to apply language skills to activities in the real world, and finally can bridge the gap between classroom and the real world through activities developed based on authentic materials (Wong et al., 1995).

Ghaderpanahi's (2012) quantitative study examines the effect of authentic aural materials on listening ability of thirty female tertiary psychology majors studying English as a foreign language in Iran. Students received authentic listening input provided from the instructor-researcher. After doing the listening part, students were asked to perform various tasks to develop academic listening skills, such as listening to the main ideas, listening for specific details, or note-taking. An IELTS test was administered at the beginning and end of the program. The results revealed a statistically significant improvement in the listening abilities of the EFL undergraduates. The mean of the post-test was much higher than that of the pre-test.

Guo (2012) investigates fifty Taiwanese college students recruited from two

intact classes and randomly assigned to one experimental group and one control group in his quantitative study. The experimental group received the treatment from ten online authentic reading, whereas the control group did not receive treatment. The study used pre-test and post-test of simulated TOEIC test at the beginning and at the end of the semester. At the end of the semester, a questionnaire was administered to both groups. The findings showed that there was measurable vocabulary gain in the experimental group that received online authentic readings.

### **3.5.5 For Providing Rich Input and Opportunities of Real-World**

#### **Language Use**

As authentic materials refer to any kind of texts or materials taken from the real world, they can expose learners to the real language as used in real-world situations (Wilkins, 1976; Clarke, 1989; Lee, 1995; Wong et al, 1995; Hedge, 2000; Richards, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004; Berardo, 2006). They can thus sensitize students to the real-world use of English, and enable them to relate real-world events to their experience (Wong et al., 1995). The “enriched input” which authentic materials offer provides learners with plentiful “exemplars of the target structure in the context of meaning-focused activities”, an approach that calls for “incidental acquisition”(Ellis, 1999: 68).

Belaid and Murray’s (2015) empirical study tries to understand EFL teachers’ perceptions and attitudes towards using authentic materials in teaching English through ten EFL Libyan teachers from four Libyan universities. Drawing from



questionnaire data, one major reason for these teachers to use authentic materials was to expose their learners to the everyday life language. In fact, the results showed that TV, internet, as well as magazines and newspapers, provided rich input and opportunities for real world language use.

Not only are teacher's views significant, different sources used can also play an important role in helping students to be exposed to authentic language. Mestari and Malabar's (2017) study explored six university teachers' perceptions in Indonesian EFL context by employing seven open response questions that guided the teachers to describe their experience of using authentic materials to teach grammar. The results indicated that all the teachers tend to use various source of authentic materials, such as greeting cards, TV guides, magazines, and newspapers, to teach.

Furthermore, Akbari and Razavi (2016) investigate EFL teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding the use of authentic materials at the high school level in an Iranian context. Fifty-seven female and male in-service English teachers participated in a survey questionnaire for this study. The results were that 97.3% of all participants considered using authentic materials mainly to provide the students with real world language opportunities. Their findings also indicated that TV, Internet, and films were the most popular resources for input and opportunities of exposure to the real world. Moreover, Huda (2017) investigates EFL teachers' perceptions towards the use of authentic materials in the Indonesian context at the high school level. Six English teachers, including a male and five females, participated in two questionnaires and one interview.

The findings revealed that authentic materials, especially the internet, were considered as an important input to motivate and to expose students to real language.

As Berardo suggests (2006: 67):

One of the main reason[s] for using authentic materials in the classroom is once outside the 'safe', controlled language learning environment, the learner will not encounter the artificial language of the classroom but the real world and language how it is really used

All these studies not only support the positive attitudes teachers have towards the use of authentic materials but also that they provide an abundant source of input for real world language interaction.

### **3.5.6 The Disadvantages of Using Authentic Materials**

In spite of the impetus advocating the use of authentic materials, there are still some disadvantages of using them. A few researchers contend that authentic materials may sometimes be de-motivating because they are too difficult for beginner learners, who may lack lexical items and structures to comprehend authentic texts (Peacock, 1997: 144; Kilickaya, 2004). Authentic materials often contain difficult linguistic items (Richards, 2001). Furthermore, authentic materials can become a burden for language teachers in preparing lessons with lower-level learners (Richards, 2001).

Another disadvantage is due to their immediate relevance and high topicality as authentic texts can become dated quickly (Clark, 1987; Berardo, 2006).

Authentic materials, such as news, can become outdated quickly (Berardo, 2006). Consequently, this may be a heavy workload for language teachers to update the authentic materials in use, and to make curricular adaptation:

...much spoken and written material is ephemeral, and soon loses its contemporary relevance. There is a constant need, therefore, for upgrading it. In this area curriculum renewal is an ever-evolving exercise (Clark, 1987: 207).

Another problem with incorporating authentic materials into current course books is that it may not reflect the premises of the communicative approach to process learners' needs (Clarke, 1989: 74). Thus, the relevance of the textbook materials and the inclusion of the authentic materials are under question in meeting the needs of the learners. One other negative aspect about using authentic materials is that they are too often culturally biased (Berardo, 2006). Often times the authentic materials presented include culturally sensitive items and language which for those outside of such community would find it difficult to comprehend. Even though there are disadvantages, most teachers support the use of authentic materials and consider that the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages (Berardo, 2006; Huda, 2017).

### **3.6 The Selection and Exploitation of Authentic Materials**

Given the merits brought about by authentic materials, language teachers are urged to prepare materials pedagogically in certain way to enable the learner to respond to the genuine discourse (Widdowson, 1978). Criteria regarding the selection of authentic materials have been suggested. Also, there have been some debates over the use of simple versus simplified texts.

### **3.6.1 The Selection Criteria of Authentic Materials**

Relevance and appropriateness to learners' needs and interests are of great importance. Berardo (2006: 63) gives four criteria in choosing authentic materials to use in the classroom: "suitability of content," "exploitability," "readability," and "presentation." Among them, suitability of content is the most important of all. This refers to the authentic text selected should interest the learners, be relevant to the learners' needs, and motivate the learners. McGrath (2002:106) also proposes several important criteria for the selection of authentic materials, such as relevance and intrinsic interest of topic/theme; among these, relevance to the "topic, genre, or linguistic features" and to the "learners' needs" is a must. Whether the text is going to interest the readers is also a main concern. If a text is not intrinsically interesting to the readers, no matter how relevant it is, it should not be used with the learners (McGrath, 2002).

Exploitability refers to how an authentic text can be developed for teaching purposes. If texts are exploitable, "they lend themselves readily to tasks which are interesting as well as useful" (McGrath, 2002: 107). A text which cannot be exploited for teaching purposes should not be used at all (Berardo, 2006).

Readability refers to assessing the appropriate level for the appropriate learners in terms of lexical difficulty, vocabulary amount, and grammatical items. Additionally, there should be a rough match between a linguistic and cognitive demand of the text and the language capacity and mental maturity of the

learners (McGrath, 2002). Thus, selected texts should be appropriate to the learners' needs, interests, and proficiency levels" (Nunan, 1989: 58). Moreover, whether a text looks authentic matters a lot. An authentic presentation involves using pictures, diagrams, or photos to attract the students, but also help "put the text into context" (Berardo, 2006: 62).

In addition, thematic relevance to their specific domain of subject knowledge is also important. Materials should be selected to enable the learners to respond to the genuine discourse, through selecting the relevant instruction level of the text, with the discourse of appropriate linguistic and rhetorical language codes (Widdowson, 1978).

### **3.6.2 Simple versus Simplified Texts**

The issues that authentic materials are often too difficult to many learners lead to a discussion of adaptation of the materials; one way to do so is through simplification. An authentic text simplified is different from a simple text. In distinguishing a simplified text from a simple one relating to the adoption of authentic materials, simple account of texts are the "genuine discourse' and can be exploited to illustrate an 'actual instance' of language 'use' whilst simplified texts featuring distortion of discourse may fail to illustrate the actual instance of use and may not be exploitable to serve as the example for communicative learning behaviour (Widdowson, 1978, 80-82). Widdowson regards the simple texts as a more feasible alternative than a simplified text as the former is a text with a 'genuine' simple account of integrity qualities "in its own right" whilst the

latter has been amended to make its meaning more overt by altering the discourse on structures of lexical items (Clarke, 1989: 74-75). The process of alteration has thus changed the nature of the discourse in the long run and had the text distorted (Clarke, 1989).

Many scholars who hold a similar view (e.g. Honeyfield, 1977) argue that simplification can lead to text altered in ways different from normal English "in the areas of information distribution, syntax, and communicative structure" (p.431) through linguistic and content simplification. Clarke (1989) argues that owing to the deficiencies in the cohesion and coherence in a re-structured text, the adapted texts can become distorted, and thus may render the text itself to be more difficult, rather than less difficult, to understand. Clarke also presents the other line of argument claiming that unadapted materials might be more difficult than the adapted ones for the learners to understand as they are linguistically challenging and thus the learners would be directed to focus on the 'codes' of the language, losing sight of reading for meanings (Clarke, 1989: 74). In a similar vein, McGrath (2002: 107) argues that editing may reduce a long text to something manageable; however, too much editing may result in rendering the text inauthentic or rendering it much more "difficult to process". The main issue related to the adaptation is that the more alteration is made, the less authentic the materials become (McGrath, 2002). Clavel-Arroitia and Fuster-Márquez (2014) also argue that adaptation through cropping or linguistic substitution may lead a text far from being authentic.

Nevertheless, it is sometimes necessary to simplify texts, for example,

exhausting amount of vocabulary: the texts contain so large amount of vocabulary beyond learners' language abilities that they need simplification (Nation, 1990). Nation summarizes the advantages of using simplification: first, it is a way to control the presentation of unknown words and structures. This can allow only a few unknown items to appear at a time. Second, after the unknown items are selected, they can be repeated in the text so learners can be exposed to them and increase familiarity of them. He also presents another line of argument. It is not always necessary to simplify the text; the advantage of large amounts of vocabulary is that it can lead to indirect learning. New words can be learned incidentally.

Honeyfield (1977) states that the two principal forms of simplification "produce material which differs significantly from normal English in the areas of information distribution, syntax, and communicative structure" (p.431). He argues that "such material may lead students to develop reading strategies that are inappropriate for unsimplified English" (p.431). He also asserts three problems with traditional simplification: (i) "The tendency to produce a homogenized product" (Honeyfield, 1977: 434); "simplifying normally involves expansion" due to paraphrasing (*ibid.*). Materials become "less densely packed" in expansion (*ibid.*). The reader has to cover more words to get the given amount of information load required for comprehension. (ii) simplifying syntax "may reduce cohesion and readability" (Honeyfield, 1977: 435); simplifying syntax may come at the cost of losing the semantic and rhetorical function of syntax, and thus "a reduced syntax may be inadequate for a given information load. The result may be material lacking in cohesion, and hence readability"

(ibid.). (iii) Traditional simplification often obscures communicative structure (ibid.). Following Mountford (1976), Honeyfield asserts that the communicative structure should be preserved and made explicit when working with simplification, especially the science and technology materials. What Mountford suggests is that by concentrating on the vocabulary and sentence structure, the simplifiers usually lose sight of communicative structure and “in particular sequence signals, the items which explicitly mark the structure” (Honeyfield, 1977: 436).

Similarly, Honeyfield (1977) thus suggests that (i) students do not need to understand every word when tackling with unsimplified text; (ii) students should be taught how to use contextual clues; (iii) students’ attention should be shifted to the communicative purpose of a text; (iv) students should be trained to identify the communicative structure of an unsimplified text. Given that the skills highlighted here are all important skills that learners need to possess, I think these suggestions are feasible in my teaching context.

### **3.6.3 Elaboration of Authentic Materials**

Contrary to simplification, elaboration is another way of modifying an authentic text. Elaboration involves adding to, rather than removing difficult items (Zyzik & Polio, 2017). This addition may be made by providing synonyms or by restating the lexical items which may impede learners’ comprehension. Elaboration of a text usually makes the text longer. Nevertheless, just as simplification, elaboration of authentic text may also come at the price of



compromising its authenticity (Zyzik & Polio, 2017).

The next section reviews literature on tasks appropriate for use with authentic materials.

### **3.7 Tasks**

The idea of tasks as a pedagogical model is indebted to CLT approach (Mishan, 2005: 67). According to Mishan (2005: ix), the change of pedagogical focus from form-based instruction to meaning-focused communication underpinned by CLT has not only contributed to advocating the inclusion of authentic materials in language classrooms but also contributed to a call for a comprehensive authenticity-centred approach. The authenticity-centred approach stresses the use of authentic texts to learn languages and preservation of authenticity involved throughout the process (Mishan, 2005: ix). Aside from using authentic text, the authenticity-oriented approach is usually manifested in the use of the task as a pedagogical model (*ibid.*). The use of authentic text and the task in an authenticity-centred approach in language teaching is deemed a pedagogically good match as both are originated from the “real-world” (*ibid.*).

#### **3.7.1 Definitions of Tasks**

Breen (1989; cited in Ellis, 2003: 5) refers to a ‘task’ as a ‘workplan’ for a learning activity, aiming to engage the learners in meaning-focused language use. Following Breen (1989), Ellis (2003) also defines a task as a ‘workplan’ and highlights meaning-focused language use. According to Ellis (2003: 5), “a

'workplan' is intended to engage the learner in meaning-focused language use". Tasks require the learners to attend to meaning, and utilise their linguistic resources to achieve an outcome (Ellis, 2003: 16). Other writers, such as Willis (1996: 36; cited in Mishan, 2005: ix), also attend to the importance of meaning. In Willis' definition, a task refers to "a goal-oriented communicative activity with a specific outcome where the emphasis is on exchanging meanings, not on producing specific language forms" (*ibid.*).

A framework has been provided by Nunan for a communicative task, which involves language input, teaching activities, teachers and learners, all of which form a dynamic circle of task (Nunan, 2004). Nunan (1991) extends Breen's (1989) term of 'workplan' to include three elements: goals, input of materials, and activities. According to Nunan (2004), activities may specify what learners will actually do with the input data which becomes the point of departure for the learning task (Nunan, 2004: 59).

For the material design in line with a CLT approach, the principles of and the contributing factors in communicative theory are "the 'genuine' information gap", "unpredictability", "freedom of choice" in "what to say and how to say it, meaningful context, and the purposeful use of language" (Clarke, 1989: 76). These factors characterise the real communication and should be the basis of language activities (Johnson, 1981, cited in Clarke, 1989: 76).

### **3.7.2 Tasks versus Exercises**

Bearing the communicative purpose in mind, it is necessary to distinguish tasks from exercises. Tasks are “activities that call for primarily meaning-focused language use”; whilst exercises are “activities that call for primarily form-focused language use” (Ellis, 2003: 3). Ellis continues that tasks involves the learners in language use in relation to communicative processes as in the real-world activities, and thus there might be “incidental” learning; whereas exercises may require the learners to be involved as language learners whereby any learning is “intentional” (Ellis, 2003: 3).

Following Willis and Willis (2001; cited in Nunan, 2004: 4), what distinguishes a task from a grammatical exercise is that language learners are enabled to draw from their repertoires of language so that they can achieve the targets or the “outcomes” of the tasks (Nunan, 2004: 4). This does not undermine the importance of grammar because meanings and forms are inter-related.

Furthermore, Littlewood (2004; 2007) proposes five categories ranged along a continuum from the most form-focused end of continuum to the most meaning-focused end of continuum. These five categories set activities from ‘non-communicative learning’ to ‘pre-communicative language practice’, ‘communicative language practice’, ‘structured communication’ tasks, and finally to ‘authentic communication’ tasks (Littlewood, 2004; 2007). According to Littlewood (2007: 247), the most form-focused end of the continuum refers to those non-communicative exercises or drills that focus on language forms only, such as grammar practice, or substitution drills (*ibid.*). The pre-communicative language practice refers to attending to form, but shifting slightly

towards meaning, such as the typical question and answer in which teachers ask display questions to which every student knows the answer (*ibid.*). Communicative language practice refers to the activities in which learners employ recently taught language items to convey messages, such as a survey conducted in class (*ibid.*). Structured communication refers to attending to meaningful communication with teacher structuring the situation, such as more complex information-exchange activities or structured role-playing tasks (*ibid.*). The most meaning-focused end of the continuum refers to ‘authentic communication’ tasks with a focus on communication of meaning with unpredictable language (*ibid.*).

### **3.7.3 Real-world Tasks versus Pedagogical Tasks**

The development of CLT approach has implications for methodology and the role that learning tasks play in the curriculum (Nunan, 1989: 14). What is meant by a task underpinned by CLT framework? Nunan (1989) suggests that one thing in common with a task is that it involves “communicative language use in which the user’s attention is focused on meaning rather than linguistic structure” (Nunan, 1989: 10). The core of a communicative task lies in the ‘exchanges of meanings’ (Willis & Willis, 2001: 173). Nunan (1989) further defines what is meant by the communicative task:

the communicative task as a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form (Nunan, 1989: p.10).

The communicative tasks consist of two types of tasks: real-world tasks and pedagogical tasks. ‘Real-world’ or ‘target’ tasks refer to “uses of language in the

world beyond the classroom”; whereas pedagogical tasks refer to “those that occur in the classroom” (Nunan, 2004: 1). In other words, in the real-world tasks, i.e. target tasks, the learners are required to perform the tasks that approximate to, or resemble, those in the real world beyond the classroom (Nunan, 2004: 1), such as designing an event based on listening to a weather forecast.

On the other hand, pedagogical tasks refer to those that are likely to take place in the classroom (Nunan, 2004: 1). Tasks taken at pedagogical sense are thus referred to as anything that language learners are likely to do in the classroom rather than the world beyond the classroom (Nunan, 2004: 2-3).

Nunan’s (2004) summarizes pedagogical tasks as:

a pedagogical task is a “piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right with a beginning, a middle and an end (Nunan, 2004: 4).

These definitions have one thing in common: a pedagogical task ‘involves communicative language use’ with which learners’ attention may be drawn to exchange of meanings rather than to grammatical form (Nunan, 2004: 4).

Nunan further argues that tasks should be analysed for the extent to which they can enable learners to rehearse in class with the assumption that the learners may be expected to use the communicative behaviours as genuine

communicative interactions beyond the classroom (Nunan, 2004: 53).

According to Oura (2001), the pedagogic tasks can enable the learners to develop necessary skills they will be using to accomplish the target tasks and eventually these newly developed skills could be used beyond the classroom. On the other hand, real-life, or target, tasks, replicate or rehearse real-life activities, aiming for meaningful communication and negotiation of meaning in the target language. The nature of the real-life tasks was to rehearse or approximate the tasks as used in the real-life contexts, with an aim to get meaning across, with negotiation of meaning as the primary focus in the target language to undertake the tasks.

Some argue that classroom procedures should reflect the communicative behaviour and stick to authenticity. Yet, it is argued by Widdowson (1987) that classroom activities might not need to resemble the communicative performance in the real-world context:

...what is wanted is a methodology which will... provide for communicative competence by functional investment. [Such a methodology] would engage the learners in problem-solving tasks as purposeful activities but without the rehearsal requirement that they should be realistic or 'authentic' as natural social behaviour (Widdowson, 1987: 71; cited in Nunan, 2004: 53-54).

What Widdowson (1987) argues is an intervention of pedagogical methodology to help learners to engage in problem-solving tasks as natural social behaviour as found in the society, not necessarily involving the element of rehearsal as found in authenticity-driven language learning approach.

### **3.8 Pedagogical Implications**

Hereby some pedagogical implications are provided below.

#### **3.8.1 Fitted to Learning Purpose**

In a strict sense, authenticity does not allow for any alteration of potential material: “Authenticity means that nothing of the original text is changed and also that its presentation and layout are retained” (Grellet, 1981: 8). However, Clarke (1989) implies that the persistent use of authentic input materials in the actual teaching materials will not automatically produce effective language learning. Therefore, what matters is not authentic text itself, but *what* and *how* teachers should deal with the text in the process of language learning (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 159-160; Taylor, 1994). The pedagogical implication here is to look for the issue of ‘fitness to the learning purpose,’ rather than to look for the concept of authenticity (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 159; Gilmore, 2007). In the same line, the notion of ‘fitness’ is similar to Widdowson’s idea of the ‘appropriate intervening’ in methodological pedagogy to ensure ‘appropriacy’ of response in order for the learners to ultimately achieve authenticity (Widdowson, 1979: 166). In other words, a text should not only be selected because it is an authentic text; but rather, teachers should select a text based on whether they have enough competence to handle the text effectively (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 162). The teacher has to negotiate from factors involved in selecting a text in order to accommodate syllabuses, materials and their own teaching capacities (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987: 162-164). Nunan maintains that: “To my mind it is not a matter of whether or not authentic

materials should be used, but what combination of authentic, simulated and specially written materials provide learners with optimal learning opportunities” (Nunan, 2005: 49). Gilmore (2007) also echoes the concept of ‘fitness to the learning purpose,’ to help learners achieve their communicative competence through the use of texts and tasks at teacher’s disposal whether they are inauthentic, i.e. contrived, relatively authentic, or authentic (Gilmore, 2007: 98). In terms of relative authenticity, the notion is brought to be more related to the learners’ specific needs and less to the ‘authentic nature’ of the input data (Clarke, 1989: 73; cited in Mishan, 2005: 17).

Clarke (1989) also argues that the learner’s perceptions may have implications for the learning outcome. Thus, learner authenticity comes to play through their appropriate responses and positive perceptions of the texts (Lee, 1995: 323). Language teachers’ role is to help their learners engage with the appropriate text and have affective interactions as shown in the involvement of tasks or activities that accompany the texts.

### **3.8.2 Exploitation of Authentic Text**

In the discussion of how to exploit authentic texts, Grellet advocates that a global understanding rather than an extraction of the details of the text should be acquired (Grellet, 1981). In the same line, Cook (1983; cited in Clarke, 1989) also supports scanning the text in a way the same as native speakers will do, without attending to irrelevant details (Cook, 1983; cited in Clarke, 1989). Following this, Swan and Walter point out that language learners should selectively listen for key points in a text without a need to understand every



word that they hear. Hence, attempts should be made by the language learners to make a grasp of the key ideas from the text, orally or in writing, so as to generate a response without extracting every detail from the text (Swan & Walter, 1985; cited in Clarke, 1989).

In terms of attempting to generate appropriate responses from the text, Widdowson (1978) raises his doubt by questioning the procedure of comprehension check used by the teacher to ask learners one question after another after reading a text, especially when the teacher already knows the answer or the answer is self-evident. In the same line, Grellet (1981) points out that the authentic response to a text may involve, rather than answering comprehension question after reading, a task such as we would do in the real world, i.e. to solve a problem, to make a choice, or to compare the information with previously existing knowledge (Grellet, 1981). It is deemed as inappropriate to process a text at the cost of the comprehension check, because this extracting of the details, at the cost of generating appropriate response to the text, may fail to reflect the communicative purpose of the authentic text. Saraceni (2003) also argues that the materials we use should be authentic and the activities based on the authentic texts should be authentic, in line with the realistic situation in order to expose learners to the authentic input. Saraceni (2003) argues that using tasks, such as gap-filling and answering comprehension check, would make the texts inauthentic. Thus, the main concern over the authentic nature of the text is related to how we can ensure the task is appropriate when we process the authentic texts to reflect its communicative purpose (Clarke, 1989: 75).

To recap, the principles in CLT approach inform the material design. The principles of and the contributing factors in communicative theory are the 'genuine' information gap, unpredictability, freedom of choice in what to say and how to say it, the meaningful context, and the purposeful use of language (Clarke, 1989: 76). These factors characterise real communication and should be the basis of language activities (Johnson, 1981: 93, 95; cited in Clarke, 1989: 76).

The focus of the concern over authenticity has shifted from the sheer nature of the input authentic text to take into account learners' need and the engagement in the text (Clarke, 1989: 73). It is argued that "when we go beyond the text, authenticity is very much a matter of interpretation" (Taylor, 1994: 3). Therefore, a good fit within teachers' selection of pedagogies informing the development of the tasks may be as important as the selection of authentic texts. I will draw my discussion to teachers' views in the following section.

### **3.9 Teacher's Views on Using Authentic Materials**

Teachers' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in their class have not received enough attention (Soliman, 2013), although scholars have been urging to use authentic materials. Belaid and Murray's (2015) empirical study in the EFL Libyan context indicates that most EFL teachers held positive attitudes towards using authentic materials in teaching English. Also, Huda's (2017) study indicates that the participating English teachers in the Indonesian

context at the high school level had positive attitudes regardless of their gender and teaching qualifications regarding the use of authentic materials in their EFL classes.

One of the current studies in the context of reading and for the intermediate level also highlights the positive attitudes that teachers had towards authentic materials. Soliman's (2013) quantitative study utilizes attitude and beliefs questionnaire investigating the Libyan university teachers' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials to EFL learners. The results revealed that most of the teachers were positive towards the use of authentic materials. Moreover, the results indicated that a perfect reading class should combine both authentic texts and textbooks. Other findings also reveal that most of the teachers stated that the use of authentic materials should start at intermediate level.

In addition, Akbari and Razavi (2016) investigate EFL teachers' attitudes and beliefs at the high school level in the Iranian context. Fifty-seven female and male EFL teachers took part in a survey questionnaire for this study. The questionnaires were analysed in terms of percentage and frequency through descriptive statistics. The results indicated that English teachers had a positive attitude toward presenting authentic materials in their EFL classrooms. Authentic materials were perceived as important input to improve students' reading and listening skills. The majority of the teachers suggested that authentic materials can be used in the intermediate level (98%) and the advanced level (78%), only half (53%) indicated using them with beginners.

Moreover, Anam and Anam's (2019) qualitative study uses both interviews and observation to find out about teachers' perceptions at the high school level in Indonesia towards the use of authentic materials. Two teachers took part in the study. The results showed that the teachers were positive about using authentic materials in their teaching. They perceived that authentic materials were very important to be implemented in their teaching and they enjoyed teaching with authentic materials. Similar to the participants in my study, the teachers used authentic materials as supplementary materials to their teaching.

Mestari and Malabar's study (2017) investigates six EFL university teachers' perceptions about using authentic materials to teach grammar in Indonesia. Seven open response questions were utilized to guide participating teachers to describe their experience. Qualitative methodology was used to analyse the data. The results showed that these teachers preferred using authentic materials. All the participating teachers concurred that authentic materials tend to be more motivating and interesting for their learners as well as more up-to-date than the required textbook.

Teachers' and students' positive attitudes are of great importance in the use of authentic materials. AbdulHussein (2014) investigates EFL college teachers' and students' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in Iraq for reading classes. Eighty-five participants took part in the study which employed questionnaires as instruments. A statistically significant difference was found between teachers' and students' attitudes. Teachers had positive attitudes, whereas the learners had even stronger positive attitudes than the teachers.

Just as AbdulHussein's study on teachers' and learners' attitudes, another study that is similar and with great relevance but conducted in a different context is one done by Almusallam (2015). She elicited 32 EFL college teachers' and 144 students' beliefs and attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in the Saudi contexts with which mandatory textbook materials were used. Like my study, mandatory textbook materials were assigned to the teachers. The descriptive research study utilized both qualitative and quantitative instruments. The participating students had two hours of reading classes, using four different authentic texts. Unlike my study, her study focused only on female EFL teachers and students in their reading classes. Two questionnaires were administered. A subgroup of 18 students and 9 teachers took part in follow-up interviews. This study focused on the effect of different variables on the part of the teachers, such as degrees and years of experience as well as the students' age and language level upon these individuals' attitudes towards authentic materials. Although the results showed both having positive attitudes towards the use of authentic materials, the learners were more willing to use authentic materials as compared to the teachers. All variables had no effect except for teachers' academic degrees having a negative correlation with their attitudes towards authentic materials. Teachers with higher degrees might perceive authentic materials to be too difficult for lower level learners and the mandatory textbooks to be most suitable, and thus teachers with higher degrees have less favourable attitudes towards authentic materials. The participating teachers suggested that an ideal reading class should be a combination of authentic materials and textbook materials in use. They also argued that exposure to authentic materials should start at the intermediate level. The participating teachers claimed that short stories were the most preferable type of authentic

materials whilst poems were the least preferable. This study centred on reading and did not deal with the use of authentic materials related to the communicative approach.

With the rise of authenticity and its influence upon material development, educators and researchers as well as textbook writers and publishers have differing opinions on the definition and application of real, authentic texts and tasks inside the classroom. As to the definition of authenticity for texts and tasks, it should not solely be defined by native speakers and culture but is allowing real uses of 'real' language for a real purpose (Pinner, 2016: 85). In terms of application, the questions of what, how, or when authentic materials and tasks should be introduced have become an issue for educators (Zyzik & Polio, 2017). In reviewing the current studies in this field of authenticity, none of these studies explores teachers' perceptions regarding the use of authentic materials and tasks in an EFL Taiwanese context as well as constraints at the tertiary level.

This thesis is one of the few relevant studies that addresses all three threads simultaneously: teachers' perceptions, how activities and tasks are carried out to exploit the authentic materials, and the constraints they experience. In addition, the information gathered through the questionnaire and interviews will shed light on teachers' attitudes when faced with a test-driven ethos and mandatory school-wide textbooks, filling a gap in this research area. Furthermore, through this research, I hoped to embark on gathering my fellow teachers' views on authentic materials and explore their perceptions in trying to use authentic materials and tasks. Finally, this research will gain a better

understanding of the significance of adding authentic materials and tasks in such a test-driven environment where teachers are faced with certain stresses or constraints.

### **3.10 Aim and Research Questions**

This study aims to explore teachers' perceptions of the use of authentic materials and tasks in EFL classrooms at the tertiary level in Taiwan. I would like to find out what teachers think about authentic materials, how they exploit them for teaching English in Taiwanese universities and universities of technology and the constraints they experienced when using authentic materials and tasks.

The research questions are as follows.

1. What are teacher's views on the use of authentic materials for teaching?
2. If they need to use authentic materials, how do the teachers use authentic materials and associated tasks or activities based on the authentic materials?
3. What issues need to be addressed when using authentic materials in terms of the teachers' pedagogical considerations or teaching practices?
4. What tasks or activities based on the authentic materials are deemed appropriate to be assigned to their learners, if any?
5. What, if any, are the limitations on the teachers' use of authentic materials and associated tasks?

The next chapter states the methodology that guides the research.

## Chapter Four: Methodology

### Introduction

This chapter explains the research design of my study, describing and justifying the methodology. To begin with, I will explain my philosophical orientation through a brief discussion of the ontological and epistemological stances that guided the research and the choice of methodology, before explaining the data collection tools, the participants, data analysis, credibility, and trustworthiness. This chapter will conclude with ethical considerations and limitations to the study.

### 4.1 Paradigmatic Assumptions

Educational research is usually conducted “within a recognized” “*research paradigm*” (Ernest, 1994: 19). According to Guba & Lincoln (1994: 105), a paradigm refers to a “basic belief system” or “worldview”. Researchers will choose the paradigm that best matches their approach to the nature of knowledge and knowing, i.e. the philosophy underpinning the paradigm. Researchers will position themselves in a particular research paradigm in which the philosophical assumptions which underpin the ontology and epistemology will inform the research designs. Thus, the theoretical stance that the researchers take demonstrates their understanding about the nature of the social realities or the phenomenon in question, the nature of knowledge, and the ways of constructing or interpreting realities and knowledge (Creswell, 2003; Grix, 2004; Cohen et al., 2007; Cohen et al., 2011).



Ontology refers to the philosophical assumptions about “nature of social reality” (Denscombe, 2002: 5). Our ontology will govern our worldview towards the reality or social reality. Whereas, epistemology refers to ‘what constitutes knowledge claims’ (Creswell, 2003: 3). In other words, epistemology is related to “providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate” (Maynard, 1994: 10). Epistemological issues are concerned about ‘What is the relationship between the knower and what is known?’ and “How do we know what we know?” (Tuli, 2010: 3). Thus, our epistemology, which refers to our views about the nature of knowledge (Ernest, 1994: 8), is related to how we view and make sense of the world together with how we access the knowledge (Crotty, 1998: 8).

Our ontological and epistemological assumptions will guide and justify our approach to research (Ernest, 1994: 19), enlighten our choice of methodology and then inform how we come to understand the conceptualization of the approach to the research paradigm, the methods and the limitation of the study (Crotty, 1998; Creswell, 2003; Grix, 2004; Troudi, 2010).

The interpretive paradigm seeks for interpretation and contextualization (McKay, 2006: 7) rather than observation and explanation. The interpretive paradigm seeks to understand the “subjective world of human experience” through retaining the “integrity of the phenomenon” and through understanding the person “from within” (Cohen et al., 2011: 17). An interpretive paradigm is good at ‘capturing’ the ‘uniqueness and individuality of the particular individuals’

(Ernest, 1994: 32). The strength of interpretivism lies in its sensitivity to make sense of the individuals, their views and contexts (Ernest, 1994: 32). The interpretive researcher would seek to explain, listen to her participants and build an understanding based on his/her participants' ideas (Creswell, 2003: 30). An interpretivist researcher tries to "make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005: 3). Through the interpretive lenses, the researcher may bring the multiple perspectives from the participants to the fore through the rich descriptions of the interpretations, supported by the direct quotes in the participant's own wording as well as by the previous literature. Thick descriptions of contextual information are required through a full reconstruction of the individuals in the setting of the culture in which they lived (Grix, 2004: 176), allowing for various interpretations and perspectives of a phenomenon (Cohen et al. 2007: 20-21).

This study seeks to explore teachers' perceptions of the use of authentic materials and tasks in EFL classrooms at tertiary level in Taiwan. Underpinning this exploratory nature of my thesis is an inquiry informed by the interpretive paradigm, aiming to study and understand the lived experiences of individuals regarding phenomena as perceived and reported by the participants rather than by the researcher (Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2014). I chose to make my inquiry from an interpretive orientation.

Hence, I subscribe to the ontological stance that my participants and I co-constructed the realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994: 113), which are not only multiple, but also socio-culturally situated (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Cohen et al.,

2007). Given an interpretive approach, this study aims to explore the participating teachers' perceptions through their reports made to me so that it allowed me to make sense of what they perceived, how they came to understand, or even came to terms with using or not using authentic materials and the associated activities or tasks in their teaching. Thus, from the ontological and epistemological groundings, my study was situated as an exploratory inquiry embedded in an interpretive paradigm.

#### **4.2 The Research Methodology**

Being informed by the researchers' ontological and epistemological assumptions, methodology is "the overall research strategy reflecting a theory of acquiring knowledge" (Troudi, 2010: 315), or "the general procedures of research" known as "*strategies of inquiry*" (emphasized in original, Creswell, 2003: 3) Thus, the choice of methodology involves an understanding of how the researchers conceptualize the approach to the research, inclusive of the research paradigm, the methods chosen and the limitations of the study (Grix, 2004: 33).

The methodology of this study is exploratory embedded in the interpretive paradigm. Interpretive research takes an inductive design with identifying and analysing from the bottom-up approach, rather than being deducted from a pre-determined theory (Creswell, 2007: 19), and usually makes use of qualitative data collection methods. The general conclusions of the interpretivist research are reached at inductively from studying micro issues and through using a

purposive sampling in small numbers (Grix, 2004). My purpose is to draw insights from my participants through interpreting phenomena “in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005: 3).

As mentioned in previous chapters, the pedagogical considerations of language teachers in my contexts are likely to be influenced by the learners’ diversities of needs, mixed language levels, the design of materials and methodologies, teaching and learning objectives, language policies stipulated and mandated by the Ministry of Education, as well as socio-cultural ethos inside and outside of classrooms. Given the complexities and diversities of the nature of teachers’ experiences and perspectives, I aim to understand the perceptions of my participants and explore the issues. The key characteristics of exploratory research is “to investigate and capture interpretations of social phenomena as experienced and understood by participants” (Ritchie & Ormston, 2014: 32). This is the reason why I consider this research exploratory embedded in interpretive paradigm.

#### **4.3 Data Collection Methods**

The choice of research methods should be informed by the choice of the research approach aimed to deal with the data in line with the paradigmatic nature of the research (Troudi, 2010: 315). In other words, the research methods to use are informed by the researcher’s ontological and epistemological assumptions and are guided by the research questions (Grix, 2004: 30-31).

Qualitative methods are predominant in the interpretive paradigm (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Qualitative methods featuring “flexible” and “exploratory” approaches offer deeper understanding of “dynamic phenomena”, rather than “downsizing the participants’ subjective viewpoint” as quantitative methods may do (Dörnyei, 2007: 34-35). Descriptive language is used to discern recurring patterns and themes emerging from the data and set within specific social contexts rather than to seek the relationship between variables (Grix, 2004: 120). However, I also used a questionnaire associated with quantitative research. “Although interpretive research tends to rely heavily on qualitative data, quantitative data may add more precision and clearer understanding of the phenomenon of interest than qualitative data” (Bhattacharjee, 2012:103-104). He argues that “joint use of qualitative and quantitative data” may contribute to “unique insight” (Bhattacharjee, 2012: 104).

The study aims to investigate teachers’ perceptions of their use of authentic materials and if any, their associated activities or tasks to understand if there is room for introducing authentic materials in a Taiwanese EFL context at the tertiary level, which is characteristic of a test-driven ethos. My research design was partly informed by a study carried out by Sheu’s study (2008). In an empirical study, Sheu (2008) uses the semi-structured interviews of ten teachers following a questionnaire which had been administered to forty Taiwanese EFL teachers to elicit their general views and attitudes towards using picture storybooks (Sheu, 2008: 47). Although the topic was not the same as mine, the methodology has similarities. I used a questionnaire to elicit participant teachers’ general views towards authentic materials, followed by a

semi-structured interview to explore more of the topics of interests in depth. The purpose of using a questionnaire in interpretive research is to derive the overall attitudes and key issues emerged (Sheu, 2008). Semi-structured interviews help illuminate the main issues derived from the questionnaires in greater depth and detail (Sheu, 2008). The questionnaire was administered to thirty teachers with experience of teaching English at universities or universities of technology, followed by semi-structured interviews of fourteen teachers.

Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews can be complementary to each other in light of elucidating topics and issues in their breadth and depth. The questionnaire survey is good at capturing the “breadth of evidence” but it is usually flawed with “lack of depth” (Roberts-Holmes, 2005: 48). In contrast, interviewing can provide the opportunities to “probe” and “go more in depth” (Cohen and Manion, 1989: 313). Interviewing enables accessing to people’s perception and how they construct the realities (Punch, 2009). That is the reason why I opted for these two types of instruments. The current study employed a questionnaire as the initial data collection instrument. Informed by the previous literature including the authenticity of the texts and tasks (Mishan, 2005), and the criteria for selecting the texts and text difficulty (McGrath, 2002), I designed the questionnaire items aiming to explore teachers’ perception towards the use of authentic materials. The questionnaires were used for the following purposes: (i) to elicit the teachers’ general views towards the topics of interest; (ii) to help me identify potential interviewees who are interested in participating in follow-up interviews. As a set of questions in the written form, questionnaire was designed with a combination of structured and open-ended

“discursive response” items (Thomas, 2009: 172-73) to derive the respondents’ attitudes or views. The verbal or open-ended questions in a questionnaire can be used “as an introduction to a follow-up interview” (Bell, 2010: 141). Hence, I used both types of questions, open-ended and closed-ended questions, with an aim to derive the overall views and to explore issues at great depth.

#### **4.3.1 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire (see Appendix 2: Finalized Questionnaire) consisted of five main parts. The questionnaire started with the non-threatening factual questions (Cohen et al., 2011: 398) to collect some background information for the study. The main parts of the survey asked for participants’ views on aspects of authentic materials using a 5-point Likert scale response, with ‘1’ as the ‘*Strongly Disagree*’ choice and ‘5’ as the ‘*Strongly Agree*’ choice, interspersed with an open-ended free response question.

In designing my questionnaire items, McGrath's (2002) criterion for the selection of authentic texts and Nunan's (1989, 2004) designing tasks and adaptations of authentic texts were helpful. In addition, Mishan (2005) provided a deeper understanding of authenticity. Questions related to reasons for choosing authentic materials were based on my personal interest as well as my review of the notion of authenticity. Questions regarding the notion of exploitation of tasks were inspired by Nunan (1989; 2004), Ellis (2003), and Littlewood (2004; 2007). Furthermore, Almusallam (2015) conducted a larger scale study with both questionnaires and an interview. Some of her questions

related to factors limiting the use of authentic reading materials in EFL instruction related to my items about constraints. However, her focus was on authentic texts in the reading classroom and she surveyed both teachers and students. She used a mixture of questions, including open ended questions, multiple choice questions, and the use of a 5-point Likert scale. Although much of the literature I reviewed had similar elements to my questionnaire, few of them contained all three strands of my study and with a focus on communicative aspects of the use of authentic materials. Each part is explained in more details here.

The first section (Part A) aimed at collecting the factual or background information of relevance to the purpose of the study, such as years of teaching experience, native or non-native English speakers, and full or part time teachers. Items also included asking whether the participants were required to teach with a mandatory coursebook materials, and to abide by following a unified curriculum.

The main sections were divided into five parts, meant to draw the general perceptions of the participant teachers towards the use of authentic materials and their real use. RQ1 regarding the 'perceptions of authentic materials' is addressed in Parts B, C, E, F of the questionnaire. RQ2 and RQ4 correspond to Part D, the 'tasks or activities'. Part C investigating contextual issues addresses RQ3. Finally, 'the constraints of difficulties in using authentic materials' are related to Part F addressing RQ5.



The first main section (Part B) corresponds to the rationales of using authentic materials (Table A in Appendix 2). It consists of 12 closed-ended (items 12-23) and one open-ended item asking the participants to respond to statements about their views on the use of authentic materials, for example, motivating and engaging learners (items 12-13) and preparing learners with real language use (item 14). From Section B onward, an open-ended question at the end of each section was provided to elicit the teachers' views about the issues in question.

Part C investigated the reasons for choosing authentic materials (Table B). As mentioned earlier, to my observation, the contextual factors, for example, the mandatory textbooks in use have constrained my colleagues and my use of authentic materials. Therefore, these questions were set to understand whether this was the case in my institute and beyond. It draws on teachers' pedagogical rationale for choosing authentic materials, for example, whether they meet their teaching aims and objectives (item 26-29; items 31-32).

Part D investigated how the teachers used tasks or activities based on authentic materials (Table C). It includes eight statements (items 35-42) and one open-ended question, for example, "Do exercises that aim for comprehension check and drawing inferences from contextual clues" (Item 38), "Use tasks that copy real-life activities" (Item 39).

Part E (Table D) regards the teachers' views about adapting authentic materials. It addresses whether they would simplify or make supplement, or make no

change, containing nine statements (items 43-51), followed by an open-ended question.

Part F (Table E) regards teachers' views on perceived constraints or difficulties in using authentic materials and factors that prevented them from using authentic materials. Participants were told to tick as many boxes as needed in a list of reasons. These options included the constraints due to poor match with the coursebook, curriculum, or course objectives; issues to do with the testing system; time stress; insufficient technical equipment; lack of interest in their use by teachers or students; or issues related to the text difficulty.

#### **4.3.1.1 Piloting the Questionnaire**

It is essential to pilot data collection instruments to check aspects such as: (i) its clarity in terms of wording and meanings; (ii) its layout and appearance; (iii) whether it is too lengthy; (iv) its validity in terms of whether the questions asked pertinently address the research question (Cohen et al, 2011: 118). I piloted the questionnaire in two phases: first, with two Taiwanese academic colleagues and with an American teacher working in a similar context to the participants; second, with three of my Taiwanese colleagues working in my institute.

The advice I was given from the academic colleagues included the inclusion of two more questions relating to mandatory textbook and its relation with major school examination, which I added, 'If you teach with coursebook materials, is it compulsory for you to use them?' and 'If you teach with a coursebook which

is mandatory, are you required to follow a unified curriculum?’ and ‘Do the major school exams develop the test questions from the unified curriculum that you use?.’

In addition, they suggested the inclusion of open-ended, rather than the closed-ended, questions at the end of each section to elicit free responses. They also suggested more instructions in Section D to encourage those who did not use authentic materials to still give a response. Accordingly, I included the following statement: “Even if you do not currently use authentic materials in class, please answer to show what you would do to exploit them.”

The feedback received from the American teacher revealed that the questionnaire took more than ten minutes to complete. Some of the words were imprecise, and some of the jargons used should be given with explanation. Hence, I made quite a few changes by removing the items that contained wordings of vague, ambiguous, or imprecise meanings; changing those that were invalid by containing two questions at a time (Cohen *et al.*, 2011: 397); modifying those that contained specific language, such as the use of ‘pedagogical tasks’ or ‘non-pedagogical tasks’, which might be unfamiliar to the participants. I also made some changes to the layout of the questionnaire to make it more user-friendly. I then piloted the questionnaire a second time with three of my colleagues working at various departments from the institute where I teach. They pointed out that the directions of the rating scales in each section should be consistent, and I made changes accordingly.

### **4.3.2 Semi-structured Interview**

The second phase of the data collection employed semi-structured interviews. Interviewing is one of the most prevalent data collection methods in qualitative research (Merriam,1998). Interviews may allow the participants to talk about their interpretations of the world where they live and how they perceive the situations from their perspectives (Cohen et al., 2011: 409). The core reason for the in-depth interview lies in the researcher’s interest in “understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (Seidman, 2013: 9).

Interviewing is the best technique in situations when we need to find out the past events, or other people’s feelings, or how they made sense of the world around them (Merriam, 1998: 72). Being informed by the interpretive paradigm, I anchored my inquiry using interviews as one of my data collection methods. Interpretive research allowed me to attend to the process, meaning, and understanding through rich descriptive words and voices made from my participants. Interviewing enabled me to get access to how they perceived their pedagogical choices regarding using or not using authentic materials and tasks. Through our interactions through interviewing, we co-constructed and made sense of each other’s perceptions and understanding.

Although interviewing may provide the platform for the interviewer and interviewee to “co-construct the interview” (Walford, 2001: 90), we should handle data generated from the interviews with care. A drawback of interviewing

mentioned by some researchers indicate that the interviewee would moderate their choice of what to say to particular circumstances and that their perceptions may change depending on the situations in the course of the time (Walford, 2001: 90). To avoid this, one major approach is to seek for comparisons between different informants (Whyte, 1982: 116; cited in Merriam, 1998: 91). Hence, I opted for semi-structured interviews from various participants and member checking of interview transcripts to minimize the biases.

Depending on the amount of structure needed, three types of interviews are usually positioned in a continuum: at one end, the highly structured; at the other end, the unstructured; whilst the semi-structured interview is situated in-between (Merriam, 1998: 73-4). Structured interviews feature “a degree of uniformity” (Thomas, 2009: 162) and predetermined wording and order of questions; thus, not allowing access to the participants’ viewpoints (Merriam, 1998: 74). On the other hand, an unstructured interview is made with no prescribed set of questions. Completely unstructured interviews, being rarely used, may engulf the researcher with overwhelmingly “divergent” points of view (Merriam, 1998: 75). Most interviews are placed “somewhere between the highly structured and the highly unstructured point on the continuum, allowing participants’ freedom to talk about the topics and give their opinions” (Bell, 2010: 165). A semi-structured interview is situated in-between: combining the pre-structured list of issues together with the freedom to follow up important points when necessary (Thomas, 2009: 164). Whilst there may be a preset order to follow, the interview would allow for participants’ spontaneous and free responses to complex issues (Cohen et al., 2011: 409). Semi-structured

interviews allow for more flexibility in wording and changing the order of the questions (Merriam, 1998: 74) to probe into the participants' opinions. As semi-structured interviewing would not only enable the participants to respond to important topics of interest, but also allow me the flexibility to explore deep issues, I opted for a semi-structured interview.

The questionnaire was administered first in order to gather their general attitudes and use of authentic materials. The interview was conducted in order to garner more in depth views of authentic materials and the constraints they experienced. One of the limitations of this study was that not all who participated in the questionnaire were interviewed. Questionnaires are useful for collecting background information on all participants and gain a quantifiable data related to their use of authentic materials. By contrast, to acquire a more in-depth knowledge of teachers' perception, interviews were used in order to produce a more extended accounts and views (Creswell, 2009; Cohen et al., 2011). The interview protocol (Appendix 3: The Interview Guide) for the semi-structured interviews evolved and developed around the constructs as follows:

- Perceptions of authentic materials (RQ1)
- Reasons for using authentic materials (RQ1)
- Reasons for not using authentic materials (RQ1)
- Tasks or activities (RQ2 & RQ4)
- Constraints or difficulties in using authentic materials (RQ3 & RQ5)

#### **4.3.2.1 Piloting the Semi-structured Interviews**

The rationale for piloting the semi-structured interview was (i) to check whether

the questions I asked were appropriate to my research questions; (ii) to refine my interview skills; (iii) to build up my confidence in interviewing. Although I had experience in interviewing when I was doing my MSc studies, I did not have experience in interviewing native English-speaking teachers. I think it was essential for me to at least pilot an interview with a native-speaking English teacher. The American teacher, who is an acquaintance of mine, agreed to pilot both my interview and questionnaire. He was teaching English conversation to adults of advanced level, including working professionals, college graduates, or PhD students at various private language institutes in Taipei, Taiwan at the time. The piloting of the interview went smoothly and took more than two hours.

There were several lessons learned from piloting the interview. First, I realised I should take more initiative to keep the interview focused. As I interviewed him, the interviewee was intent on talking about his experience in teaching adult students from a particular class, which did not seem to be pertinent to the subject of the current study. My hesitation to steer the interviewee back to the topic would leave the interview rather unfocused. I should have offered guidance to keep the topic of the interview in focus. Second, the interview was too lengthy. I pressed for more questions after each turn, resulting in exceeding the scheduled time limit. I needed to improve my time management. I needed to develop the skill of an attentive listener and to allow our conversation to flow naturally, rather than pressing from one question to another. Thus, after our discussion, I made amendments to the interview questions to make the interview questions revolve around major themes. The subsequent bilingual interview schedule was developed (see Appendix 3 The Interview Guide).

### **4.3.3 Selecting Participants**

As my research question is concerned with teachers' perceptions about using authentic materials in Taiwanese universities or universities of technology, the selection criteria were based on the teachers' availability, qualification and their teaching experiences. The criteria for identifying my interviewees were their experiences of teaching the English language at tertiary level at universities or universities of technology in Taiwan. In order to get multiple voices and perspectives, the participants were from a range of departments, schools of faculty, colleges, universities of technology, or universities.

All the participants who took part in the interviews were identified through purposive and snowball sampling. The participants were selected because of their expertise and experience (Merriam, 1998: 61). As such, purposeful sampling relies on choosing "information-rich cases" from which we can learn a great deal about topics of interest important to the study (Patton, 1990, cited in Merriam, 1998: 61).

A variant of purposeful sampling is snowball sampling, which is "the most common form of purposeful sampling" (Merriam, 1998: 63). The strategy for snowball sampling is to encourage the participants to refer the researcher to other participants that would fit in the same criteria of selection. Participants that are information-rich or good interview subjects (Merriam, 1998: 63), likening to those who are knowledgeable, possessing "in-depth knowledge about particular issues" in terms of role, expertise, or experience (Cohen et al.,



2011: 157), would be accessed through purposeful sampling. The current study utilized purposeful and snowball sampling with an aim to select individual interviewees who were information-rich in terms of their expertise, experience, and could give multiple views from different perspectives.

The participants in the research were 30 teachers of English language who took part in the questionnaires, and from them, 14 teachers were interviewed. The participants were recruited from three universities and universities of technology; some of them taught at different institutions as part-time teachers. Twenty-seven participants were recruited from my institution; whilst another three (Lily, Fanny, and Respondent 30) were recruited from different institutions. Some were my acquaintances, whilst others were reached through the referral of other participants. The 14 participants who were interviewed either expressed their willingness through the questionnaire or were approached either in person, or through social media *LINE*, and invited to participate in the interview part of this study.

(n=14)

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>sex</b>	<b>Type of institution</b>	<b>years of teaching</b>	<b>NS/ NNS</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Students' level</b>
Shaun	M	Private UT	21-25	NNS	PhD	Beginner/ Pre-intermediate/ Advanced
David	M	Public U, & private UT	11-15	NS	PhD	Pre-intermediate/ Intermediate/ Advanced
Max	M	Private UT	28	NS	MSc	Mixed levels
Joan	F	Public U & Private UT	21-25	NNS	MA	Pre-intermediate/ Intermediate

Jade	F	Private UT	11-15	NNS	MA	Pre-intermediate/ Intermediate
Tanya	F	Private UT	11-15	NNS	MA	Beginner/ Pre-intermediate/ Intermediate
Jenny	F	Private UT	21-25	NNS	MA	Pre-intermediate/ Intermediate
Han	M	Private UT	6-10	NNS	MA	Beginner/ Pre-intermediate
Sue	F	Public U; public & Private UT	11-15	NNS	MA	Beginner/ Pre-intermediate
Sharon	F	Private UT	21-25	NNS	MA	Pre-intermediate/ Intermediate
Lily	F	Private U	35	NS	MA	Mixed level
Jessica	F	Private UT	16-20	NNS	MA	Pre-intermediate/ Intermediate/ Advanced
Austin	M	Private UT	11-15	NS	MA	Mixed levels
Fanny	F	private U; Public & Private UT	16-20	NNS	MA	Intermediate/ Advanced/ Mixed levels

Table 4.1 Demographic Data of Interviewees

U: University; UT: University of Technology

As summarised in Table 4.1: Demographic Data of Interviewees, the interviewees consisted of four native-speaking (NS) teachers, and ten non-native-speaking (NNS) Taiwanese teachers. Five of them were males, whilst the remaining nine were female. The interviewees were all experienced teachers, having taught English for at least six years and upward of 35 years. Two of them held PhDs; the rest of the teachers had Masters' degrees. Their students' English proficiency ranged from beginner to advanced, mostly between beginning to pre-intermediate levels. They had experience of teaching English at a wide array of public and private universities (U), or universities of

technology (UT).

#### **4.4 Data Collection Procedure**

I approached the potential participants and handed them the Participation Information Letter (see Appendix 1). In addition, I briefed them regarding the aims and objectives of the research and assured them of their anonymity. I also clearly stated that they can withdraw from the study at any time. I asked them to sign the consent form (see Appendix 1) before handing in the questionnaire to them. Furthermore, fourteen out of thirty participants were willing to be interviewed. A time and venue for the interview were set up and took place at their convenience. I stopped recruiting after I had finished with the fourteenth interviewee as the information they provided were becoming very similar, giving me a sense of data saturation. The data collection process took place from May until July 2016.

##### **4.4.1 Administering the Questionnaire**

The participants taking part in the questionnaire were given a week to complete the questionnaire. Thirty hard copies of the questionnaire were delivered manually by myself with a return of 30 copies (100% return rate). I approached the individual teachers in their recesses either at the staff room, or on campus, or other premises, such as cafes, or restaurants. They were free to choose whether they would like me to collect the questionnaire or they could drop it into a covered folder attached to the door of my office. When the returned questionnaires were collected, I checked if there were any items which had

been missed or illegible (Robson, 2011: 266).

#### **4.4.2 Conducting Semi-structured Interviews**

The fourteen participants gave me a preferred time and place for the interview. Three interviewees, including David, Sue, and Fanny, chose to be interviewed in cafés; two other interviewees, Jade and Jessica, opted for language laboratories during their break time; and Lily preferred to be interviewed at her church hall. The others chose to be interviewed at either my office or their offices. On our arrival at the agreed time and venue of interviewing, I engaged in some “small talk” with each interviewee to establish a good rapport (Yeo et al., 2014: 187). Before the interview started, I explained what might be covered in our interview, answered any questions the participants raised, and assured them of the voluntary nature of their participation in the study as well as their confidentiality. I then asked for their informed consent and permission to audio-record the interviews. Finally, I reassured them that they are free to withdraw or discontinue their consent at any time before the completion of the study.

The length of the interviews ranged from forty minutes to approximately ninety minutes. The interviews were conducted in either Mandarin Chinese or English: Four native-speaking teachers chose to use English and ten non-native speaking teachers preferred Mandarin Chinese.

The opening questions about factual contextual information, such as the interviewees’ background and teaching experience, were asked to provide a

link to the follow-up questions and not to discontinue the flow of the interview (Yeo *et al.*, 2014: 188). Following the coverage of the background information, I embarked on the interviewing. Interviewing can be regarded as a “conversation with a purpose” (Dexter, 1970: 136). Although an interview protocol surrounding the key themes was utilized, it served as a prompt and allowed changes to make in phrasing the questions during the interviews. I conducted the interviews in a manner of chatting with my participants so that I can probe for more clarification (Merriam, 1998) and respond to any new topics, ideas, or worldviews that emerged from the participants in the conversation (Merriam, 1998; McKay, 2006). The interviewees were the ones that should do most of the talking whilst I was attentively listening, encouraging them to go on talking, and steering them back to the topics, and deciding on what topics to pursue (Yeo *et al.*, 2014: 188). All the interviews were audio-recorded, and then transcribed by me, and the verbatim transcripts were sent to all interviewees for member checking.

#### **4.5 Transcribing the Interview Data**

After interviewing, I listened closely to the recording of the interviews and then transcribed all of the content of the interviews. The verbatim transcripts of the research were emailed to all the participants so that validity can be ensured through member checking. For the transcripts done with my Chinese-speaking participants, I emailed the verbatim transcripts after finishing with checking of the transcription one after another. For the transcripts done with my English-speaking participants, I firstly emailed the verbatim transcript to a British PhD researcher of the Exeter University for proof-reading as I am not a native

English-speaker. After amendments were made, I emailed the English verbatim transcripts to the English-speaking interviewees.

This process of member checking was very important. Although the transcripts were emailed to all the participants, not all the participants responded to my repetitive requests. Even though I contacted them via emails, in person, or through social media *Line*, some of the interviewees were too busy to get back to me. Among fourteen interviewees, I received feedbacks from eight interviewees. The feedback included encouragement with no corrections, such as Jenny, Han, and Sharon. Corrective feedbacks received from other interviewees ranged from modification over some typos, identification with unclear or inaudible words, to removal of or amendment to segments of their transcripts. For instance, Shaun met me in person requesting to remove and alter certain wording that was sensitive to him. David asked me to spell out the name of his institute in American English, rather than British English, in line with the original name. In terms of indiscernible words in the recording, David and Max agreed to transcribe some of the words that were unclear to us in the recording as 'inaudible' with a bracket surrounding them. Jade personally deleted segments of her verbatim transcripts to make them more refined and emailed them back to me. Lily added more comments or examples in her email to me to illustrate or explain what she meant during the time when she was interviewed. After the member checking by my participants, the final copies of the transcripts were used as the data for analysis.

#### **4.6 Data Analysis**

The data analysis in my research was mostly inductive and evolved bottom-up approach from the data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2013). Yet, I acknowledge that top-down deductive approach might be at play to a certain extent, influenced by the literature I read, by my research questions, or by my previous teaching experience and background. Creswell (2007: 42) argues that “methodological congruence” to consider for a qualitative research in which the researcher needs to bring all the parts into a coherent whole rather than fragmented segments including purposes, questions, methods, worldview, and a theoretical lens (Creswell, 2007: 42).

There were two sets of data in my research. The interview data were transcribed into verbatim transcripts, which were approached qualitatively. The questionnaires consisted of end-closed numerical responses and open-ended responses. The numerical items were approached quantitatively, whilst the open-ended responses were approached qualitatively. The qualitative data were analysed with thematic analysis.

#### **4.6.1 Analysis of Questionnaires**

There were two sets of data from the 30 questionnaires; namely, quantitative and qualitative data. After the collection of the questionnaires, all the quantitative data were first fed into SPSS (IBM SPSS Version 24) tables for analysis. The purpose of using a questionnaire was not intended to test the hypothesis or to see if there is a correlation between dependent or independent variables. Hence, only descriptive statistics, rather than inferential statistics,

were used to give an overview of the overall responses of the participants.

The questionnaires were designed to measure attitudes; namely, teachers' views on the use of authentic materials (Q12 to Q23), reasons for choosing authentic materials (Q25 to Q33), making use of authentic materials with tasks (Q35 to Q41), and adaptation of authentic materials (Q43 to Q51). In addition to measuring the teachers' attitudes, the questionnaires were used to derive the key issues out of which the interview questions were developed (Sheu, 2008: 47-8). The use of questionnaires served as a point of reference so that topics of interest could be derived for the follow-up interviews. Thus, open questions were arranged in the questionnaire in order to derive free responses which were dealt with thematic analysis. A few examples are shown below.

<b>Extract</b>	<b>Codes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>Themes</b>
1 "Time constraints and suitability of materials would hinder my selection/use." (Respondent #3)	Time constraints suitability of materials	<b>Curricular limitations</b>	<b>Contextual factors</b>
"Teaching has occupied most of time. Thus, no extra time uses authentic materials." (Respondent #6)	Time constraints		
"Unified curriculum has set the boundary and narrow the incentives of exploitation of authentic materials in the classroom teaching." (Respondent #17)	the unified syllabi & curricula		
"Students might feel it redundant and unnecessary and see it as an extra work." (Respondent #17)	extra workloads for students	<b>Related to students</b>	

Table 4.2 Codes, Categories, and Themes



#### **4.6.2 Data Analysis of the Interviews**

There are mostly two approaches to data analysis: namely, data-driven and theory or concept-driven (Flick, 2007). Data-driven approach is to approach the data inductively, while theory or concept-driven approach is to approach the data deductively, from the concept of existing theories to impose the theories to the data. Nevertheless, the two major approaches are not mutually exclusive. Many researchers are mostly situated in-between; that is to approach the data inductively and deductively (Flick, 2007). This was the case for the qualitative data from this study.

The analysis of the interview data was conducted largely inductively, from a bottom-up approach although I acknowledge that deductive thinking, such as that informed by the literature, played a part in the process of analysis. I began my data analysis process, working iteratively and recursively between the data and the emerging themes, and then returned to the themes of the data deductively to determine whether extra evidence was needed to support the themes (Creswell, 2014).

I tried to focus on what the data themselves suggested to me through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis would usually involve “discovering, interpreting, and reporting patterns and clusters of meaning within the data” to identify the topics that would be incorporated into higher-order themes (Spencer *et al.*, 2014: 271). Thematic analysis can be used deductively or inductively to capture either the surface or the latent meanings in the data, and can also be utilised to

describe, summarize, and interpret the data (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 88). Thematic analysis is systematically building from “data familiarization through to coding and theme development” (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 84).

Stage	Process	Product
1: data familiarisation	Listening to recorded interviews Reading transcripts Jotting down the initial reflection	Initial reflective notes (Appendix 4 Initial Reflective Notes)
2: coding	Started with coding, assigning segments of data with a code.  Highlighted codes in various colour bands	Initial coding (Appendix 5 Initial Coding from Transcript)
3: creating categories	The codes with the same inherent properties were clustered together and tagged with the segment of the data to a category.  Merging some of the codes with other codes; others were discarded due to being redundant, refined, or re-labelled  The codes and categories were grouped separately into each interviewee’s dataset	Grouping of codes into categories (Appendix 6 Grouping of Codes into Categories).
4: grouping of categories into themes	All the codes and categories were fed into EXCEL spreadsheet to look for patterns to develop themes	Grouping of coding into themes

	Codes were then clustered into categories, which were then refined or evolved into potential themes	
5: initial themes	Codes were subsumed under initial categories	The procedure from Stage 1 to Stage 5 was reiterative.
6: overarching themes	Some of the categories were aggregated or subsumed into other themes; others were directly promoted to themes; still others were discarded due to being unable to account for addressing to my research questions.	

Table 4.3 Stages of Analysis

Based on Clarke & Braun (2015), I modified Table 4.3 (Stages of Analysis), which shows what I did with data analysis. First, I started with data familiarization to prepare me to engage analytically with the data. The initial process of data familiarization refers to familiarizing oneself with the data through repetitive reading and making notes (Clarke & Braun, 2015). Following Tesch’s tips in the coding process (cited in Creswell, 2014), I started with choosing an interview transcript which was very interesting to me. I went through the interview data by listening repetitively to the recording of the interviews, and then by reading the verbatim transcripts, immersing myself fully in the data to familiarize myself with and get a feel of the data (Spencer, *et al.*, 2014). I highlighted important parts and noted the recurring ideas or subjects (Thomas, 2009: 199), jotting down the initial reflection and the quotes that resonated with me (See Appendix 4: Initial Reflective Notes). The initial reflective notes, consisting of long chunks of words, phrases, or even sentences, were the “temporary constructs” (Thomas, 2009: 199). Then I clustered

together the initial reflection notes under separate topics based on my research questions.

### **Analysis of the Interview Data**

Then, I started with coding (Appendix 5: Initial Coding from Transcript), assigning segments of data with a code (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 91). Codes were understood as “word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldaña, 2016: 4). Depending on what they are aimed to capture, codes can vary from being descriptive to more latent or interpretative (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 90).

Coding involves in “disassembling and reassembling the data” (Cohen *et al.*, 2011: 599): these data are broken down into fragments, segments, lines, or paragraphs through coding, and then are rearranged to yield a new understanding in exploring “similarities and differences, across a number of different cases” (Cohen *et al.*, 2011: 599). Coding is not only for data reduction in terms of summarizing the semantic or surface meanings in the data, but also for capturing the researcher’s interpretations of the data addressing to the research questions (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 90).

Thus, I started with open coding by giving descriptions or meanings to capture the essence of the key words, the chunks or segments of phrases or sentences that were important to me. Open coding refers to a way of coding through

constantly reflective reading of the text by making comparisons and interrogating to identify relevant categories (Gibbs, 2007: 50). I labelled the relevant segments of the text with codes and highlighted the codes in various colour bands, each indicating separate features or properties to which the codes belong. I iteratively read the transcripts line by line, and jotted down any ideas, next to the transcript column, which would be illuminating to me. I was open-minded, allowing the coding to emerge or the text to suggest themselves to me. I kept reviewing, re-coding or re-labelling the raw data iteratively until I had finished with coding all the transcripts of the interviewee, one after another.

At the first cycle of coding stage, there were two types of codes, namely, “encoding” or “decoding” (Saldaña, 2016: 5). “Decoding” refers to reflecting on a passage of data to “decipher” or demystify its core meaning whilst “encoding” refers to deciding on “its appropriate code and label it” (Saldaña, 2016: 5). During this phase of data analysis, I also employed the method of constant comparison (Thomas, 2009; Cohen *et al.*, 2011) to compare the new data with the existing ones so as to determine whether there was a good fit with the data until all the data can be accounted for (Cohen *et al.*, 2011: 600).

Next, the codes with the same inherent properties were clustered together and tagged with the segment of the data to a category. Even during this stage, I re-coded or re-labelled the codes and categories. Some of the codes were merged with other codes; others were subsumed under a different coding; still others were discarded due to being redundant, refined, or re-labelled. The codes and categories derived from individual interviewee’s transcripts were grouped

separately into each interviewee's dataset (Appendix 6: Grouping of Codes into Categories).

Then, to make analysis easier, all of the codes and categories were entered into EXCEL spreadsheets to look for patterns to develop themes. I then started to search for, identify, or develop themes, which involved compiling segments of data associated with each code (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 92).

While codes were the "building blocks" for themes (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 93), a theme refers to a "general patterning of meaning" (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 93) or recurring issues, concepts, or ideas derived from either prior theories or the participants' lived experience that emerged from data analysis (Gibbs, 2007: 152). Initially, the codes pertinent to the specific issue were clustered together (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 93-94). As codes were integrated into themes, they were provisional in the sense that they may be developed or discarded as the analysis progressed (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 93). Some of the codes that may be thick or rich were promoted into a theme (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 93): the key to developing a theme lies in identifying certain repeated ideas, or patterns in the codes. Other codes were then clustered into categories, which were then refined or evolved into potential themes.

When reviewing the potential main themes, I considered their relevance to the research questions in terms of whether these themes were capable of fully accounting for answering the research questions (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 93).

In the phase of reviewing themes, I revisited the data, involving abandoning, preserving, refining, integrating, or splitting a theme into sub-themes or more themes, depending on whether these themes were a good fit with the data and how well they addressed the research questions (Clarke & Braun, 2015: 94).

Finally, the temporary constructs out of initial reflection and free-response questionnaire data were used to check against the themes derived from the interview transcripts (Thomas, 2009: 199) and the research questions. This was to decide whether there was a good fit (Thomas, 2009) and can give full justification for answering the research questions.

In the second stage of data analysis, codes were subsumed under initial categories or sub-themes. After the initial categories were clustered under specific topics, I started to reorganize, assign, or cluster together the initial categories featuring similar patterns, into themes. Some of the categories were aggregated or subsumed into other themes; others were directly promoted to themes; still others were discarded due to being unable to account for any relevance to my research questions. The process of focusing on some of the data and discarding other insignificant data is to “winnow” the data (Creswell, 2014: 195). The potential themes that were beginning to develop and emerge were provisional. This process was reiterative until all the codes, sub-themes, and themes were developed.

#### **4.7 Ethical Considerations**

First of all, an informed consent form (refer to ethics documentation in Appendix 1) was signed off and obtained from individual participants before they agreed to participate in my study. Informed consent specifying anonymity and confidentiality as well as their voluntary involvement in my study were obtained in writing and orally. My participants were informed that they would have the free will to withdraw from the study at any time and that no potential harm would be inflicted upon them whatsoever. Secondly, I informed them verbally and in writing that I will do my best to assure their confidentiality and anonymity of their identities. Therefore, their identities were treated anonymously and labelled with pseudonyms or code numbers, and safeguarded with passcode in my laptop throughout my study.

The study also set out to gain an in-depth understanding of teachers' account of what authentic materials and tasks might be deemed appropriate from either an insider's or an outsider's point of view. As a teacher of English and a doctoral student studying in the UK, I positioned myself as both an insider and an outsider whilst conducting the study as I interviewed some of my colleagues working at the same institute and also other participating teachers working at other institutes. I understood that the nature of any research might intervene or disturb the natural setting to a certain extent as the researcher is part of the world that she is observing. A need to respect the participating teachers and minimize the disturbance to their settings has been my priority. Therefore, I encourage them to reflect on their teaching through interviewing them rather than observing their teaching practice. Although Creswell (2009: 179) suggested the full, partial, or non-participation role of the researcher in



conducting class observation, I had no intention of disturbing my participating teachers through this form of collecting data.

Lastly, to minimize the disturbance to the teaching contexts, I approached my participants at the latter part of the semester when the teachers had finished with marking the midterm papers and were less busy. I explained to them the purpose, the aims and objectives of the study, and why the questionnaires and interviews would be conducted and thank them for taking part in this research (McKay, 2006: 55). As for approaching participating teachers from other institutes, the same cautions were taken. I would tell them that through reflecting on their teaching practice and perceptions, we were co-constructing the perceptions beneficial to our teaching. Although I had interview guides, I was open-minded to free responses and kept an eye on the dynamics of the interview to hear the multiple voices.

To minimize potential bias either on the part of my colleagues or myself, I decided to reduce the number of participants from my department and in the previous sections I had reported any assumptions or presumptions related to my past teaching experience.

Given the topic that I chose may enable my participating teachers to comment on other teachers or reflect on their teaching contexts, I did my best to safeguard the ethical issues. The ethical considerations taken for my study were as follows. I sought their informed consent both verbally and in writing

prior to their agreeing to take part in my study. I approached the potential participants, briefing the aims, objectives and the purpose of my study, and then invited them to take part in the questionnaire, together with Participation Information Sheet. If they showed interest in the follow-up interviews, further arrangement was made, depending on their availability and convenience. Initially I emailed the potential participants the Consent Form and Participation Information Sheet to brief them about their rights to voluntary participation, anonymity, and their free will to withdraw from the study without incurring any harm to them. On the day of our interview, I handed them the hard-copies of the Participation Information Letter and the Consent Form to obtain their informed consents both verbally and in writing before the implementation of any enquiry, to participate in my study.

In terms of the transcribed data derived from the interviews, I sent the verbatim transcripts to all the interviewees for them to refine, amend, remove, or withdraw any sections of the transcribed data or any statement that they made previously. The participants were also informed of their freedom to withdraw from my interviews without any harm being incurred to them because I would like to ensure that their participation is voluntary. They had the rights to decide when and where it would be convenient for them to be interviewed.

## **4.8 Research Criteria**

### **4.8.1 Criteria for Questionnaire Reliability**

One of the concerns underlying reliability is the internal consistency, which

refers to the degree to which the items of the questionnaire are grouped under the same construct (Pallant, 2016: 101). In order to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire, I checked SPSS reliability test. The reliability assessed is internal consistency, which is “the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute (i.e. the extent to which the items ‘hang together’)” (Pallant, 2016: 6). The most commonly used statistics for measuring internal consistency is Cronbach’s coefficient Alpha (Pallant, 2016). The results for each section are shown below.

In the scale items of teachers’ views on the use of authentic materials in Part B, the Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient is .947, above the minimum level of .7 Cronbach’s Alpha value, which suggests very good internal consistency reliability (Pallant, 2016). (See Appendix 7 Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient for Reliability: Teachers’ Views on the Use of Authentic Materials). In the scale items of teachers’ view with reasons for choosing authentic materials (Part C), there is good internal consistency reliability for the scale with this sample, with a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient reported of .887, higher than .7, which is deemed reliable (Pallant, 2010). In the scale items of teachers’ view with exploiting authentic material (Part D), the scale has good internal consistency, with a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient reported of .790, higher than .7, which is deemed acceptable (Pallant, 2010). Finally, in the scale items of teachers’ view with adapting authentic material (Part E), the scale has good internal consistency, with a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient reported of .843, higher than .7, which is deemed reliable (Pallant, 2010).

#### **4.8.2 Criteria for Interpretive Research**

The trustworthiness of interpretive research may be addressed through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; 1986; Shenton, 2004). Credibility can be likened to internal validity (Bryman, 2016: 44). Credibility can be achieved through member-checks, peer debriefing, triangulation, prolonged engagement, and thick description (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; 1986).

To assure credibility, as previously described, member checking was used in which the verbatim transcriptions were emailed and verified by the participants. The emphasis of member checking lies on whether the interviewees consider what they said matches what they intended (Shenton, 2004).

Another approach is to involve peers in the form of graduate students or faculty to examine the data (Creswell & Clark, 2011: 212). For peer debriefing, a Taiwanese PhD researcher and a Taiwanese associate professor were invited to check for the design of the questionnaire. The Taiwanese PhD researcher was involved in checking the subsequent data analysis and the findings, as explained above.

Triangulation involves using multiple theoretical and methodological approaches in studying the same phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018: 318). For triangulation, I interviewed 14 individual teachers. This is a way of triangulation which is achieved through data source (Shenton, 2004: 66). This means a range of informants supply their viewpoints which is then corroborated

and verified against others to construct a rich picture of the topic under scrutiny (ibid.). It can be used to suppress the weakness of subjectivity by using multiple viewpoints from different perspectives from various participants (Ernest, 1994: 24).

Thick descriptions of qualitative data made the interpretations in line with the literature, and thus credibility was achieved (Shenton, 2004: 64). In a similar vein for thick description, I provided ample descriptions of my participants, methods, procedures, and other contextual information. The analysed data was corroborated using the participants' direct quotes from the interview data and findings from the literature so as to ensure trustworthiness of the study through thick description.

Transferability is likened to external validity or generalizability (Shenton, 2004: 64). Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be generalized across other settings (Bryman, 2016: 384). To assure transferability, the use of a thick description is required. While generalizability is not a criterion of interpretive research, thick description of contextual information allows readers to decide whether a comparison can be made with other settings (Shenton, 2004). A thick description of the phenomenon allows other readers to have a full understanding of it and allow them to compare the "instances of the phenomenon described in the research report with those that they have seen emerge in their situations" (Shenton, 2004: 70). It is important to highlight the boundary of the study by conveying to the reader about the delineation of the organization, participants involved in the study, the length and the number of

the data collection methods used, and how long the data was collected (Shenton, 2004: 70). Thus, I have provided rich description of contextual information for my study.

Dependability can also be likened to reliability (Bryman, 2016). Unlike positivist research, interpretive research needs to take into account the specific contextual factors. Replicability is not aimed for in interpretive research. However, dependability, or reliability can be addressed through reporting the process in research in great detail to enable other researchers to repeat the study and to gain the same results (Shenton, 2004: 71). This includes reporting the research design and its implementation, detailing data gathering, and appraisal of the project in retrospect (Shenton, 2004: 71-72). In order to address the dependability issue more directly, the processes within the study should be reported in detail, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, though not necessarily to gain the same results (Shenton, 2004).

Confirmability can be likened to objectivity (Bryman, 2016). Triangulation reduces the investigator bias. Critical to this is the audit trail. To ensure confirmability, the researchers need to “take steps to demonstrate that findings emerged from the data and not their own predisposition” (Shenton, 2004: 63).

#### **4.9 The Researcher’s Role**

Identifying the researcher’s role, biases, values, and personal background is of importance as qualitative research is usually involved in prolonged and “intensive experiences with the participants” (Creswell, 2014: 187). Using

multiple viewpoints from different perspectives from various participants on the same object of study as triangulation can be used to suppress the weakness of subjectivity (Ernest, 1994: 24). The reflexivity of the researcher is required to make explicit the biases, values, and experiences being brought to the study (Creswell, 2007: 243). Instead of being “value-free,” interpretive researchers are value-laden; hence, they should acknowledge the assumptions and preconceptions the researchers bring to the research (Grix, 2004: 84) through reflexivity and making their presumptions explicit to the readers. The researcher acknowledges and reports the biases so that the interpretations of the data collected from natural settings would represent those of the researched and their own (Creswell, 2007). The researchers are engaged in becoming an integral part of the phenomena under study (McKay, 2006: 7). In other words, the researcher’s positioning in the study is explicitly voiced out in the text alongside with the interpretations (Creswell, 2007). Attempts are made to minimize the distance, such as power relations, between the researcher and the researched (Creswell, 2007).

As the study context is mainly based on the institute where I had taught for approximately two decades, I considered myself as both an insider and outsider. I am a colleague to some of my participants. I am familiar with the academic context and cultures of the Taiwanese universities of technology where the participants worked, and my assumption was that to a certain extent I shared an understanding with some of the teacher participants. Nevertheless, my experience of being a researcher away from my homeland to embark on a different journey, while studying the EdD in Exeter, had equipped me with a mindset as an outsider, to come to a somewhat different understanding of the

academic institute and the accounts made by my teacher participants.

There are definite advantages to the insider aspects of the researcher role. Having familiarity of the roles of the EFL teachers provided me with certain accessibility to some of teachers of English that may be inaccessible to the outsiders. It seemed to me that I had a shared understanding of their individual accounts of whether they use authentic materials as the potential pedagogical approach to their teaching EFL classes.

In terms of the topic of the study, I must acknowledge my assumption that the appropriate use of authentic materials can be motivating to all language learners and may thus contribute to their language development or communicative competence, as long as it is presented properly by the language teachers. I also believe that the approach of using authentic materials and tasks would be ideally more in line with a communicative ethos in the language classrooms.

I will report my findings, evidenced by direct quotes and then discussed with reference to the existing literature in the next chapter.



## **Chapter Five: Results**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the main findings derived from the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data to address the research questions. Following the section of the background information of my participants (5.1), the findings using both data sets are structured and reported according to the main themes under each research question. Section 5.2 presents teachers' views towards the use of authentic materials; Section 5.3 looks at teachers' exploitation of authentic materials and tasks; Section 5.4 examines the teachers' view on the appropriateness of associated tasks or activities based on authentic materials; Section 5.5 presents findings related to issues associated with using authentic materials in terms of pedagogical considerations or teaching practices; and finally, Section 5.6 renders the limitations on the use of authentic materials and tasks.

The two data sets are used together when appropriate to show the findings in each section. Quantitative data from the questionnaires may be shown in tables or just stated in the text. Extracts from interviews are used to support the thematic analysis. Where the original interview was in Chinese, all translations were done by me and checked by the participants. Only the quotes reported were translated.

### **5.1 Background Information**

This section provides some relevant information about the participants in the

study: 30 teachers took part in the questionnaire, and 14 of those took part in the interviews. For the questionnaire participants, two thirds (twenty) were female; five had English as their first language and the majority, twenty-five, were speakers of Mandarin Chinese.

All of the participants were qualified and experienced teachers, with teaching experience at technological universities or universities in Taiwan for more than six years, as shown in table 5.1.

<b>questionnaire respondents: years of teaching</b>		
years of teaching	n	percent
6-10	4	13.3
11-15	9	30
16-20	5	16.7
21-25	6	20.0
Over 25 years	6	20.0
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.1 Years of Teaching Experience

The 14 teachers who took part in the interviews were five male and nine female teachers; four native speakers, and ten non-native speakers (See Table 4.1 in Chapter 4: Demographic Data of Interviewees). Two of them held PhDs, the rest of the teachers had Master's Degrees. Their teaching experience ranged from six years to 35 years. Their students' English proficiency ranged from beginner to advanced, mostly between beginner to pre-intermediate levels.

### 5.1.1 Extent of Textbook Use

The overwhelming majority of the participants reported that they taught with textbooks (28; 93%); with only two teachers (Respondent 5; Respondent 21; 7%) responding that it is situation-dependent.

When asked further about textbook use, twenty-five teachers (83%) reported that it is compulsory for them to adopt the unified textbook materials from their college. Three teachers (10%) reported that they were not required to do so, and the remaining two participants (7%) noted on the questionnaire that it depended on the situations.

Thus, given the fact that more than 80% of the participating teachers were required to use mandatory textbooks as the major teaching materials, the use of authentic materials was rendered as supplementary, rather than major, teaching materials for the participant teachers. This was an expected condition.

### **5.1.2 Unified Curricula**

More than three-quarters of the teachers (23; 77%) reported that they were required to abide by a unified curriculum developed from the mandatory textbooks. Only five teachers (17%) reported that they need not follow the unified curricula. Two other teachers (7%) responded that it was not applicable.

In the open questions on the questionnaire, one teacher added that she was required to follow a unified curriculum only when teaching the non-English major students.

### 5.1.3 Unified Major School Examinations

In many technological universities in Taiwan, it is a common practice for the authorities at the school or department, or the cohort of the teachers involved to design the test questions based on the shared unified curricula from which major school examinations were developed. Most of the teachers (24; 80%) indicated that the major school examinations would have the test questions developed from the unified curricula (See Table 5.2). Another three teachers (10%) noted down that it depended on the specific contexts as they were teaching at various universities.

Major tests based on the unified curricula		
Tests based on fixed curricula	n	percent
Yes	24	80.0
No	3	10.0
It depends	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.2 Major Tests based on Unified Curricula

### 5.1.4 Extent of Use of Authentic Materials

Participants were asked in the questionnaire two questions about the use of authentic materials -- how much they were used, and how they were treated.

How much authentic materials were in use		
Frequency	n	percent
Sometimes	15	50.0
Almost always	9	30.0
Seldom	5	17.0

It depends	1	3.0
Total	30	100

Table 5.3 How Much Authentic Materials in Use

When asked how much authentic materials were in use (Table 5.3), half of the teachers responded that they would *sometimes* (15; 50%) use authentic materials in teaching; whereas almost one-third indicated that they would *almost always* (9; 30%) use authentic materials, and five reported that they would *seldom* (5; 17%) use them in class. Hence, most teachers would employ authentic materials at times. One respondent (Respondent 3) noted in the open question that it would depend on the courses. If he was the only teacher who taught a module, he would *almost always* use authentic materials as major teaching materials since he was not required to follow the unified curricula based on the unified textbook materials. Otherwise, he would use authentic materials only when he has finished covering all the materials from the textbook.

The participants who chose '*Almost always*' were also asked how they treated authentic materials; the majority (8 teachers) responded that they would regard authentic materials as *supplementary* materials to complement their course books. Only one teacher (Respondent 14) noted in the questionnaire that she would use it as *major* teaching materials.

In summary, the data revealed that 50% of the participating teachers would sometimes use authentic materials. This is mostly due to the contextual factors of the requirement of their workplace. The mandatory course books in use, the

shared unified curricula to follow, and the imposed unified major school examinations would all constitute the contextual factors, which most likely have implications related to the use of authentic materials in their teaching.

The following sections (5.2-5.6) present the findings according to the research questions. The purpose of using questionnaires (n=30) was to find the overall perceptions of teachers, whereas the purpose of interviewing (n=14) was to explore the in-depth thoughts of my participants. The findings are presented primarily with themes emerging from the interview data, given that this study is qualitative in nature, and they will be compared with questionnaire data which are under similar themes and codes. Questionnaire participants who did not participate in the interviews are addressed as respondent 1, 2 and so on. Otherwise, pseudonyms were adopted.

## **5.2 Teachers' Views towards the Use of Authentic Materials**

This section addresses the first research question regarding teachers' views on the use of authentic materials for their teaching. Six main themes emerged: enhancing motivation, enhancing engagement, linking to the real-world language use, exposure to rich input, developing cultural learning and awareness, and promoting language skills, as summarized below and presented in this section.

### **5.2.1 Enhancing Motivation**

The first theme derived from the data on teachers' views shows that the concept

of motivation was important to the participants. Seven out of the fourteen interviewees perceived that authentic materials play a prominent role in enhancing students' motivation. The coding is summarized in the following table, citing only a few examples.

<b>themes</b>	<b>sub-themes</b>	<b>examples</b>
Enhancing motivation	motivating	to increase motivation (Shaun) more motivating (Max) to motivate students to learn English through films (Sharon) to trigger learning... motivation (Han) to motivate students (Jessica) motivating (Tanya) to motivate students to learn English through songs (Sue)
	Trigger interest	to motivate students' interest to learn... (Tanya) high interest, high relevance..(Lily) increase students' interest (Jessica)
	Introducing novelty	...surprising to teach them (Shaun) authentic materials would look more refreshing (Tanya)
	Increase external motivation	to motivate students to learn English for the job advancement (Sharon)

Table 5.4 Theme 1: Enhancing Motivation

Four sub-themes emerged from codes regarding enhancing motivation: namely, motivating, triggering interest, introducing novelty and increasing external motivation. The participant teachers thought that authentic materials as

supplementary materials would render the lesson more interesting to motivate their learners. For example, Shaun would use authentic materials to motivate his students at the time when they are disinterested in the content of the textbook materials, as he commented: "... It would be surprising to teach them with [authentic materials] at times" (Shaun). Some teachers further remarked on the kind of authentic materials they would use to motivate their students; for example, Han would use film clips as incentives to motivate the learners. Tanya believed that "authentic materials would look more refreshing," so she would choose some controversial issues, or highly entertaining materials to arouse students' interest. Other teachers were also aware that authentic materials should be relevant and at the right level to the students as well so that "they can do GREAT" (Lily). Max and Sue highlighted that authentic materials should cater to the learners' immediate needs so as to interest them, as Max explains:

I feel that using authentic materials you introduce them to real language, ..., uh, students see it as relevant, real, and immediate and more motivating to use, than, ... textbooks in many cases. (Max)

Only one teacher, Sharon, suggested that the use of authentic materials can motivate her students to learn in order to enhance their employability. This is similar to increase external motivation. She pointed out some films, such as *Internship*: "It's like catalyst— to make them feel... that they can work better and might as well go to work in such big enterprises as Google, or ... can climb up [the career ladder] higher".

The open responses of the questionnaires confirmed the findings from the interview data. Two teachers noted down that authentic materials increased



motivation:

- Authentic materials can ‘motivate interest in learning English’ (R8).
- Authentic material can help to convince the students that’s the way how native [speakers] use the language (R14).

Findings from the closed-ended questionnaires data also confirmed those from the interview data, as shown in Table 5.5.

Item	<i>Teacher views on the use of authentic material</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<b>M</b>
12	I think authentic materials can motivate learners to learn English	1	0	2 7%	13	14	4.30
		1/ 3%			27/90%		
Item	<i>Reasons for choosing authentic materials</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<b>M</b>
25	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are entertaining to my students	0	5	3 10%	16	6	3.77
		5 /17%			22/ 73%		
30	I choose authentic materials based on whether they can motivate my students	0	1	4 13%	11	14	4.27
		1 /3%			25/ 83%		

Table 5.5 Questionnaire Items on Increasing Motivation

The data derived from the interviews are highly consistent with those from the questionnaire. Twenty-seven out of the 30 teachers (90%) were positive about the enhanced motivation potential of authentic materials. Only one participant (Respondent 22) disagreed strongly (and also in Item 30 showed his disagreement). Twenty-two (73%) used ‘entertaining’ as a criterion for choosing the materials, with a slightly higher percentage (83%) choosing them based on

their motivating potential. Respondent 22 consistently showed his disagreement in the remainder of the questionnaire.

In summary, on the theme of enhancing motivation of the learners, the findings from the data concluded that most of the teachers were positive that they would opt for using authentic materials that are motivating, and thus creating an optimal environment facilitative to language learning.

### 5.2.2 Enhancing Engagement

The second theme that surfaced was enhancing engagement. When it comes to engaging learners, six interviewed teachers were positive about the engaging role that authentic materials play in class. The coding is summarized in Table 5.6.

themes	sub-themes	examples
engagement	Willingness to learn	more willing to learn (Sue) to create learning atmosphere. (Jessica)
	Increasing engagement	they [AM] can...and then make them engaged (Sue)
	Increasing involvement	play some English-speaking film clips to involve them (Jade) attached to students (Sharon) drawn to delve in it (Tanya)

Table 5.6 Theme 2: Enhancing Engagement

Shaun would complement his coursebook teaching with authentic materials at the time when the textbook materials perceived as dull failed to engage them:

Authentic materials can be used to complement the textbook materials from time to time when the students are fed up with textbooks which appear to them as nothing new. (Shaun)

Authentic materials can be multi-media and are more appealing to students, involving students in a multi-sensory learning experience. Video clips were picked out as a way to engage their students by Sue, Jade, and Sharon:

...or we'd say that they can arouse interest,...and then make them engaged; sometimes they enjoy the sight and sound stuff. (Sue)

.... So, I would play some English-speaking film clips to involve them in multi-sensory experiences, to make them feel refreshed.... (Jade)

...interesting, vibrant, lively, and attached to students. ...When you see the films, the motion pictures and the sound effects would be ushered in altogether to have the dual effects [on the audience]. (Sharon)

Authentic materials as the teaching points were used as the inspirational source to engage students. Tanya mentioned that authentic materials with controversial issues would sustain her students' interests and thus engage them in exploring the subject matters:

.... So, I would choose more controversial issues, which would be more appealing to them.... and if they take interest, they would be more likely drawn to delve in it.... (Tanya)

Authentic materials were employed to sustain students' interest, activate their background knowledge, and engage learners in meaningful discussion as Jessica claimed below:

.... With authentic materials they can give rise to even more creative questions or ideas, for instance; and to create learning atmosphere. (Jessica)

The findings from the questionnaires echoed those from the interview data. Nearly 73% of the participating teachers were positive about using authentic materials to engage the learners (item 13), while 80% of the participating teachers were positive about using authentic materials to stimulate meaningful discussion (item 32). Authentic materials serve as the basis to involve learners in meaningful communication and thus engage the learners in class.

One participant's response to the open question in item 24 ('other views about the benefits of authentic materials') made an interesting point about linking interest and relevance to engagement:

Authentic materials might stimulate learners' interest and make them feel more of relevance to their life experience but we can't conclude it will definitely ensure their engaging in the class nor to fortify their motivation of learning English (Respondent 17; item 24).

Thus, the finding from the data showed conclusively that most teachers were positive that authentic materials enhanced engagement for their learners.

### **5.2.3 Linking to the Real-world Language Use**

The third theme on the teachers' views of authentic materials is the connection

that authentic materials can give students to real-world language use.

themes	Sub-themes	examples
<p><b>Real-world language use</b></p> <p>9 teachers</p>	<p>Closer to real world</p> <p>the real stuff</p> <p>real language</p>	<p>get even closer to the world (Shaun)</p> <p>to learn the real-life experience (Austin)</p> <p>to relate to the real world through using realia or examples of real things (David)</p> <p>authentic material linking to the real-world (Sharon)</p> <p>as an extension to textbooks to link to the real world outside of the classroom (Jessica)</p> <p>to relate students to the real-world experience (Han)</p> <p>help students relate to the real-world experience (Jenny)</p> <p>'something real' (Jessica)</p> <p>they are the real stuff (Sharon)</p> <p>will bring that subject to life. (Austin)</p> <p>they're realia that students can refer to (David)</p> <p>it is real... not fake (Max)</p> <p>corresponding to authenticity.... (Tanya)</p> <p>even Taylor Swift's songs had the same vocabulary (Han)</p> <p>taking on board the current idioms and usages (Shaun)</p> <p>learning to use real language (Austin)</p> <p>featuring real language (Max)</p> <p>something real, handy (Jessica)</p> <p>to learn authentic English (Jenny)</p> <p>to expose students to how TL used in the real world. (Tanya)</p>

Table 5.7 Theme 3: Real-world Language Use

Nine teachers shared a similar view that authentic materials would help

students relate their learning to the language as used in the real-world contexts, reduce students' sense of foreignness, and bridge the gap between the real and abridged textbook language.

Seven teachers identified the function of linking the students closer to the real world, as Shaun indicated below:

They would get even closer to the world, rather than using the pre-arranged textbook materials; and they can keep abreast of what's happening around them or take onboard some of the idioms or usages through accessing to authentic materials (Shaun)

Shaun also pointed out that incorporating authentic materials into his lesson can allow his students to 'jump out of the existing frames bound by the textbook content' and to enable them to expand their worldview through tapping into topical issues.

Similarly, the open question of the questionnaires confirmed the finding from the interview data. One teacher attributed the use of authentic materials to the real language use (item 34): to "lead the students into real English world ..."  
(Respondent 20).

Other sub-themes are related to the real content of authentic materials and the real language use. A number of participants mentioned specific examples of real language-use situations and kinds of media in the real world that students could benefit from, and commented on their raised awareness of what language actually does. This is supported by Jessica's illustration of how her students exclaimed, saying "This is something real for sure" when they viewed the video

of a speech delivered by Hillary Clinton in the American Congress, and then commented that they felt that they were learning the real language. Meanwhile, Han described the language that students were learning is also real:

So, when they listen to pop songs, they would realize that it is for real and that they would be surprised to find out even Taylor Swift's songs had the same vocabulary items that we were about to learn. (Han)

Austin and Sharon used videos and news extracts to allow students to relate their learning to the real world:

.... But actually, watching the news and hearing real names combined with the terminology or ..., watching, say, a YouTube video or ... bringing in newspaper extracts to explain in more detail about the subject will bring that subject to life. (Austin)

Also, realia or examples of real things can be used to relate the lesson taught to the real world, "to see a real-world example of what the teacher is covering in the classroom." (David)

With their characteristics of real and natural discourse, authentic materials would sensitize the students' awareness of what real language is like and how it is used, as Tanya said:

... I think the authentic materials would be much more corresponding to authenticity, and students would take more interest in them. ... students would feel that the language used in the real world is sloppier and more disorganized than that in the textbooks. .... It is more refreshing to read the authentic materials. (Tanya)

The findings from the questionnaires also confirmed that of the interview data. Twenty-seven of the participating teachers (90%) were affirmative that authentic materials can prepare learners to encounter authentic language as

used in the real world (item 14) (Appendix 8).

#### 5.2.4 Exposure to Rich Input

Regarding the fourth theme, nine teachers reported that students might be exposed to enriched input of authentic materials either in large quantities or in diversity, as tabulated below (Table 5.8).

themes	Sub-themes	examples
Enriched input	in large quantities	more input of authentic materials (Lily) increasing more input (Han) using authentic material to maximize the students' input (Fanny) to give more input and stimulus with using authentic material. (Sue)
	diversities of input	multiple access to learning opportunities (Jade) three-dimensional (Austin) to enrich the diversities of input (Jenny) incorporate the audio or visual medias (Fanny)
	enrichment	to enrich the content to teach (Max) to enrich the diversities of input (Jenny)

Table 5.8 Theme 4: Exposure to Rich Input

In terms of quantities, four teachers believed that it is necessary to provide many authentic materials as input, as Han pointed out: “the input in large quantities would increase the learning abilities and would be embedded in their minds”. The importance of using authentic materials as input was illustrated by



Lily's comments: "And I said, that's even MORE reason when I have the ten minutes, or an hour, or two hours..., they even need MORE input of authentic English."

Authentic materials can be diverse as Austin commented: "... Because textbook is one-dimensional, or two-dimensional; whereas authentic material is three-dimensional". Jenny suggested that teachers should increase the diversities of their materials by incorporating authentic materials as complementary to textbooks to enrich the content of what is taught in class.

Regarding ways to make ample use of authentic materials to maximize the input in the curricula, some teachers provide some vivid examples. Fanny stated that teachers can bring into class audio or visual media, or print materials, such as newspaper articles and magazines. Similarly, Sue suggested songs, films or literary works. In addition, the rich input of authentic materials would benefit students with exposure to some of the vocabulary items rarely found in the textbooks. According to Max, authentic materials contained examples of vocabulary as used in the real world, such as 'cower', 'guru', 'macho', or 'shouty', which are not found in textbooks. Thus, Max would incorporate literary work, such as fictions or novels, or the latest news reports into the curricula to 'make the content richer'.

For these teachers, the rich input of authentic materials, whether 'visual' or 'audio', would simultaneously provide students with manifold accesses to

optimize their learning opportunities.

The data from the questionnaires revealed that 70% of the teachers were more positive about enriching the input from the extra-linguistic knowledge (item 17), such as body language, turn-taking, and the like, rather than the linguistic knowledge (57%; item 16), as shown in Table 5.9 below. Again, Respondent 22 showed his strong disagreement in items 16 and 17. Forty percent of the teachers held neutral stance regarding the linguistic knowledge brought about from authentic materials (item 16).

Item	<i>Teacher views on the use of authentic material</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<b>M</b>
16	I think authentic materials can enable learners to understand the linguistic knowledge of the target language	1	0	12 (40%)	11	6	3.70
		1/ 3%			17/ 57%		
17	I think authentic materials can enable learners to understand the extra-linguistic knowledge of the target language	1	0	8 (26.7%)	16	5	3.80
		1/ 3%			21/ 70%		

Table 5.9 Questionnaire Items on Linguistic and Extra-linguistic Knowledge

### 5.2.5 Developing Cultural Learning and Awareness

The fifth theme is developing cultural learning and awareness. Seven interviewed teachers mentioned that authentic materials facilitate cultural learning through exposing students to the diverse cultures, perspectives and

worldviews, and thus can develop their students' awareness of British, American, local, and other different cultures (See Table 5.10).

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Developing cultural learning and awareness	British & American cultures	to understand why the westerners think differently from Asians (Sharon) to learn popular cultures (Han)
	Local culture	aspects of Chinese and Taiwanese culture...(David)
	Different cultures	beyond British and American cultures (Shaun)
	Different perspectives	understanding and insight into different viewpoints (Fanny)

Table 5.10 Theme 5: Developing Cultural Learning & Awareness

Some teachers clearly believe in the importance of exposure to different ways of thinking. As Fanny stated, “We should be teaching something beyond a language skill”. Regarding British and American cultures, Sharon thought students should understand “why westerners think differently from the ways we Asian people do”. She continued that authentic materials, such as films, can be used to acquaint the students with foreign cultures and values, for example, “...things such as cultures, or even tourist attractions, or some background information and the ways they think.” (Sharon)

Furthermore, some teachers would draw students' attention to the British and American popular cultures. Han incorporated the vocabulary found in the pop songs written by iconic singers in his curriculum as his students are very keen on these:

You might as well start with pop songs. They like Taylor Swift, and her lyrics are quite

close to life. I don't think they are difficult. They are mostly words taught in the middle schools .... (Han)

As for different cultures, authentic materials can also be used as the means to show students an array of ethnic diversities and cultures, as Shaun described below:

... we can also introduce them to the neighbouring countries.... In fact, I have covered beyond British and American cultures, as I think British and American cultures should not be limited to the U.S.A. or the U.K cultures— they merit more discussion. ... (Shaun)

David believed that it is also important to train students to explain and demonstrate aspects of Chinese and Taiwanese culture in English. Therefore, he would organize a culture fair and ask his students to invite anybody on the campus that wants to attend and demonstrate it to them.

Also, there is a need for students to understand current global affairs and thus develop their cultural learning and awareness, as Fanny stated:

... We should be teaching something beyond a language skill. A [tertiary] student needs to know what's happening in the world. Okay, when coming to immigration, he needs to know the issues of immigrants, refugees, including what had happened to the immigrants and refugees in Europe, and what their viewpoints are. (Fanny)

Authentic materials may be the basis to discuss current issues and to understand what is happening in real-world contexts, as Austin put it: “And it'll be often about current issues in the news. .... And it'll talk about these issues and what remedies there are for these problems.” (Austin)

On the other hand, Sue would orient her teaching points to what is happening in her students' lives and enable them to relate the events to their experience:

It's just something that's very much in our daily lives, something close to our lived experiences. It's not necessarily the kind of spectacles in the world as they might be a little out of reach. I feel that it is something in our everyday lives. (Sue)

In a similar vein, the questionnaire data confirmed that from the interviews (Table 5.11). Twenty-seven teachers (90%) were affirmative about using authentic materials to familiarize learners with the target language culture (item 15); and twenty-four teachers (80%) were positive about introducing culturally appropriate materials (item 23). Once again, only Respondent 22 disagreed with the statements. Thus, the findings from both sets of data revealed that most teachers were positive about using authentic materials to develop cultural learning and awareness.

Item	<i>Teacher views on the use of authentic material</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<b>M</b>
15	I think authentic materials can acquaint learners with the culture of the target language	0	1	2 (7%)	13	14	4.33
		1/ 3%			27/ 90%		
23	I think authentic materials can be culturally appropriate	0	1	5 (17%)	17	7	4.00
		1/ 3%			24/ 80%		

Table 5.11 Questionnaire regarding Developing Cultural Learning

### 5.2.6 Promoting Language Skills

The sixth and final theme in this section addressing teachers' views on authentic materials was the role of authentic materials in promoting students'

language skills (Table 5.12).

themes	sub-themes	
Promoting language skills	Integrated skills	Integrated skills (Shaun)
	receptive skills	Listening skills (Sharon)
	vocabulary skills	Vocabulary acquisition (Sharon)
	productive skills	Speaking skills (Max)

Table 5.12 Theme 6: Promoting Language Skills

Shaun mentioned about developing students' integrated skills with authentic materials:

Actually, I feel that they can facilitate language skills regarding listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As for listening, those video clips, or songs. As for reading, students can be asked to read aloud, and simultaneously to write something... (Shaun)

Sharon used authentic materials, such as videos or films, aiming to develop her students' listening comprehension as well basic vocabulary acquisition:

.... So, the emphasis is on their listening comprehension, whether they can understand what they've heard, and write it down the basic vocabulary that they need to know.... (Sharon)

Likewise, Han prioritized that authentic materials facilitated his students' receptive skill, such as listening skill as he explains:

All they need is listen for the key words. ... just to grasp the main ideas...and her expression, body movement, how she interacted with the audience.... They can learn through predicting and learn something from guessing for the meanings, and from the

dynamic process of interactions. (Han)

Max mentioned that authentic materials are used as the inspirational basis for discussion to develop his students' speaking abilities:

And so they'd discuss something in the pair, or a threesome. And then, we come back, and the pair would feedback and discuss it ..., as a class, yeah. So, we would use authentic materials ... very heavily in conversation class. (Max)

Although the findings from the interview data highlighted the integrated language skills being developed, the findings from the questionnaire were slightly reserved (Table 5.13). They were positive about using authentic materials to promote their learners' receptive skills in reading or listening (90%; item 19) and enhancing the learners' communicative competence (83%; item 21), rather than productive ones (77%; item 20). In other words, more teachers from questionnaire data were affirmative about promoting their students' receptive skills, rather than their productive skills. Only Respondent 22 strongly disagreed, and Respondent 24 disagreed about the two statements. Only one interviewed teacher (Max) mentioned about promoting speaking skills.

Item	<b>Teacher views on the use of authentic material</b> (M=3.96)	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<b>M</b>
19	I think authentic materials can promote learners' receptive skills, such as listening or reading skills	1	1	1 (3.3%)	17	10	4.13
		2/ 6.6%			27/ 90%		
20	I think authentic materials can promote learners' productive skills, such as speaking or writing skills	1	1	5 (16.7%)	18	5	3.83
		2/ 6.6%			23/ 76.7%		
21	I think authentic materials can	1	1	3	15	10	4.07

promote learners' overall communicative competence			(10%)			25/ 83.3
	2/ 6.6%					

Table 5.13 Questionnaire regarding Promoting Language Skills

### 5.3 Exploitation of Authentic Materials and Tasks

This section addresses teachers' perceptions about how to exploit authentic materials and tasks or activities to answer the second research question: ***If they need to use authentic materials, how do the teachers use authentic materials and associated tasks or activities based on the authentic materials?*** Three overarching themes are used to present the findings of this part: relevance, appropriateness, and attending to the overall messages.

#### 5.3.1 Relevance

For the first theme, seven interviewed teachers reported that authentic materials in use should be relevant to the curriculum. The coding process is summarised in Table 5.14 below.

themes	Sub-themes	examples
relevance	Relevance to the curriculum	relevance to the needs of the course (Shaun) relevance to the subject matter to teach (Austin) in line with course objective (David) relevant to the topic (Sharon) using authentic materials of relevant topics to complement the textbook material (Jade) relevance to the topic of the lesson (Jessica) relevance to the content of the lesson or the curriculum (Jenny) suitable for students of certain disciplines (Joan)



	relevance to the topic of interest	relevance to the topics of interest to teach (Tanya) selecting TED talks or video clips relevant to the topics to teach (Fanny) relevance to students' interests (Max) relevant to students' interest (Lily)
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Table 5.14 Theme 1: Relevance

Eight teachers believed that the use of authentic materials should be “relevant to the needs of the course” (Shaun) and “in line with the course objective” (David). As Austin and Jessica indicate, “when incorporating... authentic material in the classroom, it's very important to have it related to the subject I'd had” (Austin). Even though for choosing a film to watch, Sharon would play a film relevant to the topic of the textbook materials to teach.

Four teachers would choose authentic materials relevant to the topics of interest to teach, as seen in the comments:

I would try my best to look for materials which are more relevant to the topics of interest or the vocabulary to teach .... (Tanya)

.... Instead of teaching by the textbooks, I would rather source out from the materials of the topics of interest... to teach. (Fanny)

The findings from the open question of the questionnaire were consistent with those from the interview data. One teacher noted “high relevance” (R11; item 34), and also “give [learners] a clear and precise understanding of the topic”

(R13; item 34). Another respondent said, “Authentic materials might stimulate learners’ interest and make them feel more of relevance to their life experience” (R17; item 24).

The findings from the closed questions echoed those from the interview data (Table 5.15). Most of the teachers would use the materials based on their relevance to the topic of the content to teach (n=28; 93%; item 26), or to the lesson plan (n=22; 73%; item 29); or whether they are complementary to the coursebook materials (n=25; 83%; item 28). Respondent 22 strongly disagreed with all the statements and Tanya disagreed with the statement of item 29.

Item	<b>Reasons for choosing authentic materials</b> (M=3.8967)	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<b>M</b>
26	I choose authentic materials based on their relevance to the topics I teach	1	0	1 (3%)	15	13	4.30
		1 / 3%			28/ 93%		
28	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are able to complement the coursebook materials I use	1	0	4 (13%)	17	8	4.03
		1 / 3%			25/ 83%		
29	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are related to the lesson plans	1	1	6 (20%)	15	7	3.87
		2 / 7%			22/ 73%		

Table 5.15 Questionnaire regarding Relevance

### 5.3.2 Appropriateness

The second theme concerns the appropriateness of the authentic materials. When taking learners’ factors into consideration, eight teachers perceived that

the materials to use should be appropriate to the students' levels, needs and ages (See Table 5.16).

<b>themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>examples</b>
<b>Appropriateness</b>	relevance to learners' needs	authentic material relevant to students' needs (Sue) relevant to the ... needs of the students. (Max; Lily)
	relevance to learners' needs language levels	choosing online authentic material of relevance to students' language levels (Jade) relevance to students' interest and levels (Han) relevant to advanced students (David)
	relevance to learners' ages	choosing the authentic materials to teach based on the types and age groups (Austin) choosing the film based on students' age, interests, or their language levels (Sharon)

Table 5.16 Theme 2: Appropriateness

Three teachers think the use of the authentic materials should be based on relevance to students' needs. Lily highlighted the importance of "making it authentic to their needs rather than memorizing the vocabulary and passing the tests".

Another three teachers proposed that the use of authentic materials such as films and online video clips "should be the best if materials can correspond to their levels" (Jade). Sharon added that these materials should be "easy" to

understand, “fun”, and “interesting to cater to students’ language levels”. Being a teacher of beginners, Sue selected authentic materials to suit students’ levels:

The materials to choose should be relevant to the learners. This way, if you’re looking for something easier, I think English songs are easier to use, in terms of level of difficulty. I think I can find English songs that suit the beginner students. (Sue)

Austin and Sharon both noticed that, apart from students’ English level, the criteria for choosing appropriate authentic material should include students’ age groups.

Furthermore, only the findings from the closed-ended questionnaires (item 27; 21; 70%) echoed those from the interview data (Table 5.17). While most of the teachers (22; 73%) would use the materials based on whether they cater to their students’ interest, i.e. entertaining to their learners (item 25), only Sharon mentioned this aspect in the interview.

Item	<i>Reasons for choosing authentic materials</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<b>M</b>
25	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are entertaining to my students	0	5	3 (10%)	16	6	3.77
		5 / 17%			22 / 73%		
27	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are appropriate to the level of the students I teach	1	0	8 (27%)	14	7	3.87
		1 / 3%			21 / 70%		

Table 5.17 Questionnaire regarding Appropriateness

### 5.3.3 Attending to the Overall Messages

This is the third theme on the topic of exploiting authentic materials. In terms of the activities or tasks, the teachers would either teach or ask their students to attend to the overall messages that the authors of the materials intended to convey, as summarised in Table 5.18 below.

<b>themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>examples</b>
<b>Attending the overall messages</b>	asking students to grasp the general ideas	asking students to grasp the general ideas of the authentic material (Sharon) (Shaun) only asking students to grasp the main idea of the text, rather than understanding every word (Sue)
	Teaching students to grasp the general ideas	teaching how to grasp the overall meaning of a passage (Han)
	Teachers focusing on general ideas	focusing on messages to convey (Max)
	Methods to grasp the general ideas	contextual teaching in line with using authentic material (Lily) mapping of what, where, when, how, & why and content words (Fanny)

Table 5.18 Theme 3: Attending to Overall Messages

Seven, half of the teacher interviewees, made it clear that when there is a piece of authentic materials in hand, the priority should be given to the overall meaning, rather than the discrete linguistic items. Sharon and Shaun gave an example highlighting the importance of grasping the general ideas: when watching a film, “whether you are able to understand correctly or not, ... the content and the plots of the film clips”, “to catch the main ideas” is more important (Sharon) than decoding the meanings of each single word from the

listening extracts. “[Students] don’t need to understand every word so as to communicate in English and make use of English.” (Sue)

Therefore, teachers would turn students’ attention to the intended message the author tried to convey, as Max commented below:

I’ll identify some key words that students may not understand, and explain them, but that is how I use them, rather than just using it as focusing on the language itself, focusing on filling in gaps, focusing on grammar. I prefer not to use them in that way... and it’s what the author is trying to communicate... erm, ... that’s, .. that, we focus on. (Max)

These teachers also provided methods to orient students to the general ideas that the material tries to convey. Han would guide his students to grasp the overall message through attending to the content words. Rather than analysing the discrete linguistic items, Fanny would require her students to tap into the overall messages through identifying the content words and to use the *wh*-words to map out the main ideas:

I wouldn’t tell them what it means word by word, but I would rather let them read an article and do the mind-mapping... If this is a news report, ... the first paragraph usually contains the five *wh*-words. And what are they? ... what happened in the first paragraph? the second paragraph? And what goes on .... (Fanny)

Likewise, Lily would direct her students’ attention to what happened and what to expect using the contextual inferences from the authentic materials, as she illustrated below:

... and you need to know what happens at the airport. ... ‘What are the speakers doing? Checking-in.’ That’s a situation that happens when you travel. It’s real life. (Lily)

In terms of questionnaire data, in the open question, only one teacher’s

comment that he did not opt for the form-based approach to understanding all the lexical items of the text: "I'm not overly concerned that students understand all details within the material" (R13; item 42).

The data from item 38 in the questionnaire support those from the interview data. Seventy percent of the respondent teachers agreed that they would assign exercises that aim for comprehension check and encourage their students to draw inferences from contextual clues (Appendix 8).

#### **5.4 Issues Associated with Using Authentic Materials**

This section addresses the third research question regarding the issues involved in using authentic materials in terms of pedagogical consideration or practice.

The term 'issue' is taken for a 'subject' or 'problem,' according to *Cambridge University Dictionary* online. When authentic materials were in use, three themes emerged: materials adaptation; issues with suitable levels; and other challenges with using authentic materials.

##### **5.4.1 Adapting the Materials**

The first theme that interviewees talked about was the need for materials adaptation, with all but three teachers stating that they preferred to make the least modifications for pedagogical consideration. This finding concurs with McGrath (2002) as too much editing can render the text inauthentic. Codes are

summarised in Table 5.19 below.

Themes	Sub-themes	Examples
<b>Issues with materials adaptation</b>	Editing slightly	not making too much adaptation to the original authentic materials (Shaun)  usually not to edit out all difficult words or sentences (Austin)  do some editing (Jenny)

Table 5.19 Theme 1: Issues with Materials Adaptation

In case of adapting the materials, only minor modifications would be made for pedagogical consideration. The most obvious reason for making changes was due to the difficulty of the authentic materials, as explained by Shaun:

No need to make too much change. .... If they are too difficult, a little modification or editing might be needed.... (Shaun)

Similarly, Austin concurred, editing difficult words or sentences only if they hindered the students' comprehension:

...no, I don't edit, I don't edit out all difficult vocabulary or sentence pattern or phrases.... So, in some cases, I may edit out some more difficult words ... or words or sections of the material for the students. (Austin)

Another strategy involved providing a gloss in the L1, as illustrated by Jenny, who kept the authentic materials intact and added her own Chinese translation in the form of a handout: "In fact, I gave them entirely the English version. I might do some editing." (Jenny)



Furthermore, another three participants who offered responses to the open questions of the questionnaires were more concerned about keeping the integrity of the materials. They felt that the authenticity of the materials is lessened with the increase of adaptations. One respondent commented that “There is no need to adapt/ simplify authentic material since it represents the real world/language use” (Respondent 8; item 52). Another participant made it clear that he would not opt for modifying or adapting the authentic materials in use: “I lean toward explaining, rather than modifying, difficult material” (Respondent 2; item 52). Another participant, Austin, as mentioned above, strongly supported making as few adaptations as possible: “It’s important to maintain the original integrity of the material. Some changes could be made during presentation of material.” (Austin; item 52)

However, more than half (53%) of the responding teachers from questionnaire data were inclined to make adaptations by simplifying the vocabulary or idioms (item 43), compared with 23% of the teachers who disagreed, shown in Table 5.20. Furthermore, 57% of the teachers reduced the length of the text (item 45), and half of the teachers would script a listening text (item 49). To sum up, more teachers from the questionnaires were inclined towards making simplification of the materials; yet, the interviewed teachers were concerned about too much simplification and were inclined towards making as little modification as possible in order to keep integrity of the text.

Item	Adapting authentic materials	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	M
	<i>When using authentic materials in class, I would....</i>						
43	simplify the vocabulary or idioms	2	5	7	13	3	3.33
		7/ 23		23%	16/ 53%		
45	reduce the length of the text	2	4	7	15	2	3.37
		6/ 20%		23%	17/ 57%		
49	script a listening text	3	4	8	10	5	3.33
		7/ 23%		26%	15/ 50%		

Table 5.20 Questionnaire regarding Issues with Adaptation

#### 5.4.2 Issues with Suitable Levels

The theme regarding issues with suitability of the level emerged solely from interview data. The participants talked about the materials being challenging to lower level students, and about the need to choose materials that matched the students' levels, as summarised in Table 5.21 below.

themes	Sub-themes	codes
<b>Issues with suitable levels</b>	being challenging to lower level learners	being too difficult with students of low language levels (Shaun) found to be more difficult with students (Austin) not suitable for students of low language levels (Joan) being unsuitable for major teaching material, especially for beginner students (Han) being overly difficult for lower level students in terms of the language used and the content (Tanya)
	Not suitable for lower levels	suitable for advanced level students (Joan) best suitable for advanced students (Han)

	<p>the need/ recommendation to choose materials to suit students' level</p>	<p>trying to choose material students would understand around 70%-80 percent (Austin)</p> <p>to choose authentic material to an extent that students would understand 80 percent of the text.(Jade)</p> <p>understanding the material around 70 percent being appropriate (Max)</p> <p>understanding 80 percent of the article being appropriate (Lily)</p> <p>.. choose the materials at the level in between... (Sharon)</p> <p>selection of materials catering to students' levels (Sue)</p>
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Table 5.21 Theme 2: Issues with Suitable Levels

Five interviewed teachers perceived that authentic materials were more challenging with lower-level students, and thus more suitable for high-intermediate or advanced learners. Joan, Han, and Austin exemplified this position:

... only students at the high-intermediate and above are able to read and comprehend the genuine authentic materials, especially the English news.... (Joan)

... on the part of the beginner learners... I don't think they are able to accommodate too much input of authentic materials. Because...I think authentic materials are accessible to some advanced learners, who can have better grasp of the basic English. (Han)

... I taught at higher level of English that I could incorporate more authentic material, which is subsequently what I find to be more difficult or more advanced material for my students. (Austin)

Shaun expressed strong opinions on the difficulties for lower levels:

When coming to those struggling students, is it okay for them to use authentic materials? .... You need to consider whether it is suitable for them to use the English news you extracted. Are you going to bring the news from the Times or CNN to the class? I don't think so. It's too hard! too hard! You should also take into consideration the long passages, which would increase the burden of the lower-motivated learners as well. (Shaun)

Two other teachers specified that they were more suitable for high-intermediate or advanced learners:

...only students at the high-intermediate and above are able to read and comprehend the authentic materials, especially the English news.... (Joan)

... on the part of the beginner learners... I don't think they are able to accommodate too much input of authentic materials. Because...I think authentic materials are accessible to some advanced learners, who can have better grasp of the basic English. (Han)

In fact, Tanya perceived that authentic materials were too difficult for most of the learners. In contrast, Lily argued that authentic materials can be accessible to learners of any levels, even at lower language level given the materials can be of 'high interest', and 'high relevance' to the learners' needs and levels:

... I'm talking about General Ed kids that had to learn English whether they are ....., whatever you can consider the lowest kids that came in ..., it WORKED! (Lily)

The second point raised by six of the interviewees was the need to choose materials that match students' levels, as seen in Table 5.21 above. According to Austin, some students would "tune in and out" if they find it too hard to understand, whereas others would be disinterested and distracted when they

find it too easy to understand the materials. Thus, Austin would opt for the authentic materials that students can understand at a range of 70 to 80 percent.

Another three teachers also agreed that the extent to which the students would understand a passage should be at the range of 70 to 80 percent (Table 5.21). Max provided a rationale that the range of 70 percent was deemed as appropriate:

... the large majority of students understand about 70 percent of the article, having read it once. So, there's some vocabulary they don't understand, but that's my role of teacher to teach and explain the vocabulary and the content which is used in the article. (Max)

Meanwhile, Lily suggested that students understand a text at the range of eighty percent, explaining: "... if a passage has eighty percent they understand, twenty percent they don't. They can guess what the 20% is".

Sharon talked about the need to aim for the middle of the class:

I would choose the materials at the level in between to accommodate the students of the mixed levels. Otherwise, the students at the higher levels would complain that the lessons are too simple; whereas the lower-level students would complain that you're teaching them with too difficult materials that they don't understand it at all. (Sharon)

On the other hand, Tanya made a compromise by opting for materials that are more accessible to the lower-level students.

I later found out that there's no need to choose the materials that are too difficult to tackle with; instead, I would look for materials easier to understand, such as those for youngsters. ... They were all right for lower-level students; but, the higher-level students would consider them as too childish. (Tanya)

Sue indicated that teachers need to make sensible selection of materials catering to students' levels, as stated below:

Even with authentic materials to present, I think you can still source out from many materials of different levels, ranging from simple to difficult ones. You just need to filter through the materials. (Sue)

### **5.4.3 Other Challenges**

Two interviewed teachers mentioned other challenges. These are concerns with the quality of the authentic materials and the fact that authentic materials can date quickly. They noted that not all authentic materials are pedagogically appropriate to use in the classroom.

Joan commented on the quality of authentic materials, using her own language use as an example:

I myself, as a native speaker of Chinese, may not speak very good Chinese, not always good. For example, I might have a slip of the tongue and say something wrong from time to time even in Chinese. .... Likewise, authentic materials may not always be suitable for pedagogic use. (Joan)

As authentic materials are not designed for classroom use, there is an issue with the selection of appropriate content to match the teacher's and learners' needs, as Jade explained below:

After all, the authentic materials are not tailor-made to the lesson to teach. ... As there's a need for me to find materials elsewhere, and yet, they cannot completely match what I need. .... Just as I said, there's an issue with the content and then with the students' level. (Jade)

The second challenging aspect is that authentic materials can date quickly and thus might only be suitable to be used once, as Jessica explained:

Sometimes there's no way to re-use them. .... You just cannot reuse them all the time. As they need to change with your core teaching materials, you cannot simply use them this year and keep on using them next year because they would be out-dated by that time. (Jessica)

## **5.5 The Teachers' Views on Using Tasks and Activities**

This section addresses Research Question 4: *What tasks based on authentic materials are deemed appropriate to be assigned to their learners, if any?*

The findings are presented according to four categories of activities and tasks described by the teachers as they exploit authentic materials.

When describing the pedagogic activities and tasks used to exploit authentic materials, four categories emerged from the interview data: controlled or structured exercises, freer pedagogic activities, pedagogical tasks and real-world or target tasks. The findings from the questionnaire will be reported at the end.

### **5.5.1 Controlled or Structured Exercises**

Eleven interviewed teachers reported fourteen activities that they used. The analysis reveal that these activities were subject to controlled or structured exercises, focusing on practicing the language elements in table, that is, to build their students' vocabulary capacity, grammar, and basic sentence pattern, as summarized in Table 5.22 below.

Categories	Elements	Activities
Controlled or structured exercises	building vocabulary	vocabulary drills (Joan)(Fanny) substitution drills (Han) (Jenny) cloze drills (Shaun)(Jade)(Han)(Tanya) crosswords (Jade)(Tanya) tic-tac-toe drills (Lily)
	grammar exercises (4 teachers)	to use the lyrics of songs to teach grammatical items (Shaun) grammatical or spelling practice (Jade) (Han) practicing sentence structures & grammar (Joan)
	Writing practice (3 teachers)	Writing Exercise (aim for form): practice sentence patterns (Joan) students made to answer the comprehension question on the online forum (Jenny) to make interrogative sentences....(Fanny)
	games	using subsequent games to review the lesson taught (Austin) to play games in groups for credits in class (Jessica) Bingo game for practising grammar (Han)

Table 5.22 Category 1: Controlled or Structured Exercises

### 5.5.1.1 Building Vocabulary

Eight interviewed teachers reported they used a variety of form-based drills, including substitution, gap-filling or cloze drills to build their students' vocabulary, as summarised in Table 5.22 above.

Two interviewed teachers reported involving their students in doing mostly



vocabulary drills. For example, Joan would “require them to write down ten new words along with their Chinese translation, followed with a few lines of reflection on what they have read.” (Joan)

Fanny would ask more advanced students to answer the questions about the meanings of the new words to earn extra points for their grades. “They would need to raise their hands in competitions to tell me the definitions.” (Fanny)

Substitution drills were given to Jenny’s students, as described here:

...I would have them rote memorization of the set dialogues, and then do the substitution drills, such as, ‘I would like to make a table for four tonight; for six, for nine, for ten... plus a highchair, a baby chair’... I want them to put it into real use like that. (Jenny)

Although Jenny talked about the real use, the drills she asked her students to do were neither communicative nor interactive. They were very mechanical.

Three teachers reported using cloze or gap-filling drills. Shaun described their use with film clips:

Of course, there are many ways with which you can exploit the film clips. More than just viewing, your students can even fill in the blanks with words drawn out of ... a certain clip which is more exciting, rather than all of them..., and then you leave some blanks for them to fill in. .... But at least you can ask them to fill in the blanks afterwards, something like prefixes, or new words, or a cloze drill to do. (Shaun)

Exploiting the lyrics from movie themed songs, Han would devise gap-filling drills for his students to discuss the vocabulary. As he stated: “I would play the songs, and then have certain interesting key words left blank, or even certain

words relating to the textbooks removed, and then pause for a while to discuss them” (Han). Similarly, Tanya would “jot down the slogan of the commercials and leave the key words blank so that students can fill the gap.” (Tanya)

Two teachers talked about using word games or puzzles to help with vocabulary acquisition. Jade said: “I would have to google something on the Internet relevant to the topics, such as weather, or tourism, to make students as a team to do some crosswords.”, while Tanya reported that she asked her students from rubrics of word puzzle,”... to find six vocabulary items out of the puzzle game....which is similar to what can be found in American newspapers.” (Tanya)

#### **5.5.1.2 Grammar Exercises**

The second language area where teachers focused controlled activities was grammar, with four teachers reporting that they devised grammatical practice out of authentic materials in use, aiming to develop students’ grammar, as shown in Table 5.22 above.

Shaun reported that he often used the lyrics of songs to teach grammatical items, as in this example:

“‘Yesterday’. It seemed to contain the subjunctive mood, and expressions like ‘used to be’ and its usage. Then I would teach them expressions such as ‘used to be’, ‘be used to’, and the gerunds, something like that .... (Shaun)

Three other teachers reported that they asked their students to do grammar

exercises to consolidate their grammatical skills:

If I find the text useful, I would ask my students to correct some grammatical mistakes that I made on purpose. (Jade)

I would designate the topic and then give away writing paper for each of them to write. ...to make sentence.... to make the interrogative questions; and finally, is to combine or reconstruct the sentences.... (Joan)

... the students need to do the present perfect tense, to substitute the verb form with the present perfect tense ... and then to do the substitution drills with the verb tense.... (Han)

The focus of the above-mentioned teachers was on the form, rather than on the meanings; thus, these grammar drills were deemed as form-focused, non-communicative activities.

### **5.5.1.3 Writing Practice**

For the third element of controlled practice, four teachers reported activities relating to writing, which are analysed to be mainly exercise aiming for form. Most of them are related to practising sentence patterns.

For example, Joan would have her students “rewrite sentences on their own” based on the sample sentences. Jenny’s students were told to “write them down in response” to the questions she uploaded to the online forum. Fanny asked her students to compete to make up sentences out of the new vocabulary items. She put them in teams to “make interrogative sentences.” (Fanny)

### **5.5.1.4 Games**

For the fourth element of controlled practice, three interviewed teachers

reported that they used games aiming to recap what is being learned (Table 5.22). Austin provided a detailed description of the process in his class:

I'll have them break off into two groups, together as groups, for answer the questions that I've given to them, err, beforehand. And then after we bring them back together to play a review game. So as a group they answer the questions, and then I bring them back, and then they play one by one or, well, you know, they'll play for points, or play for credits ..., and so we'll use that game as a means of review. (Austin)

Jessica would give students display questions to prepare in advance before coming to class to play games in groups for credit, as she explained below:

When you read out your questions, they should be able to comprehend your questions as they had been given the questions to check for answers in advance .... It did not matter whether some of them were not prepared as they can regard the activity as listening drills. Because they can compete for answering the questions, they would have a lot of fun.. (Jessica)

Han's students were asked to play the Bingo game to describe their experiences through interactions with others:

I have people to do the bingo activities, to find someone else that meets the criteria to play the bingo games in which the participants need to identify someone else that matched the description, and to put down his/her names and then, and then to ask for the details, so that they can communicate, and put target language in use this way. (Han)

The games used by the teachers usually had display questions to which every student knows the answers. According to Littlewood (2007), such an activity is deemed as pre-communicative as the focus was still on the language form although it is oriented towards meaningful communication.

## 5.5.2 Freer Pedagogic Activities

A number of the interviewed teachers claimed that they would use student presentations and other speaking practice when exploiting authentic materials.

### 5.5.2.1 Student Presentations

Four interviewed teachers reported that they used individual or group presentation (Table 5.23).

Categories	Elements	Activities
freer pedagogic activities	Student presentation	Presentation tasks based on a novel (Max) do group presentation of a lesson plan out of authentic materials of their choice (Tanya) do individual or group presentation as post-viewing tasks (Shaun) (Sue)
	Speaking activities	conversing (Austin) learn the different types of public speaking. (David) to do sales talks (Max) to present to the class with Power Point slides (Jenny) dubbing a picture storybook (Shaun)
	Song teaching	adapting the lyrics of the songs (Shaun) gap-filling activity from themed movie song (Han) song teaching to learn pronunciation or grammar (Sue) using songs as supplementary materials (Jade)

Table 5.23 Category 2: Student Presentation

Max's students were required to do either individual or group presentations

based on a novel that they had read, for example:

... there is a novel that really inspires them. And they can make a piece of writing and they will introduce that novel to the class and they would read out one passage and then they would give a personal reflection on why that novel inspires them and why they see it as a really great example of creative writing. (Max)

Tanya would have her students do group presentation of a lesson plan out of authentic materials of their choice: “each team would make a presentation to teach the class anything they handed in each week, ...including newspapers, magazines, or online articles” (Tanya). As for the topics for presentation, an example is that her students were required to act as local tour guides to present something interesting or tasty to foreign tourists.

Shaun and Sue would also have their students do individual or group presentations as post-viewing tasks. Sue highlighted that this would depend on the time available.

The use of student presentations by these four teachers had a focus on conveying the message; however, it is one-way communication from presenters to the rest of the class, rather than interactive, so they can be classified as pre-communicative activities.

### **5.5.2.2 Speaking Practice**

Additional types of speaking practice were described by five teachers, including conversing, making speeches and narrating, as tabulated in Table 5.23 above.

Austin would converse with his students using the new vocabulary in the form of question and answer:

What they're doing during that activity is conversing: they're using all the vocabulary they use, they're using all the connecting words--I want to do these because 'if we do this, this will happen, so on and so on.' So, it allows them to use their conversation....(Austin)

David would have his students apply the public speaking skills based on the outside reading materials he brought to the class:

I had these cadets, err, learn, present on current events using the Steve Wallace book, you know, learn the different types of public speaking.... (David)

Impromptu speaking based on role-play was described by Max:

... we use some lesson time to ask a selection of students to stand up and sell an item to the class just to get people still, 'cos ... we talk about impromptu speaking .... (Max)

Jenny would have her students do briefing on topic she assigned, such as describing what family members look like, using the supplementary vocabulary bank she posted online. They also had to respond orally to the questions she posted online on the class portal. Meanwhile, Shaun reported asking his students to narrate and dub a picture storybook during their presentation: "The translation class this time is meant for ...dubbing a picture storybook.... Yeah to translate from Chinese into English, and vice versa." (Shaun)

These speaking activities do not necessarily involve negotiation of meaning as students are using a range of language which they just acquired, and are also

one-way communication from teacher or presenter to the rest of the class; so these activities can be considered as pre-communicative activities.

### **5.5.2.3 Teaching with Songs**

The third activity in this category of freer activities is the use of songs. Four teachers reported a variety of ways that they used songs in teaching, as shown in Table 5.23 above.

Shaun reported having his students adapt the lyrics of the songs, changing from Chinese version into English, and singing along to the class.

Han would have his students work together to fill the gaps he designed out of the movie theme songs. Sue reported using English songs to teach features of pronunciation, such as linking sounds, sentence patterns, and grammar. Jade would use English songs googled from English resource database provided by the institute she taught as supplementary materials to entertain the students. Neither teaching objectives nor tasks were assigned with the listening activity.

The song teaching with a focus on discursive items oriented towards meaning, thus it was deemed as pre-communicative language practice, according to Littlewood's (2007) categorization.



### 5.5.3 Pedagogical Tasks

Only three activities which the teachers reported are subject to more open pedagogical tasks, namely information gap tasks and opinion gap tasks. These are from only two teachers, as summarised in Table 5.24 below.

Categories	Elements	Activities
Pedagogical tasks	Information gap tasks	Mapping activities (Han)
	Opinion gap tasks	Discussing students' preference over an issue (Max) Roleplaying to convey viewpoints (Han)

Table 5.24 Category 3: Pedagogical Tasks

#### Information gap tasks

Information gap tasks are defined as tasks involving “an exchange of information...the information provided is split, i.e. the learners do not have all the same information”, therefore “information exchange is required” (Ellis, 2003: 86). Information gap tasks involve “a transfer of given information from one person to another” (Nunan, 2004: 57). Han reported using information gap tasks in asking for directions, using two versions of the same authentic map but with different information on them:

Mapping activity...each student holds an identical map with different architecture. To ask for direction, Student A would need to ask Student B about the whereabouts of certain building. And Student B would give the direction. Student A then ask Student B to sign his/her name. And vice versa....(Han)

With slips of paper that had identical authentic maps in hand, each student in a pair had to exchange information and carry out the information gap task in

which there is “a mismatch between the information possessed by different learners” (Nunan, 2004: 214). As said above, information gap tasks involves transferring of information from one to another, which is two-way communication, different from presentation and other speaking activities mentioned above. Thus, information gap tasks are deemed as communicative tasks.

### **Opinion gap tasks**

Max and Han reported using opinion gap tasks. Max described an interesting task where he used a five-point Likert scale of statements developed from authentic materials to engage his students during a discussion of their preference over an issue, as illustrated below:

... so let's say, some find online too risky?, somebody says one, somebody says four, then what they try, then they will have to discuss that point, and try to persuade each other, why, which one is correct..., they discuss it with each other, and try and get as many of these that they agree on as possible. (Max)

Han designed an opinion gap task in which his students roleplayed the crew and passengers in a shipwreck situation in which each had to convince others why they had to stay onboard:

.... Then, I gave each student a small card listed what profession he/she was in. Because the boat is going to sink, and they need to get rid of two out of the boat to save the lives of the rest. In order for self-protection, everyone must find ways to communicate and tell the rest about their strengths..... (Han).

Opinion gap task refers to the pedagogic tasks that involves participants “articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation” (Nunan, 2004: 57) to engage in discussion and express their opinions

to defend their preference. These opinion gap tasks involved no authentic texts. However, authenticity can be achieved through interaction in which there is learners' negotiation and engagement arising in the process (Guariento & Morley, 2001). Although these opinion-gap tasks did not include an authentic text, the need for the students to communicate and reach a set goal offered authenticity in the meaningful negotiation that took place.

#### 5.5.4 Real-world or Target Tasks

The final category of exploiting authentic materials is the use of real-world activities or tasks. Only two teachers reported activities that they assigned are related to real-world tasks or target tasks to their students, aiming for rehearsal of real-life situations, as summarised in Table 5.25 below.

Categories	Elements	Activities
Real-world or target tasks	Rehearsal of real-life situation	Students look for and report airline service (Tanya)  Students design travel itineraries for foreign tourists (Sue)

Table 5.25 Category 4: Real-world or Target tasks

Tanya designed web learning in which her students were teamed up to search online for the VIP lounge services exclusive to various airlines, to find out who was eligible for the service, and to report the information to the class:

Firstly, you need to find out the name of the VIP lounge; secondly, you need to find out for me what service they provided, and thirdly, who was eligible for admission,... and put down the answers on a white board, a plain white board to tell .... (Tanya)

Sue reported that her students were required to design and schedule itineraries for foreign friends to visit the tourist attractions based on the tour guide brochures sourced out from the MRT stations, as stated below:

.... The students were required to arrange a guided tour, and to arrange itineraries as tour guides for foreign visitors to do a sightseeing alongside the MRT stations in Taipei.  
(Sue)

The activities that the interviewed teachers reported are more shaded into the categories between non-communicative language practices to pre-communicative activities, following Littlewood's (2004; 2007) framework. As is revealed, the interviewed teachers reported using more activities that are non-communicative (n=8), and pre-communicative (n=15), rather than communicative (n=5). More activities than tasks were used.

#### **5.5.5 Questionnaire regarding Teachers' Views on Exploiting Authentic Materials with Tasks or Activities**

It is clearly seen that the focus of the above-mentioned interviewed teachers was on the form, rather than on the meanings. However, the data from the questionnaire tell different stories.

In Part E, items 35-37 are more related to form-focused exercises, while items 39-41 meaning-focus, communicative, real-world tasks. Ninety percent of the teachers would design tasks or activities that would guide their students to grasp the overall meanings (item 35) of the authentic materials, as opposed to the traditional form-based approach to decoding each lexical item (17%; item

36) or analysing the grammatical structures (17%; item 37), as tabulated in Table 5.26 below.

While more than half of the interviewed teachers (8 out of 14) used such form-focused exercises to build their students' vocabulary, results from the questionnaire, a similar percentage (53%) of the questionnaire respondents reported that they would not use activities to encourage students to understand every word (item 36; see Appendix 11), though quite a large number (9: 30%) stated that they were not sure.

Whilst the interviewed teachers drew on non-communicative grammar exercises, the result of item 37 indicated that half of the responding teachers disagreed that they would design tasks to analyse the grammatical structures. The results of items 40-41 are also consistent. Eighty-three percent of the teachers (25) would use the tasks that focus on meaningful communication (item 41), rather than developing the accuracy of the language form (12: 40%; item 40). Again, Respondent 22 showed his strong disagreement in items 36, 37, 40 and 41. In fact, throughout all items in the questionnaire, this teacher held a negative attitude towards the use of authentic materials. It is obvious that Respondent 22 enjoyed using the set curriculum and textbook and preferred not to use any authentic materials.

Item	<i>Tasks or activities to use with authentic materials (M=3.40) In designing tasks or activities</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<b>M</b>
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	<i>to use with authentic materials, I would encourage my students ....</i>						
35	to grasp the overall meaning of the authentic materials	0	3	0	17	10	4.13
		3 / 10%			27/ 90%		
36	to understand every vocabulary item	2	14	9 (30%)	4	1	2.60
		16 / 53%			5/ 17%		
37	to analyse the grammatical structures	5	10	10 (33%)	4	1	2.53
		15 / 50%			5/ 17%		
40	to use tasks that focus on developing accuracy of the language form	1	5	12 (40%)	12	0	3.17
		6/20%			12/ 40%		
41	to use tasks that focus on meaningful communication	1	0	4 (13%)	18	7	4.00
		1/ 3%			25/ 83%		

Table 5.26 Questionnaire regarding Tasks or Activities to Use

## 5.6 The Limitations on Using Authentic Materials & Tasks

This section would address **RQ5. *What, if any, are the limitations on the teachers' use of authentic materials and associated tasks?*** Limitation refers to the constraints or difficulties when using authentic materials or tasks. Two overarching themes emerged; namely, the contextual factors and the constraints which are more related to teachers themselves. Finally, the results from the questionnaire on the relevant theme will be reported.

### 5.6.1 Contextual Factors

All teachers reported constraints in using authentic materials, which are analysed to be more related to contextual factors. Contextual factors are often referred to as anything relevant to curriculum, school contexts and any factors of stake holders. As many as thirteen teachers pointed out that the difficulties were from curriculum, for example, time stress and teachers' heavy workloads, as summarised in Table 5.27 below. Other main themes include constraints from the students and other contextual factors.

<b>themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>codes</b>
<b>Contextual factors</b>	<b>Curricular limitations</b>	Time stress (x12 teachers) the unified syllabi & curricula (x 6 teachers) the mandatory unified textbooks (x 5 teachers) the unified major school exams (x 4 teachers) teachers' heavy workloads (x3 teachers) washback effects derived from English proficiency test (x1 teacher)
	<b>Related to students</b>	students' abilities & interests (x6 teachers) extra workloads for students (x2 teachers)
	<b>others</b>	The convention of the immediate working contexts at teachers' institutions (x 5 teachers) parental expectation (x1 teacher)

Table 5.27 Theme 1: Contextual Factors

### 5.6.1.1 Curricular Limitations

This sub-theme consists of high frequencies of codes: namely, the time stress, the unified syllabi and curricula, the mandatory unified textbooks, and the

unified major school examinations.

### **The time stress**

Twelve teachers overwhelmingly stated time stress as the main concern; a few cases from some teachers are reported below.

Max, Jessica, Han, Jenny and Sue all pointed out that time stress to follow the unified curricula and the unified common examinations, leaving them with little time available to use authentic materials at their disposal. Max said, "I had to find time for that, too...." (Max). Jessica continued, "Because there are curricula to follow, I think it would be a stress for me. .... While you're catching up with the lessons, there's no way to spend time to cover other stuff." (Jessica)

Some teachers reported that they usually had to condense the use of authentic materials in class. Sharon stated that she usually had her students view the themed film once a semester due to the insufficient time she had: "Yeah, the time constraints; the biggest foe was the time constraints" (Sharon).

Teachers, such as Joan and Jade, thought it too time-consuming to find authentic materials appropriate to teach with and to complement the textbooks in use. Jade even commented: "... sometimes we don't have so much time to look for them". Therefore, teachers, such as Joan, would prefer to be assigned with materials to teach rather than choosing them on her own.



The findings from the following open question of the questionnaire (item 53) echoed those from the interviews. One respondent teacher said, “Time constraints ... would hinder my selection/ use” (Questionnaire; R3). Another teacher stated, “Teaching has occupied most of [the] time. Thus, no extra time [to] use[s] authentic materials.” (Questionnaire; R6)

### **The Unified Syllabi and Curricula**

Six teachers reported that the limitation on using authentic materials was due to the unified syllabi and curricula, as summarised in Table 5.27 above.

Given the required subjects to teach with, Shaun, Sharon, Jade, and Austin mentioned that there was a unified curriculum to follow at the school level. Jade commented, “It would be rather difficult for us to use authentic materials if the university has fixed, or the so-called unified, curricula to follow.” (Jade)

Max added: “And also the constraints I have in terms of other teachers, having to teach the same thing as everybody else.” (Max) Tanya further pointed out: “there’s no way to use any extra materials as you have syllabi to catch up with. It’s enough for you to just catch up with the syllabi or curricula.”

Similarly, the response from an open questionnaire echoed the findings from the interviews: “Unified curriculum has set the boundary and narrow the incentives of exploitation of authentic materials in the classroom teaching.” (Questionnaire; Respondent 17)

## **Other Constraints**

Other constraints included the unified major school examinations, the unified mandatory textbook, the heavy workload and the washback effects derived from English proficiency tests. Shaun, Sharon, Max and Jessica mentioned that, apart from the unified curricula, the school policy mandated the unified major school examinations, which set the constraints for using authentic materials and tasks. Almost all of these teachers specified that using “the same book, the same common exam... got to make the same progress as each other through the book” is a constraint so that they were “constrained” in that sense. (Max)

Four teachers, including Jade, Max, Han, and Jenny, spoke of the unified mandatory textbook as one of the constraints that set the limitation on their use of authentic materials or tasks. Take Jenny as an example. With a mandatory textbook to follow, Jenny continued, “... the textbooks have been stipulated by the school. Therefore, what I can do at my disposal is not much, not very flexible.” Jade added, “...if you abide by the school textbook, I think it is more restrictive.”

Three teachers mentioned the workload as one of the constraints. David said: “I put them in study groups, so they don't necessarily write individual letters. It would be prohibitive for me to read a hundred letters every week. That's just like, that's a lot: that's a huge workload.” Jade agreed that too much workload as constraints as much of her time was spent on marking and grading students' assignment. Jenny also pointed out that hindrance of heavy work loads kept

teachers from assessing the extent to which students read authentic materials.

One teacher's response suggested there were washback effects derived from English proficiency tests. Han mentioned that he would make use of authentic materials if the curriculum was less bound by test schedule as all the students were subject to the graduation threshold, i.e. to pass English proficiency examination.

#### **5.6.1.2 Constraints Related to Students**

Regarding the Sub-theme, about half of the teachers identified constraints which are related to students' abilities and interests or students' workloads.

##### **Students' abilities and interests**

Six teachers mentioned the authentic materials to use were constrained by their students' abilities and interests.

Authentic materials, in Shaun's opinion, posed certain difficulty for students of lower level in particular, and might be demotivating for them if not presented properly. Shaun also showed his worries if the authentic materials could not match his students' levels: "this might turn out to be counter effects on them."  
(Shaun)

Likewise, Austin shared a similar concern, as he commented: "if the language is too difficult, or they never actually experience the authentic materials before,

it can sometimes be a little bit nerve-wracking for them.” (Austin) He continued, “... I believe it's very important before using any material, especially authentic materials, to understand the student's level, knowledge, interest as well.” (Austin)

Accordingly, the students of lower levels, in contrast to the learners of advanced levels, were not keen to learn with authentic materials, in Han's opinion: “... my students ... are of lower levels. .... They are not keen to outside reading.” (Han)

Jenny also mentioned that the constraints relied on students' willingness and their language levels: “That depends on students' language level ...and whether they are willing to learn.” Tanya also said, “I think the biggest issue is the students' levels.” As for Fanny, the constraint is that students may give up learning due to low levels: “There are some students who are demotivated to learn any materials, including authentic materials, due to low level.” (Fanny) In addition, a questionnaire respondent shared that “Students might feel it redundant and unnecessary and see it as an extra work.” (Respondent 17)

### **Extra workloads for students**

Two teachers mentioned that incorporating authentic materials could bring extra workloads to students. Max illustrated an example, “... my students have to ... cover as much of the material as every other class is doing, and in addition, they do extra stuff as well.” (Max)

Han had a personal experience. In an institute where he taught, the students

were required to read a themed movie script as supplementary materials. This scheme was not popular with students, and finally the institute decided to suspend the project due to students' reluctance to read. Han mentioned that some students considered it as a pressure for them: "Some students consider the materials as extra burden." (Han)

### **Other constraints**

A few teachers (five teachers) pointed out the convention of the immediate working contexts at teachers' institutions as constraints, such as school policies.

For example, Austin believed that to fully use authentic materials, teachers should take students to field trips; however, he perceived that the school may refute this idea; the school management may lack flexibility to deal with changes. Other constraints from school policies, such as using unified textbooks or demanding on students' passing English proficiency tests, have been previously reported.

In addition, while many teacher informants mentioned the use of video clips as authentic materials, Austin was aware that this may not meet the parental expectation, as he pointed out: "[they] pay[ing] money, not for their children to watch movies." (Austin)

### **5.6.2 Related to Teachers Themselves**

The second main theme emerged are more related to teachers themselves; the

major codes are labour-intensive to gather or compile and the difficulties in doing so, as summarised in the table 5.28 below.

<b>themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>examples</b>
<b>more related to teachers themselves</b>	<b>Taking extra labour</b>	labour-intensive to gather or compile (Shaun, David, Max) difficulty in collecting & compilation Shaun, Jade, Han, Sue)
	<b>Others</b>	teachers' short of technology skills (Sharon, Jade)

Table 5.28 Theme 2: More related to Teachers Themselves

David, Max, and Tanya all mentioned that it was labour-intensive and difficult to find authentic materials appropriate to use, and to collect and compile good examples of authentic materials in large quantities and genres. Teachers “might need to find many articles, do a lot of search, manage, or even to do some editing.” (Shaun) David told the reason for not often using them: “simply because, not that I'm against authentic materials, but it's labour-intensive to look for and gather authentic materials.” Even though they found some, as Max stated: “you have to think long and hard about how to apply it”.

Jade further pointed out that authentic materials are “not tailor-made or customized to complement the textbook.”(Jade) Tanya mentioned that it's difficult to find authentic materials that suit students' levels, especially the mixed

level. She said: “In fact, the biggest problem lies in finding suitable materials to suit students’ levels, especially for mixed level class. As you know, some of the students are of advanced levels whilst others are at beginner’s levels. It turned out that most of the materials I find are rather difficult for our students.” (Tanya)

### Teachers’ short of technology skills

Sharon and Jade perceived that they were confined by their technology skills. They thought they were not proficient in making use of the computers and technology skills. Sharon lamented that her computer skills were not sufficient enough for her to use and exploit authentic materials within the limited time. Jade echoed that her limited PC skills in editing or scripting the video clips from YouTube channel. “I’m not good at technology stuff. I know some teachers are pretty good at technology, putting the subtitle into the film clips, or editing and compiling these short film clips, but I don’t know how to do that.” (Jade)

### 5.6.3 Questionnaire regarding Constraints

Item 53 of the questionnaire investigates teachers’ perceived constraints or difficulties in not using authentic materials. Fourteen factors were listed for the participants to tick as many as needed. The responses have been ranked and percentage computed, as summarised in Appendix 8. Table 5.29 below lists the highest frequencies of responses regarding constraints.

Item	Constraints or difficulties	No of ticks	Frequency	Order
	<i>I do not use authentic materials because....</i>			

53.10	there may not be technical equipment to show video clips such as those from YouTube.	12	40%	<b>1</b>
53.8	there is no time enough for me to choose them.	11	36.7%	<b>2</b>
53.13	they are too difficult for my students' levels.	11	36.7%	<b>2</b>
53.4	they are irrelevant to the major school exams.	10	33.3%	<b>3</b>
53.1	they cannot fit in the unified coursebook materials I use.	9	30%	<b>4</b>
53.7	it is labour-intensive to choose appropriate authentic materials to teach.	9	30%	<b>4</b>
53.14	they take up much time of my teaching.	9	30.0%	<b>4</b>

Table 5.29 The Highest Frequencies of Responses regarding Constraints in Questionnaire

As can be seen in the responses, shortage of technical equipment was ranked the first. However, this sub-item was only limited to investigating playing videos clips. The teachers' responses appear to be very practical. In order to play any, teachers surely need some technical equipment. Therefore, more relevant are factors with slightly fewer responses: not enough time to choose them, too difficult for students' levels, and irrelevant to the major school exams. Clearly the questionnaire data are considered as consistent with interview data.

From the interview data, the codes or sub-themes with highest frequency are time stress (as many as twelve teachers) and others from curricular limitations (e.g. the unified syllabi and curricula, six teachers). The second are factors



related to the students' abilities and interests. The third is labour-intensive or difficulty in collecting and compilation (six teachers).

The findings will be discussed in the following section, Chapter Six.

## **Chapter Six: Discussion**

This section addresses the five research questions by summarizing the key results and then presenting and discussing the interpretations of these results.

### **6.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Authentic Materials**

Through a questionnaire and interviews, this study explored the participant teachers' perceptions of authentic materials. The results showed that the participant teachers of English might have positive perceptions towards authentic materials in their Taiwanese EFL classes. The teachers' positive attitudes are similar to the findings in a variety of studies (Soliman, 2013; AbdulHussein, 2014; Almusallam, 2015; Belaid & Murray, 2015; Akbari & Razavi, 2016; Huda, 2017; Mestari & Malabar, 2017; Anam & Anam, 2019). They perceived that the use of authentic materials contributes to language teaching with a view to motivating and engaging the learners (Mestari & Malabar, 2017), exposing them to the real language use (Wilkins, 1976; Clarke, 1989; Lee, 1995; Wong et al, 1995; Hedge, 2000; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Richards, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004; Berardo, 2006), developing cultural learning and awareness, providing enriched input (Ellis, 1999; Belaid & Murray, 2015; Akbari & Razavi, 2016; Huda, 2017; Mestari & Malabar, 2017) and promoting language skills. The findings are consistent with studies in the current literature; several researchers provided evidence supporting the merits of using authentic materials (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004; Berardo, 2006).

Many researchers claim that authentic materials can bring about a positive effect on motivation (Lee, 1995; Peacock, 1997; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Berardo, 2006; Gilmore, 2007; Almusallam, 2015; Mestari & Malabar, 2017). Authentic materials are intrinsically more stimulating and interesting (Lee, 1995; Peacock, 1997; Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014).

The teachers in this study also reported that they make use of authentic materials in an attempt to engage their learners, which echoes the literature. According to Rodriguez (2016), there are different levels of engagement. To initiate students' interests and to involve students in meaningful discussion is deemed to indicate engagement (Rodriguez, 2016). In order to engage students, teachers can bring in different levels of the texts to suit the teaching and learning contexts to engage students of all ages when authentic materials are properly utilized as complementary materials to EFL classes (Rodriguez, 2016: 47).

There are, nevertheless, precautions for teachers to take in terms of enhanced motivation and engagement brought about by using authentic materials. According to Zyzik and Polio (2017), "the relationship between authenticity and motivation is not as straightforward as we might assume" (Zyzik & Polio, 2017: 7). Authentic materials do not always lead to enhanced motivation. If authentic materials are too difficult and not presented appropriately to the students, they may lead to demotivating, rather than motivating, students. Texts that are too difficult to understand may not motivate lower level students (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004).

Another important theme the teachers mentioned is the real language use. Authentic materials are highly valued by interviewees in exposing learners to the real language use owing to the features of the natural discourse (Carter, 1998a; Cook, 1998), and the real language use of which the learners can develop acquisition. This finding confirmed what a growing body of literature has to say about the use of authentic materials to expose learners to real language (Wilkins, 1976; Clarke, 1989; Lee, 1995; Wong et al, 1995; Ellis, 1999; Hedge, 2000; Guarento & Morely, 2001; Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014; Belaid & Murray, 2015; Akbari & Razavi, 2016; Huda, 2017; Mestari & Malabar, 2017). The use of authentic materials has been proposed since long ago; for example, Wong et al (1995) already pointed out that authentic materials can sensitize students to the real-world use of English, enable students to relate real world events to their experience, expose students to the use of English for communication, and finally can bridge the gap between classroom and the real world through activities developed based on authentic materials. Interviewees reported that authentic materials usually contain real language as used by native speakers, rather than the unreal expressions as frequently found in textbooks. Seven interviewees (Han, Shaun, Max, Austin, Jenny, Jessica, and Tanya) cited, unlike the textbook language, which was under constant criticism for being fake, fabricated, and unnatural, the features of real language and the natural discourse to be something of immediate currency and relevance, less frequent use of repetition or redundancy, and the rich and diversified word choice.

However, it is a primary concern for EFL educators to prepare their students to

encounter real-life situations (Carter, 1998b; Cook, 1998; Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014), and authentic materials can help learners to bridge the gap between the classroom language and that used in the outside world (Carter, 1998b; Cook, 1998; Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014). Kelley et al. (2002) demonstrated a variety of activities associated with the use of authentic materials to enliven the teaching process and to bridge the gap between the classroom and real world.

Enriched input was another reason why authentic materials were held in high esteem by the participating teachers. Nine teachers reported that students can be exposed to authentic materials in large quantities or in diversity, as Maru (2009) and Wong et al. (1995) argue. Authentic materials can expose the learners to the verbal messages and nonverbal clues as used in the real language and can help students develop a sense of how the real language is used (Carter, 1998a; Cook, 1998). Carter and Cook both agree that the use of authentic materials is the way to bridge the gap between the classroom and the real-world language use. When exposing to video clips, students can attend to both the verbal and non-verbal messages through the mediation of the text and the teacher. The gestures, facial expressions, and body language in talk shows, movie trailers or video clips by which comprehension is raised (Rogers & Medley, 1988) can not only allow students to have incidental learning, but also pick up the way the native speakers talk or express themselves.

In addition, half of the interviewed teachers noted that authentic materials can facilitate cultural learning through exposing students to the diverse cultures, perspectives and worldview, and thus can develop their students' cultural

awareness. This view is similar to those of teachers' in Beresova's (2015) study that authentic materials can increase cultural awareness. Authentic literary texts can engage learners, not only with language enrichment, but also cultural enrichment, as Maru (2009) observed. Moreover, authentic materials can increase cultural awareness (Hedge, 2000; Kilickaya, 2004).

## **6.2 Teachers' Perceptions of Exploiting Materials and Tasks**

In terms of the extent to which authentic materials were in use, the findings revealed that it depended on the situation. All of the interviewed teachers said that they had used authentic materials in their teaching, and that it depended on the situation whether to use authentic materials as major or supplementary materials. The study also revealed that most of the participating teachers would make sporadic use of authentic materials, regarding authentic materials as mostly supplementary, rather than major teaching materials, to complement their textbook materials in class. This finding was in line with Almusallam's (2015: 83) study: Most of her EFL participating teachers indicated that "an ideal reading class used a combination of both authentic texts and textbooks". This further echoes Hadley's (2001, cited in Almusallam, 2015: 77) argument that such a combination is more suitable.

A major reason for low or infrequent use of authentic materials for these participants was the predominance of the coursebook, and the need to follow a rigid curriculum (Almusallam, 2015). As most interviewed teachers were required to comply with the course objectives developed from the mandatory

textbook materials, authentic materials were used to supplement, extend, or reinforce the coursebook materials. Some teachers perceived that authentic materials and textbooks are mutually complementary. The extent to which authentic materials complemented the course books would vary from one teacher to another.

As the interview data revealed, their textbooks played a major role in teaching, rendering the use of authentic materials as supplementary. Their use of authentic materials may be dependent on the needs of the teachers, the needs of courses or the situations. In other words, the exploitation of authentic materials was course-dependent or situation-dependent. Aside from teaching with textbook materials, authentic materials worked well with thematic or contextual teaching and learning, such as special festivals or holidays. They were used to complement teaching these themes. When being used as complementary teaching materials, authentic materials, such as video clips (Rogers & Medley 1988; Sari & Sugandi, 2015) of the similar subject matter, were utilized to highlight the teaching points in class. The verbal or non-verbal messages, or the linguistic as well as the non-linguistic items, were introduced to students through the aides of authentic materials, such as using the video, film clips (Rogers & Medley, 1988; Sari & Sugandi, 2015) or songs (Ashitani & Zafarghandu, 2015) to teach students the real language use.

To conclude, it was not surprising to find that teachers who had shared unified curriculum based on the mandatory textbook materials would be restricted in their use of authentic materials, rendering their use sporadic. Curricular

constraints will be discussed in Section 6.5.

### **6.2.1 Relevance and Appropriateness**

In line with the literature (Rogers & Medley, 1988; McGrath, 2002; Almusallam, 2015; Zyzik & Polio, 2017), the interviewed teachers mentioned that the selection criteria should be based on relevance and appropriateness to the requirement of the curriculum, to the learner's language level, interest and needs. As one interviewed teacher echoed: "So, I believe it's very important before using any material, especially authentic materials, to understand the student's level, knowledge, interest as well." (Austin)

Many researchers claim that appropriateness of a text dependent on the content and the linguistic complexity of the textual information can be compatible with the learner's cognitive and affective capacity: "Appropriateness of text refers primarily to the extent to which the content and linguistic complexity of the message are compatible with the students' cognitive and affective frames of reference and abilities" (Rogers & Medley, 1988: 471). Almusallam (2015: 85) also indicated the importance of "considering students' language level, interests and needs" in selecting authentic materials. In a similar vein, Zyzik and Polio (2017) argued that selection of the authentic texts should consider linguistic complexity of the text. In terms of the length of the text, it is better not to use lengthy passages with beginner students as they might be intimidating to the learners (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004). When used with beginner students, lengthier texts should be broken into



smaller segments or viewable chunks (Zyzik & Polio, 2017).

The interviewed teachers also mentioned that the choice of materials should be relevant to students' needs and interest. When McGrath (2002) listed the criteria in light of selecting authentic materials (e.g. 'relevance to the syllabus', cultural appropriateness, linguistic demands, cognitive demands), relevance is the major concern. No matter how interesting they are, materials cannot be justified on the grounds that they bear no topical relevance and relevance in terms of genres or linguistic attributes (*ibid.*).

McGrath (2002) mentioned that the conception of relevance and interest is highly inter-related. He mentioned that an uncompromising text can be turned into something interesting and relevant to the learners with efforts made to a creative exploitation of and sensible presentation of the authentic text. He also argued that the suitability of the text to the learners is all that matters. The suitability of the text can be justified in terms of the relevance of the text to the learners' cultural appropriateness, and whether the text can be appropriate to the learners' linguistic and cognitive levels. Hence, we should take the learners' factors in terms of the language proficiency, the maturity of the cognitive development, and their background or schematic knowledge into consideration (McGrath, 2002).

In terms of adaptation and simplification, the interviewed teachers mentioned that they would make as few changes as possible. And most of the teachers

from the questionnaire would make simplification. As McGrath (2002) suggested, glossing key linguistic items and editing out a long text are feasible but too much editing may make the text inauthentic and render the text harder to process. The main issue related to adaptation is that the more alteration is made, the less authentic the materials become. Nation (1990) supported the need to simplify texts, especially when an exhausting amount of vocabulary is presented. If the authentic texts contain so large an amount of vocabulary beyond learners' language abilities, then simplification is needed. Tweissi's (1998, cited in Zyzik & Polio, 2017) study, comparing ESL learners' comprehension using four versions of a simplified text, concluded that an effective way of increasing learners' comprehension was through lexical simplification, however excessive simplification rendered the text different from normal English in information distribution and organization, thus hindering comprehension. What matters most about successful simplification is that it should be "well-executed" (Guariento & Morley, 2001: 348).

In addition, Zyzik and Polio (2017) suggested that the use of authentic materials to incorporate into the foreign language curriculum should progressively advance with the proficiency of students' progress. When authentic materials are initially being introduced into the curriculum to complement the textbook, the amount should be gradually increased as students' proficiency increases, or even predominates the course, especially for advanced level learners (Zyzik & Polio, 2017).

Teachers would choose materials in terms of their exploitability. The term

'exploitability,' refers to "how the text can be used to develop the students' competence and how the text can be exploited for teaching purposes" (Almusallam, 2015: 21). Therefore, the materials to be included should be in line with the principles of relevance and appropriateness. It is of great importance to use materials not only relevant to the curriculum and objectives, but also meeting the needs, interests, and appropriateness of the learners.

### **6.3 Issues to Address**

Although most of the participating teachers in my research prioritized the enhanced motivation brought about with the use of authentic materials, there were some concerns over the lower level students and adaptation of the materials.

#### **6.3.1 Challenging to the Lower Level Students**

Almost one third of the interviewed teachers perceived that authentic materials were found to be more challenging with lower level learners, and thus were more suitable for high-intermediate or advanced learners; only one teacher counter argued that authentic materials can be used with all levels of learners. Regarding this, empirical studies, e.g. Soliman (2013); Almusallam (2015), Belaid & Murray (2015); Akbari & Razavi (2016), indicated that authentic materials should work with intermediate level learners. For intermediate and advanced level learners who have a better grasp in regards to grammar and lexical items, they are better able to understand the authentic materials.

The use of authentic materials with lower level learners may cause them to feel demotivated and frustrated as they lack many significant lexical items and structures needed to process the authentic materials (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004). Authentic materials may contain too many difficult language items and structures, causing a burden for teaching with lower level students (Kilickaya, 2004; Berardo, 2006; Huda, 2017). Zyzik and Polio (2017: 15) claimed that teachers sometimes feel reluctant to use authentic materials with beginner students, and that the reluctance might originate from the “perceived difficulty” in authentic materials. Authentic speech is challenging as it is fast and it contains “reduced forms” and idiomatic usage (Zyzik & Polio, 2017: 15). Moreover, authentic written texts, especially literary texts, might be open to multifold interpretations, rendering the texts very difficult (Zyzik & Polio, 2017). In fact, a wider range of vocabulary is needed to read authentic literary texts alone (*ibid.*). Therefore, students, especially the beginners, will be demotivated if authentic materials are not presented properly (*ibid.*).

Students would feel more confident after they come to an understanding and enjoyment of the texts. Through arriving at an understanding and enjoyment of a text, students can thus have more confidence, which will enhance their motivation for learning (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Zyzik & Polio, 2017). Three components may decide on whether students are motivated successfully: whether the authentic materials are appropriate in terms of the cognitive challenge and the language and level, how they are used with regards to the associated tasks, and how effectively the teacher mediates the materials and the students (Gilmore, 2007). All these elements contribute to successfully

motivating students. However, some of the previous literature proposed that authentic materials are “inaccessible” to the students at beginner levels (Zyzik & Polio, 2017: 13). Most teachers in the current studies held a view that authentic materials were more suitable with advanced learners than with beginner students, as often found in past studies, such as Beresova (2015). Nevertheless, Zyzik and Polio (2017: 15) argued that authentic materials can be suitable for beginners only if they are “presented properly and with adequate pedagogical support.”

### **6.3.2 Challenging with the Selection of Materials**

The data from both sets revealed that the teachers would generally not adapt or simplify the authentic materials on large scale. However, there might be an issue with the selection of appropriate content to meet pedagogical needs. Authentic materials were not originally designed for language teaching purposes (Hedge, 2000). This might cause issues. For one thing, the interviewed teachers reported that there is difficulty in selecting materials to be seamlessly complementary to the core teaching materials, to match the objectives of the teaching contents, and the students’ language level as authentic materials were not tailor-made to educational purposes. Teachers need to do a lot of searching and think long and hard to incorporate authentic materials into their lessons.

For another, the interviewed teachers also identified the short currency of authentic materials. Authentic materials are associated with current issues,

which might need to be constantly updated (Clark, 1987; Berardo, 2006), and create a teaching burden. For instance, the political events are constantly updating. This could be an extra burden to the teachers. Zyzik and Polio (2017: 9) also acknowledged that authentic materials are often 'timely' and that "it's not clear how long they can be used." In order not to be dated, teachers need to be constantly on the search and compilation for current events and development to be incorporated into the lesson. Thus, one of the solutions they proposed is that we should make full exploitation of a text and utilize it together with a range of activities (Zyzik & Polio, 2017).

Participating teachers perceived that authentic materials may contain some impolite language or content, especially in some movie clips, which are culturally inappropriate. Although authentic materials are highly valued, an overall adoption of authentic materials without sensible selection may be detrimental (Widdowson, 1978; Berardo, 2006). As for the type of authentic materials to choose, quite a few interviewees mentioned that they would opt for materials having potentials to create more dynamic and interactive responses. Interviewees suggested using authentic materials such as film clips (Rogers & Medley, 1988; Sari and Sugandi, 2015), picture story books, English pop songs (Ashitani & Zafarghandu, 2015), and commercials which cater to students' interests and needs, and are easy to understand or interesting to match the beginner students. For intermediate or advanced learners, participant teachers suggested that teachers choose materials which are authenticity-based, including news or speeches, such as TED talks.

Several interviewees mentioned that young adult students, particularly those from technological universities, would be more attracted to images or electronic gadgets. As a result, many interviewed teachers opted for the film (Sari & Sugandi, 2015) or video clips, or songs (Ashitani & Zafarghandu, 2015) as the genres or types of authentic materials to teach with. According to Sari and Sugandi (2015: 11) in their study, students enjoyed and were more motivated "to see and hear real life situations than to follow the activities in the textbook" when they used movies in the EFL classroom. Furthermore, Ashitani & Zafarghandu (2015: 221-222) in their conclusion related to their research on the use of songs stated, "verbal songs provide the learners with a pleasant atmosphere... reduce the learners' stresses and create a cooperative ambience and unison among the learners." This conforms to my personal teaching experience. The students of technological universities would fit the profiles of being drawn to the materials which were more interactive and dynamic, contrary to the recourse to the sole input of the monotonous traditional textbooks with little use of images or photos.

#### **6.4 Tasks or Activities based on the Authentic Materials**

There were mixed results drawing from both sets of data regarding associated activities or tasks appropriate to assign to the learners. Suggested types of activities or tasks identified from the findings of the interview data can be categorized into four types: (1) controlled or structured exercises that primarily focused on form; (2) freer pedagogical activities that make less use of forms and are oriented towards conveying the message; (3) pedagogical tasks; and (4) authentic tasks. As the interviews revealed, the activities or tasks in use by

the 14 interviewed teachers were more oriented towards form-focused and pre-communicative activities rather than meaning-focused and communicative tasks. Only four of the 14 interviewed teachers mentioned the use of pedagogical and authentic tasks.

In contrast, the data collected from the respondents in the questionnaire reported that 83.3% agree or strongly agree to Item 41: to use tasks that focus on meaningful communication. The inconsistency between the questionnaire results and the interviews conducted could be linked to the fact that not all 30 participants were interviewed or to the lack of teachers' understanding of the use of CLT activities and tasks, as is often seen in the cases of Taiwanese teachers (Chen, 2020). In addition, due to the test-oriented teaching, teachers might have been discouraged or even prevented from using CLT tasks (Chang and Goswami, 2011; Chen & Tsai, 2012). If it is true that the teachers used more controlled drills than meaningful tasks, it would raise concerns, explained below.

Guariento and Morley (2001: 349-350) discuss the importance of task authenticity from four aspects: authenticity through (i) "genuine purpose", (ii) "real world targets", (iii) "classroom interaction", and (iv) "engagement". Firstly, task authenticity lies in "whether real communication takes place; whether the language has been used for genuine purpose" (Guariento & Morley, 2001: 349). Lack of communication among learners also means losing text authenticity, as Breen (1985) believes that text authenticity relies on the criteria whether there is genuine communication going on. More controlled drills or activities cannot equip students with communicative competence (Ellis, 2003). The controlled



exercises were used for comprehension check in various forms, such as, the gap-filling drills, multiple-choice questions, the cloze exercises, peer editing to check for individual students' answers, or the responses to the teachers' displayed questions. This type of activities can be categorized into 'pre-communicative language practice' proposed by Littlewood (2004; 2007), with primary focus on form, but was oriented a little towards conveying meaning. Even though the teachers in this study reported using games or competitions to recap what is learned, during the games or competitions, the teachers asked the questions to which students answered. These questions have single standard answers, drawing from pre-taught language knowledge. Such questions resemble to displayed questions in which there was little negotiation of meanings and no real communication going on between the interlocutors as they already knew the answers. Although there is communication going on, the emphasis is on practicing the pre-taught language items. As explained above, this type of practice is categorized as pre-communicative language practice. Although there are benefits for using form-focused exercises or activities, these exercises and activities could not equip students' communicative competence (Ellis, 2003).

Secondly, authenticity can be manifested in classroom interactions. As Breen suggested (1985: 68), "Perhaps one of the main authentic activities within a language classroom is communication about how best to communicate". Authentic communication can be considered as process of interaction between a written text and specific reader's interpretation of the text (Breen, 1985). In terms of freer pedagogical activities, some teachers reported using student

presentations or other types of speaking practice, and some made use of song teaching. Like controlled drills, such presentation and song teaching are pre-communicative activities, as these types of exercises or activities involve only one-way communication. However, student presentation may meet some of the guiding criterion of learner authenticity proposed by Breen (1985), as this can allow learners to share their interpretation of the text if they are required to use the target language. Nevertheless, only three teachers asked their students to do presentation.

Thirdly, authenticity can be achieved through real world targets. Communicative tasks are assigned with a target to attain, can relate to the real world, and allow meaningful communication. These communicative tasks can be further divided into pedagogical tasks and authentic tasks since these types of tasks involved more information exchange and communication, which is deemed as communicative tasks. Classroom-based pedagogic tasks can be designed to replicate or rehearse real-life activities (Guariento & Morley, 2001). Breen (1985) also viewed that pedagogic tasks can allow learners to have real meaningful communication. With regards to pedagogic tasks, only one teacher reported using information gap tasks, e.g. asking for directions; two others reported using opinion gap tasks, and two other teachers employed real-world or target tasks. Judging from the activities that the other participant teachers described, Breen's social situation of language classroom authenticity can hardly be met, since communication is the main concern in a language classroom. Furthermore, authenticity may depend on whether a student is engaged by the tasks, the fourth aspect of Guariento and Morley's framework

(2001). The findings from the interviews highlighted the lack of real meaningful communication taking place in the classroom as the teachers' use of activities did not engage their learners, thus, authenticity of tasks was not achieved.

All in all, drawing from the interview data, the tasks that the interviewees mentioned were deemed communicative tasks in the sense of weak version. Tasks are not prevalent in many East-Asian EFL contexts, such as Hong Kong and China (Mangubhai *et al.*, 2007; Richards, 2008; Carless, 2009; Littlewood, 2014; Paul & Liu, 2018), as well as Taiwan (Savignon & Wang, 2003, Hsu, 2015; Chen, 2020).

Although it is suggested by many (e.g. Zyzik and Polio (2017) that teachers should make use of both exercises and pedagogic tasks when dealing with authentic materials, this study finds that the teacher participants lacked the knowledge to use or design tasks. This is the main obstacle of using authentic materials in this research context. This indicates that teacher education will be needed. The suggestions to address this issue will be made in the following chapter.

## **6.5 The Constraints on the Use of Authentic Materials**

A number of constraints came into play and had an impact on teachers' use of authentic materials and associated tasks. These constraints reported include those from contextual factors, for example, curricular constraints and factors related to teachers themselves. It is argued that the interplay between these

factors influences the extent to which teachers implemented the use of authentic materials and associated tasks. These constraints were not mutually exclusive, but inter-related.

### **6.5.1 Curricular Constraints on the Teachers**

Related to contextual factors, many of the teachers attributed not using authentic materials to time stress, the unified syllabi and curricula, the mandatory unified textbooks, and the unified major school examinations.

As many as twelve interviewed teachers reported that there was time stress to follow the fixed curricula with an assigned textbook and a specific timetable. This left them with little time available in class to use authentic materials. Almusallam's (2015: 69) findings concur: "the teacher participants mentioned four factors that limit the use of authentic reading materials: time, students' abilities, heavy teaching load, and the rigid college curriculum." Furthermore, in her interview, one participant stated, "They want teachers to follow a specific curriculum, which includes specific textbooks, workbooks, etc" (Almusallam, 2015: p.70). To follow a fixed curriculum has limited teachers' class time available to use authentic materials.

The unified syllabi and curricula made things worse. Most of the interviewed teachers said that they were subject to the shared unified syllabi and curricula at the department or school levels. They had a syllabus-based curriculum developed from the unified textbooks. As such, most of the interviewed teachers

were constrained in the use of authentic materials at their disposal when the unified syllabi and curricula to follow were tight. As mentioned in many studies, teachers have been frequently under tight time pressure to keep abreast of the shared curriculum. For example, Carless (2003) described a general perception among Hong Kong primary English teachers to be under pressure to “complete the syllabus and textbook” (Carless, 2003: 492), not to mention the university contexts. Zyzik and Polio (2017) also pointed out the curricular realities involved the time constraints related in covering the required textbook materials.

Another contextual constraint is caused by the communal examinations and required English proficiency examinations in order to graduate. Most of the participating teachers were usually subject to the communal examinations and shared unified curricula developed from the unified mandatory textbooks. In addition, students were urged to take certified English examinations. According to Tsai (2010: 154), the Ministry of Education, the universities, the enterprises, and the teachers value the numbers of professional certificates students earn, and they “aggressively encourage students to pass the certificate examinations”. Teachers may change the content or the way of teaching when dealing with high stake examinations (Ur, 2013). Tests that focus on form such as multiple choice and cloze testing prevalent in Taiwan (Chen, 2016) may keep the teacher from training students’ communicative abilities (Hsu, 2015). Thus, a washback effect has actually taken place.

Most of the teachers mentioned that they had to follow the shared syllabus and unified textbook, which not only rendered the use of authentic materials

supplementary, but also had implications on the time available for them to prepare the authentic materials and carry out associated activities and tasks. Similar results were found in studies from other countries. Li (1998) also pointed out that South Korean English teachers had to spend much time teaching test-preparation skills to students, a factor which was perceived as a barrier to the implementation of communicative approaches. Many teachers in the study had overloaded work, making material preparation a burden to the teachers. This constraint is similar to Almusallam's (2015) conclusion from a Saudi study, involving 32 female college EFL teachers from three institutes, which stated that the heavy workload may discourage the teachers from implementing authentic materials.

In contexts such as those in East Asia, many EFL teachers are busy with too many students due to a large class size, and a heavy workload in teaching and administrative duties. Investigating Taiwanese college students' extensive reading of authentic materials, Guo's study (2012: 203) also identified "large class size, inflexible syllabus, insufficient class time, and scarcity of materials" as the challenges that English teachers in the Asian contexts are likely to face. To find appropriate authentic materials and then to compile them into well-organized lesson plans are very time-consuming and labour-intensive. It is hard for the EFL teachers to devote much extra time in preparing and compiling authentic materials to a large extent. Using authentic materials to teach with would usually mean these teachers need to work on an even tighter syllabus at the cost of condensing outside teaching materials into the already rigid curricula, placing an extra study load on their students. It is no wonder that the unified

curriculum based on the unified textbooks had set the boundaries in teachers' flexibility of the use of authentic materials. One interviewee described his struggles to incorporate authentic materials into his lessons, which were subject to the mandatory textbooks on which the shared unified curriculum was based and from which the major unified examinations were developed:

So, we would use authentic materials... very heavily in conversation class... I had to find time for that...we use the same book, the same common exam, we've got to make the same progress as each other through the book, so I'm constrained in that sense... (Max)

One of the participating teachers in Almusallam's study (2015:70) also concurred that "the administration at a particular institution does not permit teachers to have this type of flexibility. They want teachers to follow a specific curriculum, which includes specific textbooks, workbooks, etc." Here Almusallam (2015) indicated the constraints from rigid curricula kept her participating teachers from using authentic materials. Similarly, the overall findings from the current study revealed that most of the teachers have positive attitudes and are interested in using authentic materials sporadically to supplement their lesson. However, due to the inflexible syllabus relying heavily on textbooks, the demand of passing the professional certificate and the examination-oriented education system, most of the teachers in my study could not use authentic materials and associated tasks to their full extent.

Zyzik and Polio (2017) proposed a couple of solutions to deal with the curricular dilemma of incorporating authentic materials following the same syllabus with the same textbook and common examinations to prepare. One of the solutions is to have a teacher develop certain lesson plans based on authentic materials

to share with other teachers; another option is to cover less of the textbooks used for the unified examination (Zyzik & Polio, 2017). However, the latter instance is not feasible in my context as teachers are to be accountable for their students' performance over the achievement-based unified examination.

### **6.5.2 Related to Teachers Themselves**

The teachers mentioned that it is time-consuming and labour-intensive to gather and organize the materials and to design the activities associated with the authentic materials. The teachers had to spend a lot of time to select and then to compile the materials relevant to the requirements of the curriculum and lesson plan, as well as the appropriateness for the needs and interests, and the linguistic and cognitive command of the learners.

Most of the interviewed teachers have a tight unified curriculum to follow, which had an implication on the time available for selecting, compiling, and organizing the authentic materials. This is consistent with the current literature. Zyzik and Polio (2017) mentioned that issues surrounding using authentic materials include "time-consuming to search for, compile, and organize authentic texts" (Zyzik and Polio, 2007: 135). Belaid & Murray's (2015) empirical study investigated ten Libyan teachers' perceptions towards using authentic materials from four universities. They also found time preparation on teachers' part made the teachers hesitant to use authentic materials.



The next chapter will summarize the main findings and give their implications, recommendations, and the contributions to knowledge.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusion**

This chapter summarizes the main findings and gives their implications, the limitations of the study, and finally the recommendations for further research, practice, or policy.

### **7.1 Summary of the Main Findings**

This study explored teachers' perceptions towards the use of authentic materials at the tertiary level, especially in the universities of technology in the Taiwanese EFL test-oriented educational system (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Chen & Tsai, 2012). Test-oriented teaching was one of the factors that hindered college teachers' implementation of communicative teaching in the EFL Taiwanese context (Chang & Goswami, 2011). Teacher-fronted and test-oriented educational system are prevalent in Taiwan (Chen & Tsai, 2012). This exploratory study involved two research instruments, a questionnaire investigating teachers' attitudes, followed by a semi-structured interview. Thirty teachers participated in the questionnaires and 14 teachers took part in the semi-structured interview, ranging from 40 to 90 minutes. All statistical analysis was performed using SPSS Version 24 for Windows. Descriptive analysis including means, frequency counts, and percentages was used.

The analysis of the results indicated that teachers who participated in the study might have positive attitudes (Soliman, 2013; AbdulHussein, 2014; Almusallam, 2015; Belaid and Murray, 2015; Akbari and Razavi, 2016; Huda, 2017; Anam &

Anam, 2019) towards the use of authentic materials in their EFL classes although they made sporadic use of authentic materials (RQ 1). Teachers had high esteem for using authentic materials to facilitate language learning (Kilickaya, 2004; Huang, 2005; Berardo, 2006; Guo, 2012) through motivating (Lee, 1995; Peacock, 1997; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Berardo, 2006; Gilmore, 2007; Almusallam, 2015; Marzban and Davaji, 2015; Mestari & Malabar, 2017; Parmawati and Yugafiati, 2017; Banegas et al., 2019;) and engaging the learners (Lee, 1995; Hedge, 2000; Sheu, 2008; Soliman, 2013; Almusallam, 2015; Belaid and Murray, 2015; Anam & Anam, 2019), linking to the real-world language use (Wilkins, 1976; Clarke, 1989; Lee, 1995; Wong et al, 1995; Hedge, 2000; Richards, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004; Berardo, 2006; Belaid & Murray, 2015; Akbari & Razavi, 2016; Huda, 2017; Mestari & Malabar, 2017), exposing to the rich input (Mishan, 2005; Pinner, 2016), and promoting the learners' cultural learning and awareness (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004; Berardo, 2006). With sensible selection and presentation, authentic materials may help the learners to bridge the gap (Wong et al., 1995; Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014) between the language used in the classroom and the language students will encounter in the real world outside the classroom, and thus consolidate their learning and inspire their creative thinking.

When coming to exploitation of authentic materials (RQ 2), the interviewed teachers reported that they would select the materials based on their relevance to the course objectives (McGrath, 2002) and topics of interest, and other learners' factors, i.e. learners' needs, interests, and proficiency levels (Nunan, 1989; Almusallam, 2015; Belaid & Murray, 2015). The findings from the

questionnaires also revealed that material selection would be based on whether they can be appropriate to students' interest and level. When coming to how to exploit the texts, the teachers mentioned that they would guide students to grasp the general meanings of the authentic texts. They would design activities to have genuine communication with the messages that the authors of the materials intended to convey. Furthermore, most of the teachers would make sporadic use of authentic materials as the majority of the teachers (83%) were required to adopt the shared mandatory textbooks and 77% of the teachers had to adopt the unified curricula. Still, 80% of the teachers had major school tests based on the unified curricula. All of these contextual factors had rendered the use of authentic materials as supplementary materials to complement the textbook materials. In terms of how much authentic materials were in use, most of the teachers would make sporadic use of authentic materials. When being asked how they would treat authentic materials, they would use authentic materials as supplementary materials (Anam & Anam, 2019).

In terms of issues with material adaptation (RQ3), most of the interviewed teachers were inclined not to make much simplification or adaptation, to keep the integrity of the authentic texts as is. The teachers from the questionnaires would make slight changes only when necessary. With regards to issues with suitable levels, most of the teachers perceived that authentic materials are appropriate with intermediate (Soliman, 2013; Almusallam, 2015; Belaid and Murray, 2015; Akbari and Razavi, 2016), post-intermediate (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kilickaya, 2004), or advanced levels (Beresova, 2015). And the extent to which the students would understand a passage should be at the range

between 70 to 80 percent.

With regards to associated activities or tasks appropriate with the use of authentic materials (RQ4), the findings revealed mixed results. The teachers from the questionnaires opted for more meaning-focused activities whilst the interviewed teachers reported more form-focused activities. The teachers from the questionnaires preferred real-life authentic tasks to pedagogical tasks; whereas, the interviewed teachers reported using more pedagogical tasks than real-life tasks. The discrepancy might come from the fact that not all 30 participating teachers were interviewed, the lack of understanding on the teachers' part in the use of CLT activities and tasks, and from test-oriented teaching that might prevent teachers from the implementation of CLT tasks as indicated by Chang and Goswami (2011) and Chen & Tsai (2012) in Section 7.1 above.

In terms of the limitation or constraints (RQ5), the overarching theme was the time stress (Guo, 2012; Almusallam, 2015; Belaid & Murray, 2015; Zyzik & Polio, 2017) among the contextual constraints. It was very time-consuming for teachers to gather, compile, and organize the authentic materials into their lessons (Zyzik & Polio, 2017). Preparation time on the teacher's part makes teachers hesitant to use authentic materials (Belaid & Murray, 2015). The teachers also reported that it was labour-intensive to gather and select the authentic materials to suit their students' needs and teaching points. The contextual constraints that had an implication on their willingness to use authentic materials also included the unified textbook, the rigid curricula

(Almusallam, 2015), and the unified major school examinations. Teachers have been required to follow the mandatory textbooks, to finish the shared curricula, and to help students pass with high scores the major school examinations developed from test bank questions from unified curricula. These major school examinations are usually form-focused and emphasized on the correctness of lexical items. As teachers need to help their students prepare for the major school examination and language proficiency tests, these constraints might have implications on teachers' use of associated activities or tasks.

These contextual factors constrained teachers' flexible use of authentic materials and associated activities. Finally, students' interest and level constrained teachers' selection of authentic materials. It is not easy to find simple authentic texts that contain lexically complexity appropriate for the beginner students. As a result, it is always time-consuming and labour-intensive to find authentic materials suitable for lower level students.

The findings from this investigation lead to certain implications and recommendations for relevant stakeholders in similar settings and beyond. They will be presented in the following section.

## **7.2 Implications and Recommendations**

A number of implications and recommendations from this study are presented hereby:

First, it is suggested that in order to incorporate authentic materials into the curricula, one of the solutions is to cover less of the shared curricula (Zyzik & Polio, 2017) on which the test banks of the major school examination are developed. Only when teachers are required to cover less of the textbook materials, can they incorporate more authentic materials into their classes. Teachers can thus have more flexibility to use authentic materials catered to their students' interest and needs.

Second, as the participating teachers have a high esteem towards the use of authentic materials, it is recommended for teachers to integrate authentic materials into their curricula. As teachers were assigned with textbooks to teach, a combination of textbooks and authentic materials in their teaching works might be feasible (Soliman, 2013; Almusallam, 2015). Such a combination might serve to fulfil the required materials to cover, but also allow students to experience the benefits brought about by the authentic materials. Admittedly, this can only work when teachers feel there is still time remaining in class after completing the assigned chapters in the textbook.

Third, as authentic materials may date quickly, they need to be constantly updated. However, it is time-consuming and labour-intensive to collect and compile authentic materials. To ease teachers' workload, the interviewed teachers suggested that the textbook publishers can provide them with online resources which contain authentic materials, with tips on teaching points or lesson plans for the teaching purposes. Another solution is for each teacher to develop a lesson plan based on authentic materials or lessons to share with

other teachers (Zyzik & Polio, 2017). This might reduce the teaching load to a certain extent.

This study finds that teachers may have problems in using tasks. The interviewed teachers reported several activities. Through analysis, the teachers did not make a distinction between tasks and activities; these activities were more form-focused exercises or activities than meaning-focused tasks. This is an important issue which has rarely been addressed by previous empirical studies. Several suggestions are made accordingly. First, through teacher training workshops or professional development programs, teachers should be introduced to communicative interactions with students when using tasks based on authentic materials.

Secondly, considering students' needs, interest, and language abilities (Nunan, 1989; Almusallam, 2015), teachers can allow their students to be involved in the selection process of authentic materials to be used (Almusallam, 2015; Ramezanzadeh & Rezaei, 2019). The teachers in this study also mentioned that the criteria in choosing authentic materials need to be relevant to the objectives of the lesson and appropriate to students' needs. Students should be given an opportunity to have a say on the authentic materials to use with them (Almusallam, 2015; Ramezanzadeh & Rezaei, 2019). This might ensure that the level of textual difficulty would match the learners' cognitive and linguistic demands, but also cater to their interests.

Thirdly, textbook publishers should incorporate authentic materials with



appropriate tasks, containing detailed instructions (Chen, 2020) as to how to carry out each task with the textbooks. Thus, teachers can make a choice as to the extent they would want to follow the explicit procedures to carry out the tasks. Novice teachers tend to follow the textbook and find the teacher's manual to be most valuable in assisting them (Borko & Livingston, 1989). In Chen's (2020) action research study, she worked with experienced teachers who lacked knowledge of the communicative approaches. She observed that these teachers were willing to follow and were learning the approaches as long as practical examples of communicative activities were provided with detailed procedures.

To conclude, it is labour-intensive to search for authentic materials appropriate for use, as teachers in this study mentioned. There might be a need for teacher education and for language program to establish teacher training workshops in selecting suitable materials to use, and familiarize teachers themselves with the new empirical findings in the EFL field to help them successfully implement authentic materials and associated tasks in class. Given that the teachers may fall short of the ability to design tasks based on authentic materials, it is strongly suggested that the material developers and publishers supply teachers with authentic texts or resources and teacher's manuals that provide tasks with detailed procedures.

### **7.3 Limitations of the Study**

The present study has certain limitations that should be addressed. First, data collection took place mostly in northern Taiwan. Therefore, the results cannot

speak for the entire Taiwanese tertiary EFL classes. However, universities in Taiwan are not vastly different, thus, findings are still applicable to other Taiwanese contexts and beyond.

This study not only investigated what the teachers perceive but also how they exploit authentic materials. This was explored through interviews with 14 of the 30 participating teachers. Their answers helped to clarify and expand on their perceptions of the use of authentic materials and activities or tasks in the classroom. Classroom observations were not practical because of the time commitment needed (Bell, 2010; Robson, 2011), and the accessibility limitation, and intrusive nature (Roberson, 1998). However, including classroom observations would almost certainly have provided insightful details (Robson, 2011) into the use of authentic materials and tasks in the classroom, and would have added to the depth and richness of the data. In their absence, to obtain a fuller picture of participant teachers' classroom practice, I tried to encourage interviewees to rebuild the classroom scene in their mind and describe it in detail. Thus, I believe the use of interviews in this study conceivably helped me to understand both the teachers' perceptions towards authentic materials and tasks in the classroom, and their reported practices of using them.

#### **7.4 Suggestions for Future Research**

For future studies, it is suggested that class observations could be included, as this instrument allows researchers to see and understand what participants actually do in class. Classroom observations complement the instruments, such

as interviews and questionnaires, which can only “listen” to what they do, as there is often inconsistency between these sets of data (Robson, 2011: 316).

In addition, this study focused on teacher participants in EFL tertiary level. Future study can be conducted with EFL teachers and students at other levels of schools island-wide. It is suggested that an increase in the total number of participating teachers can also ensure more credible results. Moreover, since students are the main participants in the teaching and learning process, their views should be understood. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies include students' views so as to accommodate a holistic view of the use of authentic materials in Taiwan. Besides, learner's authenticity in term of learner's voice can be explored as well as authenticity in the area of writing.

Furthermore, future study can investigate whether there is a successful case of teacher implementation of authentic materials and tasks under similar context, i.e. with shared unified curriculum to cover and the communal examination to follow.

In addition, teachers' infrequent use of tasks as well as their lack of a clear understanding regarding communicative interactions are areas which deserve future studies. This study did not include learners' attitudes and focused only on the tertiary level in Taiwan, thus, expanding to include learners and teachers at different levels would also be areas for future studies.

## **7.5 Contribution to Knowledge**

The current study aimed to build on previous work and contributed to the literature through new findings drawing from the comprehensive investigation of the teachers' perceptions of using authentic materials, associated tasks, and their constraints at tertiary level in Taiwanese context. It contributed to the literature through new findings that participating teachers did not have a clear understanding of associated tasks and were mainly using form-focused activities.

Teachers play a significant role in providing authentic materials for students. Teachers' attitudes will have an influence on their teaching and students' learning motivation (Soliman, 2013). Yet, teachers' attitudes regarding the use of authentic materials in their classes have not received enough attention (Soliman, 2013). Similarly, the use of authentic materials in EFL Taiwanese context has not received the attention it deserved.

To my knowledge, there have been very few studies that address all three areas of teachers' perceptions of authentic materials, tasks, and constraints in one study. Previous study addressed teachers' perceptions, learners' perceptions, or tasks separately. Thus, the current study serves to fill the gap.

One of the major contributions made is the understanding that although most of the participating teachers do have positive attitudes towards authentic materials, they struggled with having time in class to bring in authentic materials, feeling stressed by the set curriculum and unified testing system. Whilst many

studies merely investigated teachers' or students' attitudes (AbdulHussein, 2014; Almusallam, 2015), few studies address the problems in using tasks based on authentic materials. That is to say, another contribution of this study is the finding that these teachers had limited knowledge of using either real-life tasks or pedagogic tasks. This is an important issue which has rarely been addressed by previous empirical studies.

Through interviewing teachers who gave detailed description associated with activities that they perceived to be appropriate to use with authentic materials, this study gained many insightful findings presented in Chapter 5, which can serve as a point of reference in the Taiwanese context and beyond. This study set out to understand how teachers in this context with a test-driven ethos and unified curricula could still use authentic materials. In addition, as findings reported, teachers' lack of a clear understanding in the use of tasks should be an area of focus for the EFL education in Taiwan. Higher education institutions should conduct workshops and teachers' trainings to help educators to be better prepared, especially in light of the positive attitudes teachers have towards the use of authentic materials.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Ethics Form, Information Letter, Consent Form, Ethics

#### Certificate



Ref (for office use only)

D/15/16/31A

#### COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

When completing this form please remember that the purpose of the document is to clearly explain the ethical considerations of the research being undertaken. As a generic form it has been constructed to cover a wide-range of different projects so some sections may not seem relevant to you. Please include the information which addresses any ethical considerations for your particular project which will be needed by the SSIS Ethics Committee to approve your proposal.

Guidance on all aspects of the SSIS Ethics application process can be found on the SSIS intranet: <https://intranet.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences/staff/research/researchenvironmentandpolicies/ethics/>

All staff and postdoctoral students within SSIS should use this form to apply for ethical approval and then send it to one of the following email addresses:

[ssis-ethics@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:ssis-ethics@exeter.ac.uk) This email should be used by staff and postdoctoral students in Egenis, the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies, Law, Politics, the Strategy & Security Institute, and Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology.

[ssis-gseethics@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:ssis-gseethics@exeter.ac.uk) This email should be used by staff and postdoctoral students in the Graduate School of Education.

Applicant details	
Name	<a href="#">Lai-Yin Yang</a>
Department	<a href="#">Education</a>
UoE email address	<a href="mailto:Ly264@exeter.ac.uk">Ly264@exeter.ac.uk</a>

Duration for which permission is required		
You should request approval for the entire period of your research activity. The start date should be at least one month from the date that you submit this form. Students should use the anticipated date of completion of their course as the end date of their work. Please note that <u>retrospective ethical approval will never be given.</u>		
Start date: <a href="#">20/01/2016</a>	End date: <a href="#">20/09/2016</a>	Date submitted: <a href="#">20/12/2015</a>

Students only	
All students must discuss their research intentions with their supervisor/tutor prior to submitting an application for ethical approval. The discussion may be face to face or via email.	
Prior to submitting your application in its final form to the SSIS Ethics Committee it should be approved by your first and second supervisor / dissertation supervisor/tutor. You should submit evidence of their approval with your application, e.g. a copy of their email approval.	
Student number	<a href="#">590039220</a>
Programme of study	<a href="#">Other</a> <a href="#">Doctor of Education (EdD) Thesis</a>
Name of Supervisor(s)/tutors or Dissertation Tutor	<a href="#">Susan Riley</a>
Have you attended any ethics training that is	<a href="#">Yes, I have taken part in ethics training at the University of Exeter</a> <a href="#">I have taken part in the Research Integrity Ethics and Governance workshop:</a>

c:\Users\nts202\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.Outlook\7FPH6QFY\Lai-Yin Yang EdD TESOL SSIS Ethics application 11 Aug 2016.docx Page 1 of 9

available to students? <http://ps.exeter.ac.uk/rdn/posterandwaterresearchers:06/12/2015>

#### Certification for all submissions

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given in this application and that I undertake in my research to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research. I confirm that if my research should change radically I will complete a further ethics proposal form.

Lai-Yin Yang

Double click this box to confirm certification

*Submission of this ethics proposal form confirms your acceptance of the above.*

#### TITLE OF YOUR PROJECT

Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Authentic Materials and Tasks in EFL Classrooms at Tertiary Level in Taiwan

#### ETHICAL REVIEW BY AN EXTERNAL COMMITTEE

No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.

#### MENTAL CAPACITY ACT 2005

No, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people with learning disabilities)

#### SYNOPSIS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

*As a guide - 750 words.*

This exploratory study aims to investigate English language teachers' perceptions of using authentic materials and associated tasks as potential pedagogical approaches to complement their current use of textbook materials at the tertiary level of education, specifically various universities of technology in my country, Taiwan. The majority of English language teachers at universities of technology in Taiwan might teach with one or two textbooks in their language classrooms. The lesson plans and curriculum are based on the chosen textbooks. Most of the time, there will be a unified curriculum for teachers who teach students at the same year or level to follow because their students may need to take a unified examination at the school level. In addition, their students may need to take English proficiency examinations at national or international levels. As a result, the language classrooms may feature structure-based instruction and test-driven ethos in which language teaching and learning take place.

With the communicative language teaching approach proposed in ELT, there is encouragement of the use of authentic materials and associated tasks. As premised in communicative language teaching, language teaching should equip students with opportunities to practice authentic language and simulate the tasks as used in real-world settings. Most EFL students in Taiwan have limited exposure to authentic language due partly to lack of interaction with native speakers of English and partly to the wide use of textbooks materials, which are criticized for the dominant contrived discourse in the language classrooms. The study would also like to understand to what extent the use of authentic materials and associated tasks can have the potential to play a part in contexts such as those in the study which feature a traditional structural language teaching approach and test-oriented ethos. Although it may be a potential pedagogical approach to use authentic materials and associated tasks to complement the wide use of textbook materials in EFL classrooms, it is not clear whether English language teachers would like to use authentic materials

and tasks, and what and how they would introduce authentic materials and tasks in their language classrooms.

Given the likely complexities and diversities of the nature of the teachers' perceptions, I opt for an exploratory study embedded in the Interpretive paradigm in order to understand the multiple lived experiences of my participating teachers through exploratory studies of several participating teachers who have had experience teaching students of universities of technology in Taiwan.

Furthermore, as a teacher researcher I would like to explore not only whether authentic materials and associated tasks are deemed appropriate by these teachers but also how the authentic texts and associated tasks can be appropriately brought to their language classrooms. The research questions are as follows:

✚ What do the teachers think about the use of authentic materials and associated tasks and how do they use them for teaching English in Taiwanese universities or universities of technology?

The sub-questions are as follows:

1. What are the teachers' views on the use of authentic materials for teaching?
2. If they need to use authentic materials, how do the teachers use authentic materials and associated tasks or activities based on the authentic materials?
3. What issues need to be addressed when using authentic materials in terms of the teachers' pedagogical considerations or teaching practices?
4. What tasks or activities based on the authentic materials are deemed appropriate to be assigned to their learners, if any?
5. What, if any, are the limitations on the teachers' use of authentic materials and associated tasks, if any?

#### **INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH**

The study will be conducted in Taiwan. There are no local requirements for ethical approval from any institutions. The participants will be approached as individual teachers who are not representing any particular institution. I will start with obtaining the informed consent verbally and in writing from individual participants before they agree to voluntarily take part in the studies.

The following sections require an assessment of possible ethical consideration in your research project. If particular sections do not seem relevant to your project please indicate this and clarify why.

#### **RESEARCH METHODS**

The study is exploratory based on mostly qualitative data collection methods. I have chosen to undertake exploratory studies several individual teachers who have had experience of teaching students from universities of technology in Taiwan. The methods to use will include questionnaire, interview, observation, and document analysis. The document may include the information provided by my participating teachers or the information which is in print, or online open to public access. A pilot study will be used before the administration of the questionnaire or conducting of the interviews. Feedback will be taken into account and used to make any revisions.

There will be a questionnaire which will combine closed-ended and open-ended questions. For the

closed-ended question, a Likert scale will be used. The questionnaire will be emailed and sent to potential participants online and distributed manually by the researcher in person.

Following the questionnaire, in-depth semi-structured interviews with several participants will be carried out. Each interview will take less than 90 minutes. If the participants agree, one or more follow-up interview will be conducted. The interviews will either be face-to-face or alternatively online schemes through Skype or Line, depending on the convenience and needs of the participating teachers. The interviews will be conducted in either Mandarin Chinese or English in their native languages. The choice of the language to use will be based on the participating teachers' preference. If the local teachers are more at ease with speaking English, then the interview will be conducted in English; if they are more comfortable with their native language, the interview will be conducted in Mandarin Chinese. If the participating teachers are native speakers of English, the interviews will then be conducted in English.

The semi-structured interviews will be conducted until the information is saturated. Multiple one-to-one interviews with several participants will be conducted, each lasting no more than ninety minutes. The interview guide serves only as a prompt to allow for changes made in the questions during the process of interviewing. Prior to the in-depth interviews, a prompt which might include short texts, images, or video clips, depending on the facilities accessible, about what might constitute authentic materials and tasks will be used in order to inspire the participants to engage in talking about what they think about the use of authentic materials and tasks. Also, classroom observation will be arranged if available.

The purpose of using a questionnaire is not intended to test the hypothesis or to see if there is a relationship between different variables, but to help in the design of interview question and the follow-up interviews will be devised based on the responses of the questionnaire. Thematic analysis will be used to analyze the qualitative data in order to find emergent themes.

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

The participants will be identified based on the criteria that the teachers should have experience of teaching English at tertiary level, especially colleges or universities of technology in Taiwan. The English language teachers at the tertiary level of education in Taiwan are usually local EFL teachers and some native-speaking teachers. The potential participants will include the local non-native-speaking English language teachers and native-speaking English teachers. I will access my participants in a number of ways. Firstly, the participants will be identified through the voluntary participation of the respondents who complete the questionnaire survey and who agree on the questionnaire to take part in the interviews. Furthermore, the potential participants will be accessed through my research connections at various institutes and through snowball sampling based on the list of people recommended by interviewees or my research connections. A pilot study will be administered to some Taiwanese language teachers who are currently studying for a postgraduate degree at University of Exeter, or teachers who have the experience of teaching English at tertiary level, specifically at either universities of technology or private language institutes in Taiwan.

#### **THE VOLUNTARY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION**

I will ensure that the participation of my participants will be voluntary. The ethical considerations applied to my study will be as follows. Before the process of data collection, I will seek the informed consent orally and in writing from my potential participants before their agreement to

the study. The participants will be told that they have the right to refine, amend, cut, or withdraw the transcription of the data they provide or any statement that they made previously. The participants will also be informed of their freedom to withdraw from my study at any stage prior to the submission of my thesis without any harm or prejudice being incurred. They will also have the right to decide when, where, and how it will be convenient for them to have the interviews such as face-to-face interviews, or online interviews via Skype. I will also assure them of confidentiality and anonymity of their identities and the educational settings they work. Thus, their identities and the institutes where they work when being referred to will be not be disclosed and will be referred to using pseudonyms or codes throughout my study to ensure anonymity. In addition, in order to minimize the stress or pressure on the participating teachers' workloads, the content and length of the questions in the questionnaire will be minimized to a reasonable extent. As for the participants in the interviews, they will be assured that the data that they provide will be solely used for the purpose of the research and that their response to the interview questions will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. They will be assured that they will have freedom to express their opinions and that there will be no infliction of potential harm onto their job prospects. They will be informed that the collected data will be securely stored, and be used only for the purpose of the research, and will be destroyed one year after the award of the degree.

#### **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Teachers with special needs are not anticipated to be involved in the research as they are not expected to be among my targeted population. However, if there are any teachers with special needs who are willing to participate in my study, special arrangements will be provided in order to meet their individual special needs.

#### **THE INFORMED NATURE OF PARTICIPATION**

Before they agree to take part in the research, I will distribute to them the information sheet delineating the research. The informed consent from the participants will be obtained verbally and in writing to assure them that their participation is entirely voluntary and that they are free to withdraw or discontinue their consent at any time before the completing of the study. The information sheet will explain whatever the participants might need to know about the research that they will take in and the voluntary nature of their participation in the study.

#### **ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE HARM**

There is no perceived harm to my participants. Attempts will be made not to place any perceived harm or unreasonable stress on the participating teachers. As teachers are usually inclined to have heavy workloads, the consideration will be taken in order to minimize the length and volume of the questions in the questionnaires. Likewise, precautions will be taken to lessen the effects of my intrusion activities to the minimum. Generally speaking, an observation in the language classrooms done by researcher as observer will be more intrusive than an interview with an individual done outside of the classrooms. Thus, taking ethical considerations into account, I think it appropriate to have more interviews with individual teachers than observations in their language classrooms. Respect to the participating teachers and their pedagogical considerations are the priority of my ethical consideration. Following ethical considerations, the identities of my participants and those of their organizations will be anonymized to ensure their confidentiality.

#### **DATA PROTECTION AND STORAGE**

I agree to abide by the provisions of the Data Protection Act and the University Data Protection Policy. Data and results obtained from the research will only be used in the ways for which consent has been given. Data will be stored on my personal laptop computer and password protected. My personal laptop computer will be kept in my own room, to which only I have access, and will be destroyed one year after the award of the degree. Transcribed data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and shredded when the analysis is completed. Data will be lawfully processed and will be processed in accordance with the participants' rights.

#### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

This research study does not involve any commercial or other interests. The study aims to gain an understanding of English language teachers' perception about to what extent the use of authentic materials and associated tasks can complement their use of textbook materials in a system which is shaped by a test-driven approach, specifically universities of technology in Taiwan. It is hoped that this research will contribute to the related literature and help these teachers improve their teaching.

#### **USER ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK**

There will be piloting before the administration of the questionnaire and conducting the interviews. The participants' feedback on the questionnaire will be considered and be used for modifying the research instruments. Furthermore, the interview data will be transcribed and the transcription would be sent to the participants for their approval. They are free to amend, modify, or add to their interview data. The finding of the study will be available for my participants upon their request after the completion of the study.

#### **INFORMATION SHEET**

##### **Title of Research Project:**

Teachers' Perception of the Use of Authentic Materials and Tasks in EFL Classrooms at Tertiary Level in Taiwan

Dear teacher,

You are being invited to take part in a research project that I am conducting as part of my thesis for the Doctor of Education degree at the University of Exeter. Before you decide it is important for you to understand what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information.

##### **The purpose of the project**

The aim of this research is to explore English language teachers' perceptions regarding the use of authentic materials and associated tasks. Authentic materials are those produced for real communication and not for language learning purposes.. The research will involve teachers of English across different universities of technology and language institutes. I would like to learn your opinions of using authentic materials as the main or complementary teaching materials and the associated tasks or activities developed based on the authentic materials.

I would like you first to complete a short questionnaire about your perceptions of the use of

authentic materials and associated tasks. This should only take about 10 minutes of your time. I also plan to conduct interviews with individual teachers and would like you to agree to an interview if possible. Each interview will take less than 90 minutes. The interviews will take place at a time convenient to you. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded and only those responses related to the research study will be transcribed, and you will be asked if you would like to read, comment on, make amendments, or add to the transcribed interview data.

You will be given a pseudonym so that no connection will be made to your true identity. Your participation is entirely voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself. The information collected will be anonymized and your identity will be anonymized throughout the research and will not be disclosed in the research report.

I confirm that I have read and understood the abovementioned information. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time.

Signature: ..... Date: / /

Thank you very much again for taking part in this study.

Sincerely,

Lai-Yin Yang

Doctor of Education (EdD in TESOL) researcher

College of Social Sciences and International Studies

Graduate School of Education

University of Exeter – United Kingdom

#### CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project: **Teachers' Perception of the Use of Authentic Materials and Tasks in EFL Classrooms at Tertiary Level in Taiwan**

#### CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to



participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation and may also request that my data be destroyed

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications or academic conference or seminar presentations

if applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....  
(Signature of participant )

.....  
(Date)

.....  
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s):+886952576560 (Taiwan); +44-07542087912.

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Ms. Lai-Yin Yang  
EdD in TESOL Researcher  
University of Exeter  
Email: [ly264@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:ly264@exeter.ac.uk)

OR

Dr. Susan Riley  
Lecturer: MEd, EdD and PhD TESOL  
Graduate School of Education  
University of Exeter  
Email: [s.m.riley@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:s.m.riley@exeter.ac.uk)

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Revised March 2013

## SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Staff and students should follow the procedure below.

**CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL APPROVAL**

**Title of Project:** Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Authentic Materials and Tasks in EFL Classrooms at Tertiary Level in Taiwan

**Researcher(s) name:** Lai-Yin Yang

**Supervisor(s):** Susan Riley

**This project has been approved for the period**

From: 20/01/2016

To: 20/09/2016

**Ethics Committee approval reference:**

D/15/16/31A



**Signature:** (Dr Philip Durrant, Chair, Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee)

**Date:** 15/08/2016 (amended ethics form)

## Appendix 2: Finalized Questionnaire

Dear Respondents:

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey to help me understand your opinions regarding using authentic materials in your teaching practice.

### Questionnaire on Teacher's Perceptions of Use of Authentic Materials & Associated Tasks at Tertiary Level in Taiwan

Authentic materials refer to any texts NOT intended for language teaching purposes, but for the communicative purpose as used by the speakers of English in the real life. (Ellis & Johnson, 1994). Examples of authentic materials may include texts, prints, visuals, audio or video materials, or realia such as admission tickets, menus, google maps, email messages, newspaper articles, songs, movie trailers, video clips from YouTube, TV or radio programs, commercials and advertisements, picture storybooks, and the like.

#### Part A. Background information

*Please circle your answer*

1. Gender  
a) Male      b) Female
2. Years of teaching experience (Please specify the years of your teaching if it is over ten years)  
1-5    6-10    11-15    16-20    21-25  
Over 25 years (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Courses you teach  
Freshmen English/ Sophomore English/ Junior English/ Senior English/  
Others (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
4. The language levels of your students (You can make more than one choice.)  
Beginner/ Pre-intermediate/ Intermediate/ Advanced/ Mixed levels
5. I consider myself \_\_\_\_\_ English-speaking teacher.  
a) Native



13	make learners engaged in class					
14	prepare learners to encounter authentic language as used in real life					
15	acquaint learners with the culture of the target language					
16	enable learners to understand the linguistic knowledge of the target language					
17	enable learners to understand the extra-linguistic knowledge of the target language					
18	contribute to learners' test results of language proficiency exams					
19	promote learners' receptive skills, such as listening or reading skills					
20	promote learners' productive skills, such as speaking or writing skills					
21	promote learners' overall communicative competence					
22	be relevant to the curriculum					
23	be culturally appropriate					

24 Please write down any other views you have about the benefits of authentic materials:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Part C: Reasons for choosing authentic materials

Please tick the box which most fits your opinion of the item.

Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Not sure 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

Item	<i>I choose authentic materials based on...</i>	1	2	3	4	5
25	whether they are entertaining to my students					
26	their relevance to the topics I teach					
27	whether they are appropriate to the level of the students I teach					
28	whether they are able to complement the					

	coursebook materials I use					
29	whether they are related to the lesson plans					
30	whether they can motivate my students					
31	whether they are appropriate for my students' homework					
32	whether they can stimulate meaningful discussion in class					
33	how my students respond emotionally					

34 Please write down any other views you have about the reasons for choosing authentic materials:

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### Part D: Exploiting authentic materials

Even if you do not currently use authentic materials in class, please answer to show what you would do to exploit them.

Please tick the box which most fits your opinion of the item.

Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Not sure 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

item	<i>In designing tasks or activities to use with authentic materials, I would encourage my students to....</i>	1	2	3	4	5
35	grasp the overall meaning of the authentic materials					
36	understand every vocabulary items					
37	analyse the grammatical structures					
38	do exercises that aim for comprehension check and drawing inferences from contextual clues					
39	use tasks that copy real-life activities (such as writing an email to the editor of a newspaper)					
40	use tasks that focus on developing accuracy of the language form					
41	use tasks that focus on meaningful communication					

- 42 Please write down any other views you have about exploitation of the authentic materials:

---



---

### Part E: Adapting authentic materials

*Please tick the box which most fits your opinion of the item.*

*Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Not sure 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree*

item	When using authentic materials in class, I would....	1	2	3	4	5
43	simplify the vocabulary or idioms					
44	take out complex sentences					
45	reduce the length of the text					
46	edit out linguistic items that would be difficult					
47	make the texts more lengthy					
48	make a change in visual format of the text					
49	script a listening text					
50	make an expansion by adding something to the text					
51	make no changes at all					

- 52 Please write down any other views you have about the adaptation of the authentic materials:

---



---

### Part F: Teachers' views on NOT to use authentic materials

This section is about the constraints or difficulties associated with using authentic materials in general. Even if you currently use authentic materials in class, please answer to show the constraints or difficulties that you have experienced.

Please tick the box(es) which most fit(s) your opinion of the item.

item	If you <b>DO NOT</b> use authentic materials, tick all of the reasons that apply.
53	<p>I do not use authentic materials because...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> they cannot fit in the unified coursebook materials I use.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> they cannot fit in with the unified curriculum that I use.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> they cannot be in line with the course objectives.</li></ul> <p>Please specify:</p> <p>_____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> they are irrelevant to the major school exams.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> they cannot enhance learners' test scores in major language proficiency tests.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> they cannot help my learners improve their English significantly.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> it is labour-intensive to choose appropriate authentic materials to teach.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> there is no time enough for me to choose them.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> there is no time enough for me to exploit them</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> there may not be technical equipment to show video clips such as those from YouTube.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> my students are not interested in learning with them.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I am not interested in using them to teach.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> they are too difficult for my students' levels</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> they take up much time of my teaching.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please specify)</li></ul> <p>_____</p> <p>If you had the opportunities to use authentic materials, would you include authentic materials in your teaching? (<b>Yes/ No</b>) (Please circle your answer)</p>

Thank you once again for your response.

Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up interview either face-to-face or SKYPE? **Yes/No** (Please circle your answer)

*If yes, please leave me your contact information so that I can reach you.*

Contact Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

You are welcome to reach me as follows:

Rhine Yang

Email: [LY264@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:LY264@exeter.ac.uk)



## Appendix 3: The Interview Guide

### Bilingual (English/ Chinese)

#### Reminder:

- Reiteration of ethics: Rights to withdraw
- Consent to participation (sign)
- Agree to be audio-recorded
- Start with their teaching experience

#### Questions:

1. Do you have experience in using authentic materials?  
有使用真實語料的經驗嗎?  
(prompts: giving examples of authentic materials if teachers don't understand, e.g. newspapers, recipes, magazines, YouTube, etc.)
2. If use, what are the reasons? If not use, what are the reasons(prompts: Motivation? Promote language skills ? Promote skills for prospective workplace?)  
如果使用的話，理由是什麼? (提升動機? 提升語言能力? 具備就業能力?)
3. If use, do you use them as supplementary or major teaching material?  
如果使用的話，當作補充教材? 全部都用作主教材?
4. If use, how to use?  
如果使用的話，怎麼使用?
5. If use, when to use? (Prior to the lesson, in the middle of the lesson, after the lesson?)  
如果使用的話，什麼時候使用? (Prompts:在課程一開始、中間時候、還是課程結束時?)
6. Any activities or tasks accompanying with using authentic materials  
用哪些教學活動或任務來搭配真實語料?
7. What are the difficulties or constraints for using or not using them?  
有什麼使用上的困難或限制?

## Appendix 4: Initial Reflective Notes (Excerpt)

Interview with Max    Date: 30 May 2016    Setting: Max's office<sup>42</sup>

↵

Interviewer: Hi, thank you for agreeing to take my interview.<sup>42</sup>

↵

Respondent: Okay. Thank you. <sup>42</sup>

↵

Interviewer: First of all, I want to find out, err, do you use authentic materials in your class?<sup>42</sup>

↵

Respondent: I do use. Yes, yes.<sup>42</sup>

↵

Interviewer: What's your opinion of using authentic materials in your class?<sup>42</sup>

↵

Respondent: I feel that using authentic materials you introduce them to **real language**, some you can, err, choose materials, uh, students see it as relevant, real, and immediate and more motivating to use, **than**, err, textbooks in many cases.<sup>42</sup>

↵

Interviewer: Is there any reasons that you feel that you want to use authentic materials?<sup>42</sup>

↵

Respondent: I use them because they are more relevant, I can choose materials that are particularly relevant to their interests, and needs of the students, and because it is real, it is not fake, it, ah, it creates a sense of immediacy, and relevance in the lesson.<sup>42</sup>

↵

Interviewer: Mmm, and when using authentic materials, in your class, how would you, ah, design a task, or have you ever designed a task based on the authentic materials that you use?<sup>42</sup>

↵

Respondent: It depends on the, uh, depends on the subject. I guess, ah, often the authentic materials are, erm, an information source that we can use as a basis for discussion. Err, I think, gap-fills could be, err, used. I guess. You mentioned that in the questionnaire, but I feel that that is reducing the authentic materials to a very basic kind of level. **You're** just focusing on vocabulary. **You're** not focusing on the content, and what the materials— the message that the materials are conveying, and I prefer to focus on message, rather than focus on individual language points.<sup>42</sup>

↵

**YL** **Yang, Lai-Yin**  
Teacher **perception of AM**: Authentic materials mean something 'real,' not fake, to them (Max, LN14)<sup>42</sup>

**YL** **Yang, Lai-Yin**  
Teacher **Perception of Am**: Authentic materials are characterized by something real, and something of immediate relevance and currency. They are motivating to the students (Max, LN15-16)<sup>42</sup>

**YL** **Yang, Lai-Yin**  
**Teacher perception of AM**: The reasons for using them are that their relevance to the students' interests, needs, and they provide a 'sense of immediacy and relevance in the lesson' because the text is real, not fabricated (Max, LN21-24)<sup>42</sup>

**YL** **Yang, Lai-Yin**  
Teacher perception of **Use of task**: AM can be used as the basis for class discussion (Max, LN30-32)<sup>42</sup>

**YL** **Yang, Lai-Yin**  
Teacher perception of **Use of task**: The use of gap-filling tasks may reduce AM to the basic levels. Tasks should be used to focus on the 'content' or 'message' rather than the 'language points' (Max, LN32-37)<sup>42</sup>

Interviewer: ~~Mmm~~, speaking of focusing on the message of the authentic materials I think it is, it is a very good idea to use authentic materials, erm, in the way that it should be used,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Respondent: Yeah,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Interviewer: And so some researchers would say, it is, erm, try to use authentic materials in an authentic way,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Respondent: Yes,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Interviewer: Do you see your using authentic materials to reflect its origin, ah, the original purpose of authentic materials?<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Respondent: Absolutely...<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Interviewer: Or, try to copy or replicate the, the activity? <sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Respondent: Often I use authentic materials when it comes to Speech classes, whether the Conversation or whether the Public Speaking. And its message, erm, I mean, I choose some articles from...base websites on how to do something, like, for instance, tips on, erm, effective public speaking,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Interviewer: ~~Mmm~~,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Respondent: And we discuss what it actually means,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Interviewer: ~~Mmm~~,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

Respondent: And perhaps, I'll identify some keywords that students may not understand, and explain them, but that is how I use them, rather than just using it as focusing on the language itself, focusing on filling in gaps, focusing on grammar. I prefer not to use them in that way, because I feel it's a missed opportunity if you do because you're focusing on the small detail of the language, you're not focusing on what the author of the authentic text is trying to convey, and it's what the author is trying to communicate...erm, you, that's, I, that, that, we focus on.<sup>4</sup>

YL

Yang, Lai-Yin

Teacher **perception of AM**: AM should be used in an authentic way. That's to focus on what message to be conveyed (Max, LN39-55)<sup>4</sup>

YL

Yang, Lai-Yin

Teacher Perception of **use of AM**: We should focus on what the author of the text tries to 'convey' or 'communicate' rather than the language or grammatical items (Max, LN68-74)<sup>4</sup>

## Appendix 5: Initial Coding from Transcript (Excerpt)

Transcript	Initial Coding
<p>Interview with Max    Date: 30 May 2016            Setting: Max's Office</p> <p>I: Hi, thank you for agreeing to take my interview.</p> <p>R: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>I: First of all, I want to find out, err, do you use authentic materials in your class?</p> <p>R: I do use. Yes, yes.</p> <p>I: What's your opinion of using authentic materials in your class?</p> <p>R: I feel that using authentic materials you introduce them to <b>real language</b>, some you can, err, choose materials, uh, students see it as <b>relevant, real, and immediate</b> and more <b>motivating to use, than, err, textbooks</b> in many cases.</p> <p>I: Is there any reasons that you feel that you want to use authentic materials?</p> <p>R: I use them because they are more relevant. I can <b>choose materials that are particularly relevant to their interests, and needs of the students, and because it is real, it is not fake, it creates a sense of immediacy, and relevance in the lesson.</b></p> <p>I: And when using authentic materials, in your class, how would you, ah, design a task, or have you ever designed a task based on the authentic materials that</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>making use of authentic materials in teaching</b></li>   <li>• <b>featuring real language</b></li> <li>• <b>featuring immediate relevancy</b></li> <li>• <b>more motivating students to use real language than textbooks would do</b></li>   <li>• <b>relevance to the interests and needs of students</b></li> <li>• <b>relevance to the content to teach</b></li> <li>• <b>creating sense of genuineness for students</b></li> <li>• <b>creating sense of immediate relevance</b></li> </ul>

you use?

R: It depends on the, uh, depends on the subject. I guess, often the authentic materials are an information source that we can use as a basis for discussion. I think, gap-fills could be used. I guess. You mentioned that in the questionnaire, but I feel that that is reducing the authentic materials to a very basic kind of level. You're just focusing on vocabulary. You're not focusing on the content, and what the materials— the message that the materials are conveying, and I prefer to focus on message, rather than focus on individual language points.

I: Mmm, speaking of focusing on the message of the authentic materials I think it is, it is a very good idea to use authentic materials, erm, in the way that it should be used,

R: Yeah.

I: And so some researchers would say to try to use authentic materials in an authentic way.

R: Yes.

I: Do you see your using authentic materials to reflect its origin, ah, the original purpose of authentic materials?

- tasks to be used based on authentic materials
- tasks using authentic materials as the source of information to discuss in class
- gap-filling tasks used to initiate discussion in class
- attention should not pay to the linguistic items only
- attention should pay to the message conveyed

## Appendix 6: Grouping of Codes into Categories

category	List of codes	
<b>perceptions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• authentic materials in use</li> <li>• making use of authentic materials in teaching</li> <li>• showing how language is used</li> <li>• some authentic material with great potential to use in teaching</li> <li>• some authentic materials easier to read than others</li> <li>• the use of authentic material depending on the sources available and how to use</li> <li>• showing how language is used</li> <li>• making no sense of using it for the sake of it</li> </ul>	
<b>Reasons for using authentic materials: benefits, relevance, features, input, output</b>		
<b>benefits</b>	<b>motivating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• motivating</li> <li>• changing the focus from mundane textbook material to more motivating &amp; inspiring authentic material</li> <li>• material to motivate students' interest in reading</li> <li>• using short stories to increase students' interest in reading</li> </ul>
	<b>features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• featuring real language</li> <li>• featuring immediate relevance</li> <li>• featuring immediate currency (easily dated)</li> </ul>
	<b>input</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using fiction/novels as authentic input</li> <li>• to enrich the content to teach</li> <li>• having some vocabulary keywords not found in the textbooks</li> </ul>
	<b>output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• material to improve students' writing (x2)</li> </ul>
<b>Relevance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevance to students' interests (x2)</li> <li>• relevance to students' needs (x2)</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevance to the content to teach</li> </ul>
<b>Main/ Supplementary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• used as supplementary materials</li> <li>• authentic material as an alternative to using textbook</li> </ul>
<b>How to use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focusing on messages to convey</li> <li>• as the information source for discussion</li> <li>• material as the basis to initiate discussion</li> <li>• materials as the resource basis for discussion and reading comprehension</li> <li>• varied &amp; vague uses in speech class</li> <li>• authentic materials used very often in conversation class</li> <li>• adopt them more in speech class</li> </ul>
<b>Level of difficulty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most understand 70 percent of the article at first reading</li> <li>• understanding the material around 70 percent being appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Genres or Types</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• authentic materials drawn from online UK newspapers</li> <li>• using these books as the basis for students to read</li> <li>• short stories students chose on their own</li> </ul>

## Appendix 7: Cronbach Alpha Coefficient for Reliability

Questionnaire section heading:	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardised items	Number of items
Part B: Teachers' views on the use of authentic materials	.947	.948	12
Part C: Reasons for choosing authentic materials	.887	.891	9
Part D: Exploiting authentic materials with tasks	.790	.791	7
Part E: Adapting authentic materials	.843	.849	9

### Part B: Teachers' views on the use of authentic materials

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.947	.948	12

### Part C: Reasons for choosing authentic materials

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.887	.891	9

### Part D: Exploiting authentic materials with tasks



### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.790	.791	7

### Part E: Adapting authentic materials

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.843	.849	9

**Appendix 8: Table for Frequencies, Means, and Standard Deviation  
(Questionnaire)**

**Table A: Teacher views on the use of authentic material**

*Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Not sure 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree*

Item	<i>Teacher views on the use of authentic material</i> (M=3.96 ; SD= .297291)	1	2	3	4	5	M SD
12	I think authentic materials can motivate learners to learn English	1 (3.3%)	0	2 (6.7%)	13 (43.3%)	14 (46.7%)	4.30 0.877
		1/ 3.3%			27/90%		
13	I think authentic materials can make learners engaged in class	0	1 (3.3%)	7 (23.3%)	13 (43.3%)	9 (30.0%)	4.00 .830
		1/ 3.3%			22 / 73.3%		
14	I think authentic materials can prepare learners to encounter authentic language as used in real life	1 (3.3%)	0	2 (6.7 %)	13 (43.3 %)	14 (46.7 %)	4.30 .877
		1/ 3.3%			27 / 90%		
15	I think authentic materials can acquaint learners with the culture of the target language	0	1 (3.3%)	2 (6.7%)	13 (43.3%)	14 (46.7 %)	4.33 .758
		1/ 3.3%			27/ 90%		
16	I think authentic materials can enable learners to understand the linguistic knowledge of the target language	1 (3.3%)	0	12 (40%)	11 (36.7%)	6 (20%)	3.70 .915
		1/ 3.3%			17/ 56.7%		
17	I think authentic materials can enable learners to understand the extra-linguistic knowledge of the target language	1 (3.3%)	0	8 (26.7 %)	16 (53.3 %)	5 (16.7 %)	3.80 .847
		1/ 3.3%			21/ 70%		
18	I think authentic materials can contribute to learners' test results of language proficiency exams	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	16 (53.3%)	11 (36.7 %)	1 (3.3%)	3.33 .758
		2/ 6.6%			12/ 40%		
19	I think authentic materials can promote learners' receptive skills, such as listening or reading skills	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	17 (56.7%)	10 (33.3%)	4.13 .900
		2/ 6.6%			27/ 90%		
20	I think authentic materials can promote learners' productive skills, such as	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3 %)	5 (16.7 %)	18 (60 %)	5 (16.7%)	3.83 .874

	speaking or writing skills	2/ 6.6%			23/ 76.7%		
21	I think authentic materials can promote learners' overall communicative competence	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	3 (10%)	15 (50%)	10 (33.3%)	4.07 .944
		2/ 6.6%			25/ 83.3		
22	I think authentic materials can be relevant to the curriculum	0	1 (3.3%)	11 (36.7 %)	13 (43.3%)	5 (16.7%)	3.73 .785
		1/ 3.3%			18/ 60%		
23	I think authentic materials can be culturally appropriate	0	1 (3.3%)	5 (16.7 %)	17 (56.7 %)	7 (23.3%)	4.00 .743
		1/ 3.3%			24/ 80%		

**Table B** *Reasons for choosing authentic material*

Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Not sure 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

Item	Reasons for choosing authentic material (M=3.8967 ; SD= .295846)	1	2	3	4	5	M SD
25	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are entertaining to my students	0	5 (16.7 %)	3 (10.0 %)	16 (53.3 %)	6 (20.0%)	3.77 .971
		5 / 16.7%			22/ 73.3%		
26	I choose authentic materials based on their relevance to the topics I teach	1 (3.3%)	0	1 (3.3%)	15 (50 %)	13 (43.3%)	4.30 .837
		1 / 3.3%			28/ 93.3%		
27	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are appropriate to the level of the students I teach	1 (3.3%)	0	8 (26.7 %)	14 (46.7%)	7 (23.3%)	3.87 .900
		1 / 3.3%			21/ 70%		
28	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are able to complement the coursebook materials I use	1 (3.3%)	0	4 (13.3%)	17 (56.7%)	8 (26.7%)	4.03 .850
		1 / 3.3%			25/ 83.4		
29	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are related to the lesson plans	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	6 (20.0 %)	15 (50.0%)	7 (23.3%)	3.87 .937
		2 / 6.6%			22/ 73.3%		
30	I choose authentic materials based on	0	1	4	11	14	4.27

	whether they can motivate my students		(3.3%)	(13.3%)	(36.7%)	(46.7%)	.828
		1 /3.3%			25/ 83.4%		
31	I choose authentic materials based on whether they are appropriate for my students' homework	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	12 (40.0%)	13 (43.3%)	3 (10.0%)	3.53 .860
		2 /6.6%			16/ 53.3%		
32	I choose authentic materials based on whether they can stimulate meaningful discussion in class	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	4 (13.3%)	15 (50.0%)	9 (30.0%)	4.00 .947
		2 /6.6%			24/ 80.0%		
33	I choose authentic materials based on how my students respond emotionally	1 (3.3%)	3 (10.0%)	12 (40.0%)	10 (33.3%)	4 (13.3%)	3.43 .971
		4 /13.3%			14/ 46.6%		

**Table C Teachers' views on exploiting authentic materials with tasks or activities**

Key: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Not sure 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

Item	Tasks or activities to use with authentic materials (M=3.4042 ; SD= .6486)	1	2	3	4	5	M SD
	<i>In designing tasks or activities to use with authentic materials, I would encourage my students ....</i>						
35	to grasp the overall meaning of the authentic materials	0	3 (10.0%)	0	17 (56.7%)	10 (33.3%)	4.13 .860
		3 / 10.0%			27/ 90%		
36	to understand every vocabulary items	2 (6.7%)	14 (46.7%)	9 (30.0%)	4 (13.3%)	1 (3.3%)	2.60 .932
		16 / 53.4%			5/ 16.6%		
37	to analyse the grammatical structures	5 (16.7%)	10 (33.3%)	10 (33.3%)	4 (13.3%)	1 (3.3%)	2.53 1.042

		15 / 50%			5/ 16.6%		
38	to do exercises that aim for comprehension check and drawing inferences from contextual clues	1 (3.3%)	2 (6.7%)	6 (20.0%)	18 (60%)	13 (10%)	3.67 .884
		3/ 10%			31/ 70%		
39	to use tasks that copy real-life activities (such as writing an email to the editor of a newspaper)	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	7 (23.3%)	17 (56.7%)	4 (13.3%)	3.73 .868
		2/ 6.6%			21/ 70%		
40	to use tasks that focus on developing accuracy of the language form	1 (3.3%)	5 (16.7%)	12 (40.0%)	12 (40.0%)	0	3.17 .834
		6/20%			12/ 40%		
41	to use tasks that focus on meaningful communication	1 (3.3%)	0	4 (13.3%)	18 (60%)	7 (23.3%)	4.00 .830
		1/ 3.3%			25/ 83.3%		

**Table D Teachers' views on adapting authentic materials**

Item	Adapting authentic materials (M= 2.9556 ; SD= .4242)  <i>When using authentic materials in class, I would....</i>	1	2	3	4	5	M SD
43	simplify the vocabulary or idioms	2 (6.7%)	5 (16.7%)	7 (23.3%)	13 (43.3%)	3 (10.0%)	3.33 1.093
		7/ 23.4			16/ 53.3%		
44	take out complex sentences	1 (3.3%)	10 (33.3%)	12 (40.0%)	6 (20%)	1 (3.3%)	2.87 .900
		11/ 36.6%			7/ 23.3%		
45	reduce the length of the text	2 (6.7%)	4 (13.3%)	7 (23.3%)	15 (50.0%)	2 (6.7%)	3.37 1.033
		6/ 20%			17/ 56.7%		
46	edit out linguistic items that would be difficult	2 (6.7%)	7 (23.3%)	8 (26.7%)	12 (40.0%)	1 (3.3%)	3.10 1.029
		9/ 30%			13/ 43.3%		
47	make the texts more lengthy	8 (26.7%)	13 (43.3%)	6 (20.0%)	3 (10.0%)	0	2.13 .937

		21/ 70%			3/ 10.0%		
48	make a change in visual format of the text	4 (13.3%)	9 (30.0%)	8 (26.7 %)	7 (23.3 %)	2 (6.7 %)	2.80 1.157
		13/ 43.3%			9/ 30%		
49	script a listening text	3 (10.0%)	4 (13.3%)	8 (26.7 %)	10 (33.3 %)	5 (16.7 %)	3.33 1.213
		7/ 23.3%			15/ 50%		
50	make an expansion by adding something to the text	4 (13.3%)	4 (13.3%)	8 (26.7 %)	11 (36.7 %)	3 (10.0 %)	3.17 1.206
		8/ 26.6%			14/ 46.7%		
51	make no changes at all	5 (16.7%)	8 (26.7%)	14 (46.7%)	3 (10.0%)	0	2.50 .900
		13/ 43.4%			3/ 10.0%		

**Table E Constraints or difficulties associated with using authentic materials**

Item	Constraints or difficulties If you DO NOT use authentic materials, tick al of the reasons that apply. <i>I do not use authentic materials because....</i>	Number of ticks	Frequency	Order
53.1	<input type="checkbox"/> they cannot fit in the unified coursebook materials I use.	<b>9</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>4</b>
53.2	<input type="checkbox"/> they cannot fit in with the unified curriculum that I use.	<b>8</b>	<b>26.7%</b>	<b>5</b>
53.3	<input type="checkbox"/> they cannot be in line with the course objectives.	<b>2</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>7</b>
53.4	<input type="checkbox"/> they are irrelevant to the major school exams.	<b>10</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>3</b>
53.5	<input type="checkbox"/> they cannot enhance learners' test scores in major language proficiency tests.	<b>4</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>6</b>
53.6	<input type="checkbox"/> they cannot help my learners improve their English significantly.	<b>2</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>7</b>

53.7	<input type="checkbox"/> it is labour-intensive to choose appropriate authentic materials to teach.	<b>9</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>4</b>
53.8	<input type="checkbox"/> there is no time enough for me to choose them.	<b>11</b>	<b>36.7%</b>	<b>2</b>
53.9	<input type="checkbox"/> there is no time enough for me to exploit them	<b>8</b>	<b>26.7%</b>	<b>5</b>
53.10	<input type="checkbox"/> there may not be technical equipment to show video clips such as those from YouTube.	<b>12</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>1</b>
53.11	<input type="checkbox"/> my students are not interested in learning with them.	<b>2</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>7</b>
53.12	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not interested in using them to teach.	<b>1</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>8</b>
53.13	<input type="checkbox"/> they are too difficult for my students' levels.	<b>11</b>	<b>36.7%</b>	<b>2</b>
53.14	<input type="checkbox"/> they take up much time of my teaching.	<b>9</b>	<b>30.0%</b>	<b>4</b>