
RESEARCH ARTICLE

English Language Teachers' Perspectives on the Integration of Authentic Materials in Reading Classes

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ABSTRACT

Developing competency in second language learning requires mastery of reading, which affects other language skills. Reading in the target language exposes learners to a variety of structures and improves their comprehension. English language teachers have started to utilize authentic materials to promote learning experiences and introduce real-world language use to their learners. Authentic materials, such as newspapers, magazines, novels, and short stories, are used in reading classes to expose students to authentic language, promote reading comprehension, and raise cultural awareness. The study aims to explore English language teachers' views on integrating authentic materials in reading lessons. The study employs quantitative research by using a questionnaire to examine teachers' viewpoints regarding the effectiveness and significance of these resources in preparatory schools. Findings indicate strong consensus among respondents on the important role of authentic materials in English as a Foreign Language reading instruction. The study's key findings show that even though integrating authentic materials can be challenging when selecting and designing them, most respondents stated that they enable learners to see actual language usage, improve their grammar and vocabulary skills, motivate them, and foster a deeper understanding of the language and target culture.

KEYWORDS

English as a Foreign Language, second language learning, authentic materials, reading materials, authentic reading materials

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1. Introduction

Reading is one of the four language skills and has been a focal point in English Language Teaching since it enhances vocabulary development, comprehension, and proficiency. Learners need to improve their reading skills throughout their language learning journey to enable themselves to participate in work, the community, or daily life activities. Reading is an essential part of language teaching, assisting learners in recognizing written words, pronunciation, and speaking. It is enjoyable, intense, and a private activity that provides pleasure and exposes learning. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, reading helps students improve their skills in accessing the literature for the target language and is beneficial for students as it allows them to enhance their ability to access literature in the target language (Berardo, 2006; Alderson, 2000; Nation, 2008). Following the need to improve students' reading skills by exposing them to the language, the popularity of using authentic materials is increasing day by day. The use of authentic materials in the classroom has garnered significant attention since it brings real-world language use and conversations and helps students to become a part of the language learning process.

1.1 Significance of the Study

Language learning is a gradual process that can only be mastered after a period of time. It requires learners to dedicate time, effort, and enthusiasm to achieve language proficiency (Trimnell, 2005). This is where educators play an equally influential role as well as their learners. Teachers have had various investigations to identify and integrate different teaching materials in response

to the demand for enhanced language skills. Following this need, educators have begun considering integrating authentic materials into their classes in order to improve students' language learning development. Integrating authentic materials in English as a Foreign (EFL) reading classes profoundly impacts learners' language learning process and significantly improves reading comprehension. Despite different views on using these materials in language classes, this topic remains a topic of discussion and ongoing research. As a result, there has been persistent research regarding its purpose and usage in reading classes.

1.2 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to explore English Language teachers' views on integrating authentic materials in reading lessons. Even though a variety of research has been conducted regarding using authentic material use in EFL settings (Kılıçkaya,2004; Berardo, 2006; Şaraplı,2016; Kılıç & İlter, 2015), it is important to see English Language Teachers' views on using them in a specific skill which is reading. The study focuses on instructor's perspectives on reading classes, authentic reading texts, the appropriate starting level, the types of materials they employ, the criteria they apply when selecting these sources, and their preference for using authentic materials or textbooks. The following are the research questions that have guided this investigation:

- What are EFL teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of authentic materials in enhancing students' reading skills?
- At which levels do teachers use authentic materials?
- What factors influence the integration of authentic materials in EFL reading lessons?

2. Literature Review

Teachers utilize various materials in the classroom to achieve learning objectives and choose suitable materials to improve students' language skills. Teaching materials, such as printed materials, textbooks, or self-prepared worksheets, are necessary for language teaching and are used by educators. These sources are input for language learners to receive and practice in their classrooms. Instead of solely learning a language with the instructional rules, learners need to hear and read the language as native speakers use it. One of the biggest challenges for teachers is finding innovative ways to inspire students to learn, spark their creativity, and sustain their interest (Oğuz & Bahar, 2008). Educators utilize materials to demonstrate language usage from various cultures and contexts, fostering meaningful learning experiences.

Authentic materials are one way to achieve this in language classes. Authentic materials are defined as real-life materials that learners encounter in daily life. These materials are created for native speakers yet are used in language classes to protect their original form and design, but they are not explicitly designed for educational purposes. They help teachers conduct lessons based on real-life language use regardless of their intended purpose (Lira,2012; Umirova,2020). Authentic materials can be any text (printed or digital) or tape created for a purpose other than teaching the target language (Gardner & Miller, 1999). When educational tasks are authentic, they reflect real-life situations, which helps students grasp the significance of what they are learning and why. These materials aim to help learners bridge the gap between the classroom and the outside world. Many students desire to learn a language for their personal goals. Therefore, educators ensure they encourage their learners with authentic or goal-oriented materials (Ianiro, 2007).

Authentic materials come in various forms and can be integrated into teaching for each language skill. They can include written and spoken samples and are categorized into listening, visual, and printed materials. Listening materials include radio news, cartoons, songs, and movies, while visual materials include street signs, magazines, paintings, drawings, and postcards. On the other hand, printed materials include newspaper articles, restaurant menus, train tickets, and movie commercials (Gebhard,1966; Al Azri & Al-Rashdi,2014). These printed materials offer written language, helping students see how language is used within different texts and genres in real-life situations, given that these resources are not intentionally designed to be used in language classrooms. Instead, they are sources intended for native speakers or society for general use.

2.1 Benefits and Limitations of Authentic Materials

By their very nature, authentic materials demonstrate the actual use of natural language, making them a powerful tool for language learners. Clarke and Silberstein, cited in Richards (2006), assert that authentic materials provide cultural information about the target language and present it as native speakers use it, aligning with learners' needs and encouraging a more engaging approach. This engagement is key to fostering students' interest and motivation in their language-learning journey. They also suggest topics students are interested in, offering a wide range of text types and linguistic styles that are difficult to find in traditional teaching materials. It also enhances motivation by showing actual language use and contributing to students' overall success (Benavides, 2010; Richards, 2001). Furthermore, authentic materials create a feeling of cultural genuineness and connection, encouraging learners to engage with the language beyond academic requirements. Therefore, incorporating authentic materials into language learning programs can significantly enhance learners' motivation, helping students to be more effective in language learning and proficiency growth. Students can develop linguistic and non-linguistic skills when incorporated into different language skills. They are not limited to enhancing a single skill but can be effectively used for each skill and other aspects of language learning tailored

to learning goals. Learners exposed to and trained in the classroom with authentic materials will better understand the language and cultural nuances, which will help them feel motivated.

In Tomlinson's (2012) opinion, teachers have flexibility in using materials as sources of information, guidance, practical experience, encouragement, and exploration for language learners. Teachers can utilize these materials in the class according to the learners' requirements and needs. Providing students with authentic materials can encourage them. As Richards stated (2001), authentic materials support a more creative approach to teaching. Teachers have opportunities to reach their full potential by developing activities and tasks that better match their students' teaching styles and learning styles (Phillips and Shettlesworth 1978 & Peacock 1997).

2.2 Authentic Reading Material Use in the Classroom

The relationship between authentic materials and reading comes from the shared role of enhancing language proficiency through exposure and practice. Without a doubt, teachers bring reading materials for their classes. However, teacher-made or published materials might need more concise lexical, grammatical, and discoursal structures, which cannot prepare students for real-world reading. (Richards,2015). Nevertheless, authentic reading materials can support the creative learning environment and help students relate the target language to their lives. Bringing printed authentic materials such as newspapers, podcasts, and conversations mirrors how native speakers naturally use language, exposing learners to real-life contexts and language features. This exposure improves learners' understanding and boosts their motivation to interact with the language because it relates to real-life situations. According to Vukovic and Bratavic (2019), using actual life materials such as articles and short stories can enhance students' reading comprehension and contribute to their motivation in the target language. Using authentic materials in reading classes is beneficial because it allows learners to see real-world texts that reflect the language's natural use, and teachers have positive insight into integrating these resources. They suggested adding them to the curriculum (Treve, 2023 & Kaya et al., 2015). Books, articles, newspapers, and similar materials contain various text types that are not easily found in conventional materials. When authentic resources are used in the lessons, it supports a creative environment and encourages reading for pleasure suitable for their interests (Tamo,2019).

3. Methodology

In Turkiye, the journey of English language education begins very early and continues throughout learners' academic and professional lives. To support language education, teachers must be involved in selecting suitable activities. What they believe about integrating authentic materials matters, and their awareness of using them in their classes is essential. In this sense, authentic materials have become a topic of discussion concerning their effectiveness in reading classes. This study investigates teachers' opinions in preparatory schools in Istanbul and their perspectives regarding integrating authentic materials in reading classes.

3.1 Participants

The participants of this study, a group of 50 EFL instructors, were recruited from preparatory schools in private universities. The group included 39 Female and 11 Male instructors, ensuring a diverse representation of perspectives on authentic materials in different educational contexts. Their academic background is a testament to their varied qualifications, with the majority holding bachelor's and master's degrees in the English Language Teaching department or related fields like English Language and Literature. Participants' teaching experience ranged from one to more than ten years. The study surveyed 78% of female teachers, with 56% holding bachelor's degrees and 42% having master's degrees. Most participants were from Turkiye and graduated from the English Language Teaching department. The majority had 3-5 years of teaching experience, while 18% had ten years and more. 98% of the participants have taught reading before. These demographic distributions are essential for understanding the research's participant profile and diversity.

3.2 Data Collection Instruments

Soliman's study (2013) employed a questionnaire to investigate the use of authentic materials in reading classes. There are two parts in the questionnaire. The first part collected demographic information, including gender, years of experience, degree, and department. The second part consisted of six sections, each addressing different aspects related to using authentic materials in reading classes: teachers' opinions of reading, the current state of reading classes, using authentic texts in the classes, the extent of exposure to authentic materials, and the specific types of authentic materials that teachers employ. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert-type rating scale, ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Necessary permission to use the questionnaire was obtained from the author. The participants were informed that their responses were solely used for research purposes. The questionnaire took five minutes to complete. In the current study, quantitative data analysis was performed using SPSS version 27. Frequency analyses were conducted to calculate demographic findings, frequency (n), percentage (%), and scale levels (Average, Standard Deviation, Min, Max).

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the quantitative findings gathered from the questionnaire in four tables.

Table 4.1 highlights the participants' opinions on the importance of reading in teaching English.

Table 4.1. Teacher Opinions in Reading in English

Items	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. Reading in English is important.	0	0,00	1	2,00	0	0,00	1	2,00	48	96,00
2. Reading helps to improve students' language proficiency.	0	0,00	0	0,00	0	0,00	5	10,00	45	90,00

Note: SA= Strongly agree, A= agree, N=neutral, D=disagree, SD=strongly disagree; %= percentage

Ninety-eight percent of the participants agreed that reading in English is important. All the participants converged on a common point about the second statement, which is about helping improve students' language proficiency. There is no opposing view regarding this item. None of the participants hold negative views regarding the statements. This suggests that respondents had positive opinions on the importance of reading in English and the role of reading in developing language skills.

Table 4.2 shows the distribution of views of participants on the benefits and effects of reading courses.

Table 4.2. Teacher Opinions on Reading Classes

Items	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
3. Reading classes are beneficial.	1	2,00	2	4,00	2	4,00	12	24,00	33	66,00
4. The Reading courses enable the students to read and comprehend other materials outside the classroom.	1	2,00	3	6,00	5	10,00	7	14,00	34	68,00
5. The reading courses introduce the students to how language is used in the real world.	2	4,00	2	4,00	6	12,00	15	30,00	25	50,00
6. The reading courses motivate the students to read other materials outside the classroom.	6	12,00	0	0,00	8	16,00	17	34,00	19	38,00
7. I am satisfied with the current reading courses.	4	8,00	4	8,00	12	24,00	16	32,00	14	28,00

Note: SA= Strongly agree, A= agree, N=neutral, D=disagree, SD=strongly disagree; %= percentage

A high proportion of the respondents agreed that (90%) reading courses are helpful. They also believe that reading courses help students learn how language is used in the real world (80%). Regarding the fourth item, which is about motivating students to read other materials outside the classroom, participants agree (72%). However, a notable minority either disagrees (12%) or is undecided (16%), emphasizing that there may be a variability in the effectiveness of this course or that other factors may play an essential role in motivating students. For the last statement, there is a mixed but predominantly positive view on the reading courses, with 60% agreeing, 24% disagreeing, and 16% undecided courses. While 60% of the participants are satisfied, a significant portion (24%) is undecided, and dissatisfaction is expressed (16%).

Table 4.3 displays the distribution of views on authentic texts among participants.

Table 4.3. Teacher opinions on authentic language use

Variable	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
8. Introduce students to how language is used in the real world.	1	2,00	0	0,00	0	0,00	11	22,00	38	76,00
9. Fulfill students' needs.	0	0,00	1	2,00	7	14,00	16	32,00	26	52,00
10. Enable students to see the value of reading classes.	3	6,00	0	0,00	3	6,00	15	30,00	29	58,00
11. Improve students' language proficiency more than textbooks do.	1	2,00	0	0,00	8	16,00	12	24,00	29	58,00
12. Improve students' reading comprehension ability more than textbooks do.	0	0,00	1	2,00	6	12,00	14	28,00	29	58,00
13. Help develop students' writing styles more than textbooks do.	0	0,00	5	10,00	9	18,00	16	32,00	20	40,00
14. Increase students' familiarity with the use of grammar rules in their original context.	0	0,00	1	2,00	5	10,00	18	36,00	26	52,00
15. Increase students' knowledge of vocabulary items which they need in real situations.	1	2,00	1	2,00	3	6,00	13	26,00	32	64,00
16. Improve students' cultural understanding.	0	0,00	1	2,00	3	6,00	11	22,00	35	70,00
17. Be difficult for students to comprehend.	0	0,00	16	32,00	15	30,00	13	26,00	6	12,00
18. Will cause cultural conflicts that hinder comprehension.	6	12,00	19	38,00	18	36,00	3	6,00	4	8,00
19. Make students feel frustrated.	9	18,00	18	36,00	16	32,00	5	10,00	2	4,00
20. Be interesting.	0	0,00	1	2,00	4	8,00	24	48,00	21	42,00
21. Motivate students to do more reading outside the classroom.	2	4,00	3	6,00	12	24,00	14	28,00	19	38,00
22. Help to overcome some cultural barriers to language learning.	0	0,00	2	4,00	4	8,00	21	42,00	23	46,00
23. It is important to use authentic materials in EFL reading instruction.	0	0,00	0	0,00	0	0,00	12	24,00	38	76,00
24. It is difficult to access authentic materials.	13	26,00	14	28,00	11	22,00	11	22,00	1	2,00
25. It is difficult to select appropriate authentic materials.	6	12,00	9	18,00	13	26,00	17	34,00	5	10,00
26. It is difficult to design the appropriate types of tasks when using authentic texts.	3	6,00	14	28,00	11	22,00	14	28,00	8	16,00
27. The use of authentic materials is time-consuming.	13	26,00	14	28,00	14	28,00	6	12,00	3	6,00
28. I prefer to use authentic texts rather than textbooks in my reading classes.	0	0,00	4	8,00	16	32,00	18	36,00	12	24,00
29. I prefer to use authentic texts as supplementary materials in my reading classes.	1	2,00	1	2,00	11	22,00	18	36,00	19	38,00

Note: SA= Strongly agree, A= agree, N=neutral, D=disagree, SD=strongly disagree; %= percentage

Many respondents (98%) believe that authentic texts are effective in teaching students how to use language in the real world, meet their needs (84%), and show the value of reading lessons (88%). They also believe authentic texts improve students' language skills more than textbooks, enhance their ability to understand what they read, and improve their writing styles.

A large portion of participants think that authentic texts improve students' language skills (82%), understanding of reading (86%), writing styles (72%), and habits of using grammar rules (88%) in their original contexts and more than textbooks. Additionally, they believe that authentic texts increase vocabulary knowledge in real-life situations and promote cultural understanding (72%).

However, there needs to be more clarity about whether authentic texts can create difficulties for students to comprehend. Some participants disagree with this statement (62%), while the others agree (38%). The survey results show mixed opinions on cultural

conflict. A vast majority of participants (74%) do not believe that authentic texts lead to cultural conflicts that impede understanding, while a smaller portion (26%) feel they do. Once again, the responses have different viewpoints regarding authentic materials and disappointment. Even though the majority (68%) think authentic resources don't disappoint students, a smaller group (32%) believes that students may find them disappointing.

The study revealed that authentic texts are interesting (90%), motivating students to read outside the classroom (66%), and helping overcome the cultural barriers in language learning (88%). There is a consensus on the importance of using authentic materials in EFL reading teaching (100%). Nevertheless, it is stated that access to authentic materials is difficult (46%). Choosing suitable authentic materials (60%) is also difficult regarding the responses. There is no clear consensus on designing authentic text types when using authentic materials. Approximately 44% of the participants believe it's challenging, 34% do not agree, and 22% are undecided. The responses show mixed opinions on whether using authentic materials is time-consuming or not. While 56% of the participants disagree, 18% agree, and 26% have no strong opinion. There is a positive leaning towards using authentic texts instead of textbooks (60%), yet the other participants do not prefer (40%). There is a noticeable tendency among participants (74%) to integrate authentic texts as supplementary material in reading classes.

Depending on the results, participants believe authentic texts are essential and valuable in language teaching. In particular, authentic texts are supposed to help students learn how to use language in the real world, improve their language skills, and increase their cultural understanding. However, there are mixed views on issues such as access to authentic materials and the design of suitable tasks. In addition, it is preferable to use authentic materials as an additional task.

Table 4.4 shows the frequency distribution for items regarding the level at which teachers should start integrating authentic materials, which materials they utilize, which factors they consider, and their preference for classes with or without authentic materials.

Table 4.4. Frequency distribution for items

Items	Category	n	%
30. Exposure to authentic materials should start at	Beginning	26	54,17
	intermediate	22	45,83
	advance	0	0,00
<i>31. I would like to use the following authentic materials in class</i>			
newspapers		30	60,00
magazines		35	70,00
novels		11	22,00
short stories		40	80,00
internet material		39	78,00
books		25	50,00
poems		16	32,00
brochures		20	40,00
<i>32. I would select authentic reading materials according to the following factors</i>			
Language level		42	84,00
Length of text		31	62,00
Students' needs		45	90,00
Students' interests		1	2,00
Percentage of new vocabulary		26	52,00
Complexity of grammar structures		27	54,00
Course objectives		23	46,00
Type of text		17	34,00
Writing style		11	22,00
Cultural content		21	42,00

33. Which of the following types of reading classes is the best one in your opinion?	A. Reading class which uses authentic texts only	4	8,00
	B. Reading class which uses a textbook only	0	0,00
	C. Reading class which uses a combination of both authentic texts and textbooks.	46	92,00
34. Which of the following types of reading classes is the worst one in your opinion	A. Reading class which uses authentic texts only	7	14,00
	B. Reading class which uses a textbook only	41	82,00
	C. Reading class which uses a combination of both authentic texts and textbooks.	2	4,00

Note: %= percentage

Regarding when authentic materials should be integrated into the classes, participants think exposure should start at the beginning level (54.17%), while others say it should start at the intermediate level (45.83). Authentic materials used in the classroom include newspapers (60%), magazines (70%), novels (22%), short stories (80%), internet material (78%), books (50%), poetry (32%), brochures (40%).

The selection criteria for authentic reading resources include language level (84%), text length (90%), students' needs (%2), interests (52%), new word percentage (54%), complex grammar structures (46%), course objectives (34%), text type (34%), writing style (22%), and cultural content (42%). Lessons that incorporate both authentic texts and textbooks are regarded (92%), while those relying only on textbooks are rated lower (82%)

As a result, most teachers think authentic materials should start at the beginning or intermediate levels and be used in various language classes. The language level (84%), text length (62%), and student needs (90%) are mainly taken into account when choosing authentic sources. According to the results, reading classes are the most effective when they incorporate a variety of authentic texts along with textbooks, as opposed to relying solely on textbooks.

5. Conclusion

Even though people consult different resources to gain information, they need to become more familiar with gaining language knowledge. To have the ability to use the language appropriately, learners need to be exposed to the language continuously. Integrating authentic materials in an EFL classroom significantly affects the learning process since they serve as an example of real-life language use for learning a foreign language by helping learners improve their language skills in a meaningful context. When the learning environment is meaningful, students will have more opportunities to bridge the gap between real-life and language classes. The findings of this study demonstrated that almost all the participants (98%) had taught or were teaching reading. The value of reading in English and its role in language development are strongly viewed positively by the respondents. From the participants' responses, it can be seen that teachers are conscious of the importance of reading in language instruction. They believe that reading classes help students read and comprehend the materials outside the classroom, demonstrate the natural language used, and motivate them. Regarding the satisfaction of teachers' current reading courses, there is, nevertheless, no explicit agreement. This may show that the effectiveness and quality of these reading courses vary among the respondents.

Respondents strongly agree that authentic texts are valuable and essential when teaching languages because they show how the language is used in actual practices. They meet the needs of students. Findings also highlighted that authentic materials enhance students' habits of using grammar rules in their original texts. They also broaden vocabulary knowledge, which students need to use in real conversations. Similarly, Kamili's study (2013) indicated that teachers have favorable attitudes toward using authentic materials since they believe such materials enable students to interact with actual language and become more proficient in natural language. Moreover, they stated that these materials improve students' language proficiency, reading comprehension, and writing skills more than textbooks. Authentic texts are especially believed to support students in developing their cultural awareness while teaching them how language is used in everyday situations. Understanding other cultures is not about understanding the history of others but understanding the way people think and react. Using language skills combined with culture, students can utilize their knowledge beyond the classroom (Albiladi, 2018). Overall, it can be stated that authentic sources are important because they allow students to interact with accurate English, boost their motivation, provide cultural knowledge, and ultimately lead to more remarkable achievement. In other words, students will capitalize on their prior cultural and schematic knowledge to contrast target situations and genres with their own culture (Richard, 2001; Larimer & Schleicher, 1999).

Teachers also stated that these materials are interesting and motivate students to read outside the classroom. This resonates with Gilmore's view that teachers should provide authentic sources to develop all language skills as they are motivating, engaging, and relevant to learners' lives (2007). This motivation will result in better language learning and development. Learners' reading anxiety

is low compared to their motivation, mainly because of the challenges they encounter when reading authentic texts. Extensive reading can help overcome the lack of information about reading specific texts, reducing anxiety. The best strategy to lessen students' initial concern is to provide tasks focusing on the book's concepts they can understand. Teachers can assist students in interacting productively with a text that seems too complex. (Melvin & Stout, 1987).

On the other hand, there needs to be more clarity as to whether authentic text can create difficulties. Cultural conflicts for students lead to disappointment. According to Guariento and Moley (2001), these materials should be used according to learners' abilities. When necessary, suitable tasks can be given to learners in which total understanding is not essential. Additionally, teachers' opinions differ on topics such as having access to real materials and creating suitable activities. Furthermore, it is preferable to include authentic texts as supplemented materials. Polio (2014) suggested various authentic materials such as train schedules, restaurant menus, advertisements, hotel brochures, newspapers, and magazines. Some teachers expressed that authentic materials can be time-consuming. It may require some effort to integrate authentic materials, yet learners will benefit from the exposure to the language as it is really used. In Harmaoğlu and Peksoy's study (2017), it was seen that even though most participants have positive attitudes about using authentic materials in their teaching, more than half of the participants still think that it is difficult to find suitable materials and time-consuming. To design these materials, teachers spend time accessing and selecting appropriate sources according to their learners' levels and needs.

Textbooks are said to need to catch up in many educational contexts in terms of their comprehension of the nature of language and the linguistic and learning requirements of students (McDonough & Shaw, 1993 in Murdoch). In case of a need, Darian suggested (2001) that teachers can adapt authentic materials for different purposes based on learners' age and language proficiency with careful planning. There is a tendency to use authentic materials instead of textbooks and to use them as supplementary material. The study found that the most preferable way is to incorporate both textbooks and real texts, which is considered the most effective, while those that rely solely on textbooks are not as favored. Given that material writers traditionally tend to use dialogues to practice grammar vocabulary and functional language, they also have pedagogical aims that they focus on rather than authenticity (Gilmore, 2004). Based on the respondents' ideas, only using textbooks is not effective. As Richards (2001) stated, teachers combine created and authentic materials in many language programs because each has benefits and limitations.

Concerning the selection criteria and the right time to use authentic materials in reading classes, teachers advocated for using authentic materials in the classroom, particularly from the beginning or intermediate levels. It's worth noting that none of the participants suggested that exposure to real-life materials should start at an advanced level. The selection of authentic materials is typically guided by factors such as learner needs, text length, and language proficiency. Notably, the more realistic the language, the better it can cater to the range of proficiency levels often found in many classes. This not only enhances the learning experience but also promotes language development. (Crawford, 2002).

This research explored teachers' perspectives at preparatory schools in Istanbul, Turkiye, regarding integrating authentic materials in reading classes. Authentic materials can serve as a practical source in EFL classrooms, offering learners exposure to real-life language use. They effectively enhance vocabulary development, grammar understanding, and cultural awareness. According to the study results, it is appropriate to say that there is an overall positive view on using authentic materials in reading classes. However, there are some aspects that teachers are responsible for focusing on, like selecting suitable texts and activities for learners' needs and levels and considering factors like text length and types. Planning such lessons can be time-consuming for them. Additionally, the most preferable way for teachers is to integrate textbooks with authentic materials. As a result, it is important to understand the significance of these real-life resources and their effective utilization in reading classes to enhance learning outcomes.

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